DEGREES OF LIQUIDITY ON THE AEGEAN:
SHIPS, MIGRANTS, AND CONNECTING WATERS AROUND LESVOS

by

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Degrees of Liquidity on the Aegean: Ships, Migrants and Connecting Waters around Lesvos

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis explores the different stories and texts (newspapers, documents, conventions, reports) that produce partially discordant 'narratives' and that, consequently, delineate different patterns of mobility on the Aegean border between Turkey and Greece. Darkness, Turkey, Greece, coastguards, 'Europe' and refugees, past and present, death and life, are connected on this border and create what I call the 'liquid' border of the Aegean to borrow Bauman's felicitous phrase 'liquid'. Through an historical and ethnographic gaze along with some of the theoretical tools provided to us by the discipline of cultural studies -particularly Gilroy's conceptual framework of the 'ship' as a micro-political and micro-cultural symbol in motion-, I deconstruct the Aegean border in order to examine what I call the different degrees of proximity to 'liquidity' on the Aegean border, that is, the watery flows of 'privilege' in relation to the two most recent spaces of movement: the ferry transferring Turkish tourists and the inflatable-rubber boat carrying undocumented-migrants. An study of these two journeys along with what I see as their effectual meanings of liquidity, rather than revealing an 'open door' for some and a 'wall' for others, what they show us, I

content, is the ‘liquid’ relation between nationalism and racism expanding on the Aegean waters, on the one hand, and a more planetary cosmopolitanism, on the other. In order to conclude, I propose De Genova’s concept of a ‘migration of struggles’ as a theoretical and ethnographical tool to explore emerging alternative ways of interacting with difference on the Aegean.

ÖZET

EGE'DE AKIŞKANLIĞIN DERECELERİ: GEMİLER, GÖÇMENLER VE MİDİLLİ ETRAFINDA SULARI BİRLEŞTİRMEK

Aila Spathopoulou

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Anahtar Sözcükler: Ege Denizi, Gemiler, Göçmenler, Türk Turistler, Midilli

Bu tez, birbiri ile kısmen çelişik 'anlatılar' ortaya koyan ve bunun bir sonucu olarak Türkiye ve Yunanistan arasındaki Ege sınırında farklı hareketlilik kalıpları çizen hikâyeleri ve metinleri (gazeteler, belgeler, sözleşmeler, raporlar) incelemektedir. Karanlık, Türkiye, Yunanistan, kıyı emniyeti, "Avrupa" ve göçmenler, geçmiş ve günümüz, ölüm ve yaşam; hepsi bu sınır üzerinde birbirleriyle bağlantılılar ve -Bauman'ın isabetli ifadesi 'sıvı'yı doğrular derecede- Ege'nin 'akışkan' sınırı olarak adlandırdığım şeyi oluşturuyorlar. Tarihi ve etnografik bir bakışın yanı sıra kültürel çalışmalar tarafından bize sunulan bazı teorik araçlar –özellikle hareket halindeki bir mikro-politik ve mikro-kültürel sembol olarak Gilroy'un gemi hakkında sunduğu kavramsal çerçeve vasıtasıyla Ege sınırı üzerinde 'akışkanlığa' farklı yakınlık seviyeleri dediğim şeyi, yani, en güncel iki hareket yöntemi olan Türk turistleri taşıyan gemiler ile kaçak göçmenleri taşıyan şişme botlarla ilişkili olarak 'imtiyaz' ve 'savunmasızlık' akışlarını tetkik etmek için Ege sınırının yapıçözümünü yapıyorum. Birine bir 'açık kapı', diğerine ise bir 'duvar' sunmasından ziyade, bu iki seyahatin geçerli akışkanlık anlamlarıyla beraber bu incelemenin bize gösterdiği şey, bir taraftan

Ege suları üzerinde milliyetçiliğin ve ırkçılığın arasındaki ilişkinin ‘akışkan’ olmadığı, diğer taraftan ise küresel bir dünya vatandaşlığının varlığı. Sonuç olarak Ege’de farklılıklarla etkileşimde olan alternatif yollar keşfetmek için De Genova’nın ‘mücadele göçleri’ kavramını teorik ve etnografik bir araç olarak öneriyorum.

To Vassilis

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INTRODUCTION
A JOURNEY ON THE AEGEAN

As I was sitting on the upper deck of the ferry boat 'Ariadny', on my way back from the island of Lesvos to Piraeus (Athens), I engaged in a deep conversation on the topics of migration, Turkey, and life on Lesvos in general, with a coastguard who was stationed on the island of Lesvos and was travelling (now) to his hometown. It was approximately ten in the evening and everything around us was dark, apart from the fading lights of Lesvos, as we were leaving its port behind us. Three hours later we would discern the lights of the mountain villages on the island of Chios, our next and last stop before our final destination, Athens, a journey that lasts approximately eight hours. Lesvos behind us and Chios in front of us, we had Turkey by our side/next to us. The mountains of Turkey which were visible to the eye, even in the darkness due to the strong moonlight, seemed to be endless. I turned to my sister who was sitting next to me, when I heard her say: 'I didn't realize that Turkey was so close and big'. 'Big' and 'close', in this context, are words full of meaning for they refer to particular (haunting) experiences of the population who live on the Greek side of the Aegean, since the time when Asia Minor was ultimately defined as Turkey and the majority of the Eastern Aegean islands as Greece.[1] 'Yes Turkey is very big and very close, it follows you forever and everywhere' was the unexpected comment of the coastguard sitting on my other side. His words were uttered as if to defend the purpose of (give reason to) his presence on the Aegean; 'Due to my occupation, I know very well. I am a coastguard', was, indeed, his next sentence. 'Turkey seems to be haunting him', was what my sister whispered to my ear.

Sitting and chatting on the lower deck of the boat, were my friends from the 'Traces back' camp, who had returned to Lesvos in order to trace back their

[1] I am referring here to the Laussane Treaty in 1923 and the Exchange of Populations that I will be discussing further down in more details.

experiences of the time they first entered 'Europe' via the island of Lesvos. Now, after having spent some weeks on the island, they were heading towards Athens, where some of them were currently living, while, others had managed to move 'deeper into Europe'. With Turkey still visible in the distance, when our ferry stopped at the island of Chios it took on board many undocumented migrants in handcuffs escorted by the police, who had crossed the maritime Turkish-Greek border in order to enter 'Europe'. 'They are used to travelling in the dark and because of them so are we' muttered the coastguard. I felt puzzled to be travelling in such circumstances, that is, talking with a coastguard while migrants were being apprehended on the ferry and decided to abandon the conversation with the coastguard and moved downstairs to my friends from Afghanistan, Somalia and Syria who I had met in the 'Traces back' camp on Lesvos organized by the 'Youth without Borders' and 'Welcome to Europe' networks, and were now talking and giving advice to the newly arrived migrants.

A few days later, when reflecting on my notes from this perplexing boat journey on the Aegean, I felt that there was, indeed, a puzzle calling to be solved, a puzzle on and of the Aegean. This puzzle involves many different and sometimes competing parts, narratives and discourses, however, always in connection. Darkness, Turkey, coastguards, 'Europe' and refugees, past and present, death and life, all seemed to somehow connect on this space thanks to the 'liquid' border (liquidness of the Aegean), to borrow Bauman's felicitous phrase 'liquid'.[2] I remember the coastguard telling me that one should not judge the sea with the same criteria that one judges the land. That with the sea things are completely different, therefore, one shouldn't make fast and harsh criticisms/judgments when evaluating the work of a coastguard at sea. 'We shouldn't be blamed for the fact that we aren't able to control all the illegal migrants crossing from the opposite side (meaning Turkey)'.

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[2] I am borrowing the term 'liquid' from Bauman in order to capture the liquid materiality, which is, the unpredictable in relation to the sea's context (historical, social, political and cultural) and 'beneath the surface' meanings (sub-texts). In Bauman's words,

'now we can guess why the crowd is like, the sea, seducing and enthralling. Because in a crowd, as in the sea but unlike on hard ground, built up and criss-crossed with fences and fully mapped, anything or almost anything can happen, even if nothing or almost nothing can be done for sure. But it might be also disillusioning. Why? For much the same reasons. In the sea, ships may sink to the bottom' (2012:138).

It is this very 'different reality' that I seek to explore and understand in my thesis. If the reality, that is, the situation, circumstances and conditions at sea are indeed 'different', then, what does this reveal about the construction and experiences of the Aegean Sea? In an attempt to 'write against' the viewpoint that is reflected in the anthropological writings of Claude Lévi-Strauss, for whom the ocean is "a diluted landscape" with an "oppressive monotony and a flatness" that fails to hold qualities to enliven the imagination (1973, pages 338–339), and Roland Barthes's depiction of the sea as a "non-signifying field [that] bears no message" (1972, page 112), I argue for the importance of an (ethnographic) study attentive to the very sounds, noises and silences, movements and pauses, waves and steadiness of the Aegean waters as they contain messages and partially discordant narratives of the previous and more recent transformation on the Aegean liquid border. I am not claiming to be capturing the whole story and messages of the Aegean, its multiple versions, anecdotes and discourses/reproductions. But I do believe, that if one wants to start telling its story, she/he should not think of it independently from the story of the general making of sea-spaces, when at the beginning of the 20th century nation states in order to consolidate their power on land started to expand their borders beyond their territorial boundaries into more 'liquid' spaces; into the oceans, underneath the surface of the waters and into the air of the sky. In this way, they created borders out of water and air, which have no volume and no shape, in other words, 'liquid' borders. Indeed, in order for one to understand the production of the Aegean, before turning to Greek-Turkish relations and its more recent Europeanization by Frontex[3], then one should first examine how sea-spaces are generally being perceived and constructed with the different international laws/conventions of the sea, as a process in which nation-states attempt to control and divide waters along the lines of territorial divisions and boundaries, that date back to the colonial times.

Chapter I, then, begins with a focus on the production of sea-spaces as a space of governmentality, competing jurisdictions and overlapping national claims and the current legal system that delineates the 'liquid' borders (section 1). In the following section (section 2) it discusses the 'Aegean dispute' with a specific focus on how it is

[3] Frontex has been providing operational assistance to Greece at its external land and maritime borders through various operations since 2006 and is described in its own website as 'a specialised and independent body' of the European Union, whose main task is to help with EU border security.

experienced on the ground, that is, on the Aegean waters and on the island of Lesvos, in the imaginaries and everyday experiences of the islanders living close by its waters. At the same time it turns to the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923 and the population exchange and its role in the shaping of the Aegean space and the memories of the people living on Lesvos. The third section discusses the delineation of the islands on the Aegean and their roles in the mapping of the 'liquid' border while the last section (section 4) of Chapter I, examines the European mappings of the Aegean. It specifically focuses on the European rules and regulations, security and 'rescue' operations lead by Frontex at sea, which have transformed the Aegean border from a national one to a European one, while traces of the previous border are still visible. This part of my discussion is based on the different EU reports, such as Frontex reports in order to understand the EU's conception of the Aegean border space.

Along the lines of Foucault's theoretical framework of the graveyard as heterotopias, Chapter II talks about the Aegean Sea between Greece and Turkey as a 'liquid' cemetery at the periphery of 'Europe'. Specific attention is given to the 'push backs' (section 2) and readmission agreements between Greece and Turkey since they support my general argument on how Greek-Turkish relations and the recent migratory movement overlap on the Aegean. This chapter refers also to the past (section 3), when in an attempt to escape the massacres and the destruction of their houses in Asia Minor, thousands of refugees from Asia Minor, tried to reach the island of Lesvos in over-packed boats. This section dwells on the haunting aspect of the Aegean waters, that is, how the washed up bodies of the drowned migrants on the shores along with the objects that they waves bring evoke feelings of haunting, as well, as memories of previous catastrophes in these same waters.

Chapter III proceeds in four sections. The first briefly discusses the image of the ship along the lines of Foucault's analytical framework of *heterotopias.* It shows how Foucault's analysis of the 'ship' helps us to dwell on the links between the present journey of the migrants crossing the Mediterranean and the colonial journeys between the 16th and 18th centuries again by boat at sea. The second section turns to the most recent and characteristic patterns of mobilities that have developed simultaneously on the Aegean, the Turkish tourism and migratory movements. At the same time, it uses the 'ship' as a theoretical/conceptual tool to capture the materiality that is attached to specific meanings and experiences on the Aegean, in relation to the two above mentioned journeys. It presents the actual agencies of these mobilities, the types of

journeys that they create and their degrees of proximity to 'liquidity' on the Aegean border, that is, the flows of 'privilege' and vulnerability on the Aegean. This analysis is extended in the third section to what I call the journeys' 'effectual meanings of liquidity' as the result of the interrelating and often conflicting borders on the Aegean, past ones and more recent ones, the traces of which affect both two patterns of mobility on the Aegean (the Turkish tourists' and the undocumented migrants' journey) and the ways in which they are being perceived and imagined by the locals on the border island of Lesvos. This will support the main argument of this thesis that the 'liquid' and 'slippery' materiality of the Aegean contributes towards the making of particular experiences on, through and next to the Aegean. The final section discusses the 'ship' that crosses the Turkish-Greek border along the lines of what Gilroy calls a 'floating micro-cultural and micro-political symbol in motion', in order to understand how cultural material movements, activities and events intermingle with political-material ones on the Aegean, with some types of multiculturalism being encouraged on this border (e.g. Turkish-Greek multiculturalism) versus a more 'planetary cosmopolitanism' (what I see to be the migratory journey on the Aegean), however, undesirable by the main political actors operating in the Aegean region. Ultimately, this section will examine the limits of a more planned neoliberal multiculturalism that is being promoted on the Aegean in comparison to the potentials of an alternative, spontaneous and more radical form of motion, and a migration of becoming that is the effect of routes rather than roots.

Chapter IV which is also the Conclusion of this thesis discusses the migrants' journey at sea not so much as migrants' struggles per se, but rather, along the lines of the authors of the *Keywords* (2015), as a 'migration of struggles' that provide us with an 'autonomy of migration' on a planetary scale, since in order for the migrants to move, they have to break down the obviousness of the national state as a principle of political culture (Gilroy, 2005:5). It will proceed with concrete examples of what I see as spontaneous anti-racism movements and cartographies on the Aegean. The first is an example of what takes place precisely on the Aegean waters within a counter-mapping and counter-surveillance movement, the second as an in-between movement/mapping, that is, by tracing the border back to Lesvos, it creates a link between the Aegean Sea and the island of Lesvos and the last one an example of an anti-racist campaign taking place on Lesvos, in what the participants/activists call a 'paper boat' of different encounters and exchanges.

Already from the introduction, what one may notice and rightfully criticize is the complete absent in the theoretical framework of any reference to the gender aspect that forms an indispensable part in the making of the Aegean space. Indeed, I would be missing something from the whole picture, if not distorting it completely, if I were not to emphasize the interrelation between nationalism, racism and masculinity in the delineation and mapping of the Aegean waters and how in turn these national, racial and gender lines affect the patterns of mobility that take place there. As we will see in the chapters of this thesis, the main actors operating upon the Aegean space are men: military men, coastguards, Frontex officials, state actors, and all the staff on the vessels patrolling the waters, constitute a world of men, who apart from their nationality and European identity, are also re-enforcing their masculinity and in some cases even their sexuality on the Aegean waters. In other words, a gender approach/perception is something crucial in the delineation of the national and European border in general and the Aegean Turkish-Greek border in particular. In addition, the very idea of the frontier, as we shall see, is also about fixed, closed and essential genderized identities expanding on the Aegean waters, along with the gender hierarchies and dichotomies between the female and the male sexes. The very emphasis in the classical tour guides on Lesvos, that this is 'a friendly family island' reveals to us the degrees to which the traditional norms of the family and sexuality, prevail also in a 'European' country, which similarly to Turkey and the 'non-European' countries of the 'Middle East' from which the migrants come from, has yet to overcome national, gender and racial constructions at all levels within its society. And this, indeed, becomes even clearer at the Aegean border, a border that supposedly separates 'Greece' from Turkey, 'Europe' from 'Asia'.

And this brings me to an additional potential criticism of this thesis and which should be mentioned before moving on to the main part of the text. The fact that I speak of the two most recent patterns of mobility on the Aegean, should not mislead us to the idea that these two categories of people are homogenous in and by themselves. On the contrary, they entail within them gendered, racial, and ethnic hierarchies and distinctions that should not be ignored, when one tries to capture the politics behind 'who, when and why' one is allowed to cross the Aegean border, in other words, the degrees of proximity to liquidity that I speak about in Chapter 3. I am aware, that throughout the thesis, similar to the absence of the gender dimension, there is also not enough emphasis on the differences between these two categories of travelers; the

Turkish tourists and the undocumented migrants. I do, in other words, tend to generalize when speaking of these two patterns and agents of mobility on the Aegean waters. However, in order to make my argument more powerful and to challenge an undertsnading of the Turkish-Greek border that presents the visa facilitation for the Turkish tourists and the recent securitization of the Aegean, as the effects of two conflicting visa regimes, that is, an open border and a more solid/closed one, I opted to partially and temporaly 'ignore' (put aside) the existing and important differences within these groups of people, in an attempt also to remain within the word limit of this thesis. Therefore, a further research should certainly take into consideration and focus on these hierarchies characteristic of the migratory movements that take place on the Aegean, which are also the effects of its very contruction around gendered, national and above all racial lines, as we shall in the following chapters.

CHAPTER 1

THE CONSTRUCTION AND MAPPING OF THE AEGEAN

1.1. A brief discussion on the production/construction of sea-spaces

In the *Southern Question* Cassano (1996) argues that 'the unstoppable liquidity of the Ocean leads towards utilitarian individualism and towards aberrant forms of freedom that do not know the restraints of limits and the importance of returns' (p. xiv). The above description highlights the difficulty of imposing a unifying and totalizing vision on waters, in general. Seas are spaces defined by acts of movement that occur within, across, and outside the territory's boundaries and where the designation of specific spaces of movements are beyond territorial control (Steinberg 2009:467). The liquidity of the seas resists absolute control; however, at the same time the lack of limits and restraints of the waters, awakens an expansionist and we can even say an imperial need of empires and nation-states not only to move beyond the limits of their territorial boundaries and to explore what lies beyond but also to conquer and delineate such spaces, as the sea, in ways that are beneficial (to them) and to consolidate their empire/nation's power on the lands that these waters circulate. Thus, the construction of sea-spaces would not have been possible without the simultaneously movements of people, the first explorers across the waters, movements that regulate, produce the so-called maritime borders but also challenge and contest their own territorial boundaries. In this respect, the delineation of today's sea-spaces has its origins in the 15th century, during the colonial times, when the first maritime explorations started to take place.

Looking into representations of marine space on world maps printed in Europe and the Americas between 1501 and 1800, Steinberg (2009) encounters the

construction of the ocean as an external space of mobility, antithetical to the norm of the territorial state that also was emerging during this era. Hence, he argues that the delineation of the territorial boundaries of the modern nation state, as we have come to know it today, is not independent from the spatial imagination/idea of the exact opposite reality, that of the infinite uncontrollable exterior space characterized by continuous movement. Meaning by this, the historical, ongoing desire, and, at times, imaginary projection of social power onto spaces whose geophysical and geographic characteristics make them resistant to state territorialization, such as oceanic spaces, shouldn't be thought separately from the construction of "inside" space as a series of territories of fixity, society, modernization (ibid:467). In this sense, such an representation of the ocean was itself a construction of, and within, a system: The idealization of the ocean as the ultimate outside, beyond civilization, bolstered the construction of the rest of the world—the universe of territorial states—as sovereign insides (Thomson 1994; Steinberg 2001 in Steinberg 2009:472-473). In other words, the more the oceans and the seas were understood to be spaces resistant to state-territorialization, open spaces characterized by continuous movement, never quite stable, visible and predictable and, thus, occluding the possibility of absolute control, the construction of the territorial state as the exact opposite became the space over which absolute governmentality could be practiced. And the more the different (European) powers set out to explore the 'outside' spaces of the oceans with their maritime explorations, the more the idea of a sovereign 'inside' was reinforced as the idealized space to be government and over which absolute power could be exercised, whereas, other spaces, such as sea-spaces, were lacking the very ability to be controlled.

The above discussion on the opposition between territorialization and those spaces resistant to it, such as sea-spaces, cannot be thought independently from the phenomenon of mobility itself. On the one hand, the (outwards) movement of the first explorers into the seas and their desire (what is actually greed) to conquer more lands coincides with the making of these very sea-spaces along the lines of maritime trade routes which simultaneously reinforced the boundaries of the territorial states as centralized 'sovereign insides'. On the other hand, the sea as the ultimate representation and metaphor of mobility itself resists the very idea of a territorial restricted boundary, as the different mobilities on and through its waters challenge the territorial gaze of the nation-state, while, they crisscross between the borders of

visibility/invisibility, control/freedom and internationalism/nationalism. And it is for this, that the various official European mappings of the sea are not able to represent all the 'liquid' traces of every journey that takes place on the world' seas, likewise, on the Aegean, as we shall see in the following chapters. Like the waters themselves, peoples and objects can move across, fold into, and emerge out of the Aegean in unrecognised and unexpected ways and bring with them new understandings of living, knowing, remembering and resisting. And, it is precisely in this sense that migrants unearth territorial units: not because they do not act in a local space, but insofar as they enact geographies that exceed and trouble any possible "methodological nationalism" [De Genova, 2010], with movement itself being the foundation of geography (Steinberg 2013:160), as I have shown above. Hence, migrants' journey at sea exceeds and troubles every 'methodological' and as we shall see in the following chapter, 'European' nationalism.

Central to the imaginary of Western capitalist and colonial modernity, the sea has long been intertwined with a range of problems for representation and conceptualization (Connery 2010:691). Indeed, the ocean has long functioned as Western capitalism's primary myth element, establishing a relation to oceanic space found nowhere else in the world (ibid. p. 686). Delineating the historical links between maritime expansionism during the colonial times with the mappings of oceans, the control of maritime routes and the development of the modern nation state, help us to understand how the mappings of external spaces are ultimately linked to states' struggles over more and larger territories in an attempt to control goods, resources, trade and other forms of human mobility, which are found beyond the territorial boundaries of what constitutes the territorial nation-state. Indeed, the pre-colonial and colonial explorations at sea, when 'European' powers in search for new markets and labor forces, by delineating the trans-Atlantic triangle between Eurasia, the Americas and Africa, brought the Americas, Africa and Eurasia into an interconnected economical, social and cultural relationship. Steinberg and Peters argue that 'this oceanic politics emerges from its materiality as a space of fluidity, volume, emergence, depth, and liquidity, properties that are all at the forefront of debates presently animating a new materialism in cultural and political geography' (2015:260). Consequently, the figure of the ship is crucial in the making of this transnational triangle, the demarcation of the various trade-routes (maritime routes) and this 'new materialism' during the times of maritime expansionisms and the battle between the

European powers who had entered the maritime game, over the rights to these markets and their products. Thus, it becomes the first form of an expanding global capitalism. What we see happening at this time, in other words, was a maritime imperialism based on control of trade that lead steadily towards a territorial imperialism based on control and exploitation of production.

This is about the colonial story of the 'ship' whose continuation can still be seen in some of today's journeys at sea, such as the migrants' ones (and which I will be discussing in the following chapters). In Cassano (2012) words '… the lack of limits of restraints of the fundamentalism of the Ocean had led to the darkest pages of the Western system of planetary dominance: the colonization of the continental Americas and of the Caribbean, the Middle East and Asia; and the neocolonial formations of the present era…' ('Thinking the Mediterranean', from translator's introduction, p. xv). Colonization and neo-colonization, or what I would rather see as the present forms of colonialism is not only connected to imperialism, territorial conquest and ultimately racism on land but also to the securitization of the seas; indeed, when turning to the seas we see that throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, the dominant image of the ocean as an "outside" beyond the universe of state-civilizations, provides a pretext for banning all social actors operating from this outside space (Steinberg 2008:472). In other words, the construction/delineation of sea spaces cannot be analyzed separately from a certain type of imperialism that culminates (which finds its ultimate form) in the banning of movement of particular subjects, the racial colonial subjects, across what have been delineated as 'territorial' and what are precisely 'national' waters.

The relationship between expansionism, securitization and capitalism continues to thrive in today's neoliberal era, when the vast territories of the world's oceans have become strategic terrains of extended urbanization through undersea cable infrastructures and through shipping lanes and undersea resource extraction systems (Brenner, 2013). In short, territoriality encompasses not just the bounding of space but also its organization, within, across, and outside state borders (Steinberg 2009) as it seeks above all to control the movement of certain subjects termed as ineligible to move freely not only within and across state borders but also 'outside' of them. 'The character of the sea—its vertical depth, together and coalescing with its movement, its horizontal surface, its angled waves—is a space not moved on, but *through* [as Anim-Addo et al (2014) note], and also *under*. These spatial dimensions unique to the sea in liquid form create distinct opportunities and complications for the projection of power'

(see also Peters, 2014b in Steinberg and Peters 2015:253). It is not only mobility, in other words, but also the struggle over (the restriction) of mobility at sea, particularly certain sea-spaces that have become routes for the journeys of undesired subjects, which is crucial in the making of these very sea-spaces. And we shall see in the following chapters that the subjects of today's securitization at sea are once more perceived along racial, and thus, present colonial lines.

All this reality at and of the seas depicts a space of government in which territorial sovereignties, policing at distance (through radar and satellite systems) and the production on new spaces of governance like the limits of national waters and beyond, articulate each other (Tazzioli 2014, at academia.edu). For example, some states such as Tunisia and Libya have not defined their SAR zones. Other states such as Italy and Malta have overlapping SAR zones and are signatories to different versions of the SAR convention.[4] This leads to constant diplomatic rows as to which state is responsible to operate rescues or disembark migrants who have been 'rescued' by coastguards. Hence, in the following section, I will move on with a brief delineation of the current legal system that reproduces the 'liquid' border (and its effect on the liquid border).

1.1.1. The legal marking of the 'liquid' border through the UN Convention

The transformation from a 'freedom of the seas' concept, dating from the 17th century, when national rights were limited to a specified belt of water extending from a nation's coastlines to the realm of international relations with the construction of different layers/zones, each one representing degrees of national/international accessibility and limits over and within them, however, has not been a solid and straightforward one. On the contrary, exactly because sea-spaces resist state territorialization both on the ground, due to the mobilities of individuals who cross their expanses, challenging in this way the very idea of territorialization, and, on the macro-level of international relations, where some of the most disputed and contested (natural) regions are seas and islands, in relation to where to draw the border line. My discussion is based on the information provided by the activist group 'Watch the

[4] http://watchthemed.net/, 'the sea as a frontier'.

Med', an online mapping platform to monitor the deaths and violations of migrants' rights at the maritime borders of the EU and on which I will be discussing in detail in the final chapter and conclusion of this thesis. As it develops a counter-mapping of the Mediterranean sea-space and the 'right to look' (Watch the Med homepage), the WTM team is well aware of the complex, technical mappings and legal system that organizes/delineates the seas and the Mediterranean in particular. Thus, the information that they provide on their homepage is particularly useful for this section's discussion.

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea can be thought of as the most significant attempt to create 'borders', 'furrows', or 'markers' on seas. Also called the Law of the Sea Convention or the Law of the Sea treaty is the international agreement that resulted from the third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS III), which took place between 1973 and 1982.[5] Drawing on its historical development it is interesting to see how the law itself and its articles are characterized by a certain vagueness and ambivalence. In other words, the Law of the Sea left space for controversies to develop, especially for those semi-enclosed waters that find themselves between two national territories facing one another such as the Aegean Sea between Turkey and Greece. Indeed, 'liquid' entities as such resist delimitations, therefore, legal conventions and agreements do not apply so easily to every liquid case. As Cassano points out '(the sea) is a better hiding place and ridicules the coastguard men, swallowing without pity or guilt the desperados' (2012:12). This brings us back to the comments of the coastguard that I mentioned in the 'Introduction', who emphasized the peculiarity of being on water constantly. The following quote from our discussion is instructive for the present analysis:

> Water and darkness that characterize our job should warn and hasten people against making easy judgments about the results our work brings at land. We are many times called on duty in the middle of the night when it has not been barely over a couple of hours that we have just returned from the sea. Without any sufficient rest once again we set out into the dark waters in search of illegal migrants who have crossed the border, when we ourselves can hardly recognize and distinguish the border; and then people on the land dare to criticize our job at sea …

[5] http://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/unclos_e.pdf

According to the 'Watch the Med', however, 'far from a commonly held view (…) the sea is an area that has been governed by international law for centuries.The rights and obligations of States do extend into the sea through different maritime jurisdiction'.[6] According to the WTM which has published information on its homepage in the section named 'Rights at sea' 'maritime jurisdictions today resemble an "unbundled" sovereignty, in which the state's rights and obligations that compose modern state sovereignty on the land are decoupled from each other and applied to varying degrees depending on the spatial extend and the specific issue addressed'.[7]

The Law of the Sea is one of the oldest branches of international law with its most important source of codification and progressive development being the three United Nations Conferences held in 1958, 1960 and from 1973 to 1982 respectively:

> Article 8 of the UNCLOS provides that a state's full sovereignty and jurisdiction extend into its inland waters which form a part of the country's territory. States also have full sovereignty within their territorial waters, which may extend up to 12 nautical miles from the base line (UNCLOS, Arts. 2, 3 and 4). The state may further exercise certain police functions (take customs, fiscal, immigration or health measures) within its contiguous zone, that may not exceed 24 nautical miles from the baselines (UNCLOS, Art.33). Finally the coastal State has exclusive powers of exploring and exploiting, conserving and managing the natural resources within an Exclusive economic zone of a maximum of 200 nautical miles from the baselines from which the territorial sea is measured (UNCLOS, Arts. 55, 56 and 57). Beyond these zones, the maritime area is called "high seas" and no State can exercise its full sovereignty and purport to subject any part of the high seas to its jurisdiction. The high seas are free for all States and reserved for peaceful purposes (UNCLOS, Art. 88).

The above conventions are telling in how they construct sea-spaces along territorial lines, that is, into different layers/strata of accessibility and economic exploitation, depending on the spatial meaning/entity that each convention represents and signifies. Additionally, it is with these conventions that we encounter the first form of governmentality of seas. Indeed, from this very moment, we have the beginning of the disputes over national sovereignty and exclusive access into certain sea spaces. Moreover, questions on what nation-state is allowed to enter where (what zone), start to become an issue, what in our present times, as we shall see, is more about which groups/types of people are allowed to move where (are prohibited from

[6] http://watchthemed.net/index.php/page/index/2, 'Rights at Sea'.
[7] Ibid.

which routes), that brings us to the (a) tension between 'roots' and 'routes', that I will be discussing further down.

Another important aspect of the UN law of the sea and that is ultimately related to the topic of this thesis, is that under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, every state must require the captain of a ship flying its flag to 'render assistance to any person found at sea in danger of being lost' and 'to proceed with all possible speed to the rescue of persons in distress, if informed of their need of assistance' (Article 98 (1)). As the 'Watch the Med' points out, this means that 'the sea is not a legal void where the responsibility of States and individual actors is inexistent'.[8] Turning once more to their section 'Rights at Sea' on their online platform, WTM emphasizes the obligation of every state to rescue people in distress at sea. The 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS Convention) provides that:

> Every State shall require the master of a ship flying its flag, in so far as he can do so without serious danger to the ship, the crew or the passengers: (a) to render assistance to any person found at sea in danger of being lost; (b) to proceed with all possible speed to the rescue of persons in distress, if informed of their need of assistance, in so far as such action may reasonably be expected of him. (Art. 98 (1))[9]

Furthermore, the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea imposes an obligation on every coastal State Party to:

> (...) promote the establishment, operation and maintenance of an adequate and effective search and rescue service regarding safety on and over the sea and, where circumstances so require, by way of mutual regional arrangements, co-operate with neighboring States for this purpose. (Art. 98 (2))[10]

The Guidelines on the Treatment of Persons Rescued at Sea (adopted in May 2004 by the Maritime Safety Committee together with the SAR and SOLAS amendments) contain the following provisions:

> The government responsible for the SAR region in which survivors were recovered is responsible for providing a place of safety or ensuring that such a place of safety is provided. (Resolution MSC.167(78), para. 2.5).'[11]

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[8] http://watchthemed.net/index.php/page/index/2

[9] http://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/unclos_e.pdf, p.56

[10] Ibid.

[11] Available at: http://watchthemed.net/index.php/page/index/2, 'Rights at sea'.

Thus, the international SAR regime has led to the division of the world's oceans into national SAR regions, within which each coastal state has the primary responsibility for ensuring that distress calls are received and responded to' (Thomas Gammeltoft-Hansen &Tanja E.Aalbertsp, 2010:445). Once more we notice here the gradual development of a governmentalisation of the high seas through an expansion of territorial logics to define mutually exclusive zones/layers of sovereign responsibilities. According to the 'left to die boat case' explored by the Forensic Architecture project at Goldsmiths University in London,[12]

> The sea has, in other words, has become a vast frontier zone, in which a policy of closure, militarization, electromagnetic surveillance and conflicting jurisdictions combine to produce deaths and legal violations. Optical and SAR satellites are only two among a vast array of sensing technologies—thermal cameras, sea-, air- and land-borne radars, vessel-tracking technologies, etc.—that scan and analyze the surface of the sea, turning certain physical conditions into digital data according to specific sets of protocols and determining the conditions of visibility of certain events, objects, or people (…)the constant emission and capture of different electromagnetic waves operated by these technologies confers a new material meaning on Fernand Braudel's metaphor of the Mediterranean as an "electromagnetic field" in terms of its relation to the wider world.[13]

And they point out in the same research project that 'these technologies do not simply create a new representation of the sea, but rather constitute a new sea altogether, one that is simultaneously composed of matter and media' and which, I would add, reflects the ultimate interrelation between neoliberalism and securitization in the construction of sea-spaces.

Ultimately, as Papanikolopulu argues that on examination of the Convention, 'it immediately strikes the eye that there seems to be no place for persons; 'people seem to occupy a space so small that it can be compared to that of a rock or a small island'

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[12] The 'Left to Die Boat case' is a counter-surveillance of border security processes explored by the Forensic Architecture project at Goldsmiths. 'The Forensic Oceanography project was launched in summer 2011 to support a coalition of NGOs demanding accountability for the deaths of migrants in the central Mediterranean Sea while that region was being tightly monitored by the NATO-led coalition intervening in Libya. The efforts were focused on what is now known as the "left-to-die boat" case, in which sixty-three migrants lost their lives while drifting for fourteen days within the NATO maritime surveillance area'. Available at: http://www.forensic-architecture.org/case/left-die-boat/, 'Sensing technologies'.

[13] Ibid. 'Liquid-traces'.

(2012: 868). It seems to be in other words, more about spaces and objects rather than actual human beings. Indeed, as the same author explains further down, 'the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) has considered persons to be, to a certain extent, "accessory" to ships' (ibid: 869). This becomes particularly relevant for the topic of this thesis, when examining the agents of mobility on the Aegean; the undocumented migrants and the Turkish tourists, which both under completely different circumstances, as we shall see, cross the (Eastern) Aegean border by boat, and in this way are being perceived not only by the border control agents (Hellenic and European) but also by the 'local' people living on the Greek border islands, as the 'boat people'.

The gradual re-mapping of seas, however, is not just about developments and transformations at the political realm of international relations. It also foregrounds interstate relations, while, more importantly, it affects peoples' movements on the ground. From the above discussion, we realize that what already had started to take place within territorial states began to expand also to outside spaces, meaning that limitations were imposed on movement through seas, the symbol of mobility per se. This absurdity takes on new forms in our times. While certain groups of people are being identified by the boats they are travelling on (hence, known as the 'boat people'), their actual mobility becomes a 'problem' since the ship, similarly to the sea, is, above all, the symbol of mobility per excellence. In other words, as the boats are targeted along ('liquid') zones of national jurisdiction (with the ship obligated to carry a national flag), the movement of the migrants' boat which does not carry a national flag becomes 'illegal' and 'problematic', even on the high seas. As we have seen above, the high seas do not become a "legal vacuum" since the rights and obligations of each actor and states are framed by international law.

Despite, however, the organization and control of seas along national lines, certain groups of peoples (who are denied 'regular' routes and a 'regular' entry into 'Europe', for example,) are more and more opting to use the sea-routes which are still relatively less controlled than the land. Due to the 'liquidity' and vastness of the sea, as we discussed above, there is a general notion that the ocean can liberate and lead to freedom, more so than the land. Nevertheless, as we shall see, the mapping of the Aegean along these zones and the controversies that they provoke in Turkish-Greek relations, in addition to the EU border-mapping of the Mediterranean in general, determines the movements of the migrants on the Aegean, since, depending at which

area of the ‘liquid’ zones/points they are being intercepted affects profoundly the migrants’ journey to ‘Europe’.

1.2. The ‘Aegean Dispute’

> ‘Do you know what a naval battle is,’ asked Maurepas. ‘Two squadrons sail from opposite ports, they manoeuvre, they meet, they fire; a few masts are shot away, a few sails torn, a few men killed, a lot of power and shot wasted—and the sea remains no less salty than before (qtd. in Rodger 272).

The uniqueness of the Aegean border lies exactly in its ‘liquidity’, that is, from the very fact that its ‘liquid’ body does not occupy any specific space. It has no volume and no shape, its fluidity is like water and its volume is as thin as air. I remember, it was my first afternoon on the island of Lesvos and I was sitting with some locals at a sea-side tavern when, suddenly, I felt disturbed by the noise of a dozen of aircrafts/military-planes flying above us. I looked curiously at the other people on the table expecting an explanation but I was surprised to see them continuing their conversation peacefully as if nothing had happened. Only when I openly asked the woman next to me about the aircrafts above us, she turned and replied in a reassurance voice: ‘Oh, this is the border. It is all around us, even in the air we breathe’, was her answer, as she pointed her hands up to the sky. The woman’s words are particularly revealing about the (composition of the) Aegean border. Indeed, the ‘Aegean dispute’ between Turkey and Greece, as much as it is about the territorial waters it is also about the national airspace, where air as an external space, similarly to water, resists being restricted and defined along national lines. Recently, a similar process is taking place with an attempt to create a European border ‘out of air’ in order to deal with the ‘influx’ of migrants risking their lives by trying to reach Europe via the Mediterranean sea route. Indeed, only a few days ago, one of the methods that the chief of Frontex Leggeri proposed to deal with what he defines as ‘illegal’ migration on the Mediterranean ‘is to increase as an immediate step air surveillance in the

Mediterranean Sea south of Italy and Malta in addition to the vessels currently deployed, which is aimed at enhancing search and rescue capacities in the area'.[14]

The production of the Aegean Sea-space has certainly been affected to a large extent by how the Law of the Sea evolved. As I already mentioned, both the Geneva Convention on the Continental Shelf, 1958 and the UNCLOS 1982 were not able to take into account the particularities and distinct conditions of every sea. Although it has followed an intense and persistent examination of the issues on a case-by-case and universal level, it is characterized by a lack of clarity and an effective general application (Mazen 2009). Indeed, the variety of the world's seas is great, a variety that characterizes not only the geographical/ geomorphic composition but also the historical, social and cultural background of certain sea-spaces. Cassano who has written excessively on the uniqueness of the Mediterranean and who has even devoted a separate chapter to the geographical/geomorphic particularity of the Aegean Sea and how it relates to the particular cultural that Greece developed, attributes the 'specialness' of this sea to the fact that 'the Aegean Sea and the Mediterranean limit themselves to separating lands; they set a distance that is never the excess of the ocean; they are a strong discontinuity between lands, but not their relinquishment without bearings' (2012:18). Thus, the Aegean Sea requires close attention from the legal world.

By just looking at the map (figure 2), one can immediately understand that the Aegean is indeed a 'special' case. First, geomorphic it is a semi-enclosed sea located in between the Turkish and the Greek mainland, which makes it a special category in legal terms. Part IX of the Law of the Sea convention addressed the subject of the "Enclosed and Semi- Enclosed seas" (Mazen 2009). The inclusion of Article 122 and 123 in the Convention dealing with enclosed and semi-enclosed seas represents the recognition of seas which have a special geographical situation requiring cooperation between the states bordering them in many areas including the management of the marine environment activities.[15] Moreover, the Conference was able to agree on the

[14] http://frontex.europa.eu/news/frontex-ready-to-implement-european-council-conclusions-executive-director-fh9MEr

[15] United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea 1982: a commentary. (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff) , Center for Oceans Law and Policy, University of Virginia School of Law Volume III p 125, Published by Martinus Nijhoff p 343.

formulation of Articles 122 and 123 which defines the enclosed and semi-enclosed sea as "a gulf, basin or sea or the ocean by a narrow outlet or consisting entirely or primarily of the territorial seas and exclusive economic zones of two or more coastal States" (Article 123). However, it was not able to provide any concrete solutions to the conflicts that had emerged between these coastal states, such as, for example, the case of Greece and Turkey on the Aegean.

Additionally, what catches one's attention, when looking at the map, are the numerous islands and islets scattered on the Aegean, between the two states of Greece and Turkey with almost all of them belonging to Greece. In this way, Greece currently controls 43.69 percent of the Aegean and Turkey 7.46 percent.[16] At the same time there are many islands that are much closer to the Turkish coast than to the Greek mainland, with the closest being Kastellorizo, roughly 2 kilometers (1 mile) off the south coast of Turkey, while, from the southeast of Athens, it is about 570 km (354 miles). Other islands that are very close to the Turkish mainland are Lesvos, Chios, Samos, Rhodes and Kos, as well as smaller ones. Additionally, there are many islets and rocks on the Aegean which although uninhabited, in different historical moments, have provoked tensions between the two sides.

Second, what one is not able to see when observing the map of the Aegean are the historical, cultural and social particularities of this space, in other words, its historical depth, or what one could call 'volume' since we are referring to the body of the sea. Indeed, the 'Aegean dispute' cannot be thought separately from some key historical events that still affect the construction of the self-image of the two nations and which contribute to the reproduction of the Aegean's 'volume', that is the imaginary of lost homelands, as territory. Turkey lost most of its European territories in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, while Greece maintained cultural hegemony over the area as well as the shoreline of Anatolia since ancient times: Constantinople fell into the hands of the Ottomans five centuries earlier (1453) but the Greek populations remained until recently on the eastern bank of the Aegean Sea (Ortolland 2009). The most significant event was the Lausanne Peace Treaty in 1923, which both Greece and Turkey turn to, while demanding their conflicting rights on the Aegean. The exchange of populations should not be thought separately from the broader historical context and political development of the modern nation-state, as we

[16] Aegean Sea, Britannica Concise Encyclopedia, at:
http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/6988/Aegean-

discussed it in the previous section. We should keep in mind, in other words, the historical links between the solidification of the territorial nation-state as we have come to know it today as part of the historical-political process of colonization, the development of capitalism with the transatlantic trade system and the production/delineation of sea-spaces along territorial lines. The construction of the 'liquid' border on the Aegean and its function as a national border separating 'Greek' and 'Turkish' territory, had as its module the European nation state, at a time when, as we saw at the beginning of the 20th century, nation-states were claiming their national rights outwards and into the seas, creating in this way 'liquid' borders.

Indeed, the particularity of the Aegean case is due to the fact that at the beginning of the 20th century, at the same time when coastal nation states started to expand their sovereignty rights into seas that stretched beyond them, the Aegean became the borderline that separated Greece and Turkey as two distinct and supposedly homogenous nation-states. In other words, it was organized along the lines of the Greek-Turkish maritime border of what had once been a unified ottoman region. Presently, the Aegean Sea lies between the two opposite territorial states of Greece and Turkey. But this has not always been the case. Throughout its history, the Aegean had been characterized by exchanges, migrations and conflicts that were taking place outside existing legal frameworks. When discussing the present 'Aegean dispute' but also the most recent migratory movements that take place on the Aegean, it is important, therefore, to consider how the sea-space between Turkey and Greece animates, generates and organizes particular structures and practices of negation, feeling, (dis)continuity, remembering and communication, which I call the 'liquid' border.

The Treaty of Lausanne dated 24 July 1923 sealed the border on the Aegean and led to the flight of around 1.2 million Greeks from the regions of Asia Minor and Eastern Thrace, and of approximately 400,000 Muslims who left Western Thrace to settle in Turkey (Ladas 1932). The population exchange had far reaching consequences in all aspects of life (Hirschon 2009). Additionally, it was overseen by the League of United Nations (Green 2010). The explicit intention on this occasion was that the population exchange should help to prevent further violent conflicts from arising between the relatively new states of Greece and Turkey that had been formed out of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire (Green 2010). A key concept here is the delineation of an abstract spatial line separating Greece and Turkey on the Aegean, a

'liquid' borderline that cannot but affect profoundly the people living close by the waters on both sides of the Aegean. The Treaty, and the population exchange it required, followed a series of conflicts between Greek and Turkish armed forces, which had culminated in a battle in Izmir/Smyrna, a few miles south of Ayvalik (see in Green: Milton 2009). This battle is officially referred to in Greece as the Asia Minor Catastrophe, for it ended the long time presence of Greek Christians in Asia Minor; in Turkey, the battle is referred to as the War of Independence (Hirschon 2003a, pp. 13-14). Already from this moment, we realize how the border creates competing memories in the (Eastern) Aegean region. Thus, the 1923 Lausanne Treaty and the compulsory population exchange established a national security regime on the Aegean. Indeed, as Kasli notes, 'since the early twentieth century, the Greek-Turkish border played both a discursive and material role for the nation building process of both states, pining one against the other as a security threat to their national unity and as outsiders of their national bodies' (2014:79-80). And as we shall in the following chapter, it is this very Greek-Turkish border that provides the discursive and material ground for pining the two against other 'outsiders', which have become a security threat not only to their national unity but also to what has now become a 'European unity'.

Ultimately, it should be understood that although the territorial division resulting from the Treaty of Lausanne and the Treaty of Paris of 10 February 1947 seemed relatively stable with Greece logically having almost all of the islands of the Aegean Sea, populated by 'Greeks' since ancient times (Ortolland 2009), it wasn't experienced as something so smooth and solid on the ground, that is, by the actual people who were forced to abandon their homelands and cross to the other side under the threat of ongoing violence, atrocities and massacres. Nor was it a smooth adaptation to their new lives and a happy and peaceful integration into the host/receiving society. If at the macro-level of international relations it was considered a 'success' by the League of Nations, we must not ignore the thousands of testimonies of sorrow, nostalgia, and pain narrated by the refugees and their descendants that one continues to hear on both sides of the Aegean.

The Treaty of Lausanne as a legal document is an important part of the Aegean story, which does not lack certain ambivalence, while, it continues to shape its spatial dynamics in our times. When in the 1970s conflicts between Turkey and Greece started to develop over the Aegean space, for example, both nations turned to the

Treaty of Lausanne for evidence in order to support their claims, with its articles being open to different interpretations. In other words, similar to the law of the sea, the Lausanne Treaty is also open to various and in some cases conflicting interpretations, particularly in relation to the sovereignty of some of the islands on the Eastern Aegean. It can be argued, therefore, that the evolution of the law of the sea hampered the status quo (Ortolland 2009), in other words, unsettled further the already 'liquid' border on the Aegean and the intense socio-political dynamics taking place after 1923 (in this region). From the above discussion we realize that the Aegean's geographic/geomorphic and historical/political elements are strongly affiliated with the legal ones; the sovereignty issues, the lands lost and reclaimed and the Turkish domination, the dispute over the Aegean, however, can never be just legal (Lentza 2011). And this also affects, as we will see in the next chapter, the situation and experiences of the migrants crossing the Aegean. We will understand how the invisibility of the migrant as a subject is a by-product of the geographical territory itself; in other words, the geographical composition of the Aegean sea-space, the ways in which it has been constructed and mapped by the Lausanne Treaty, the Convention of the Law of the Sea, the 'security regime' of Turkish-Greek relations and more recently with Europe's Frontex, produces among other things the invisibility of the refugee as a (legal) subject.

The different actors involved in the 'Aegean dispute' are above all trying to create borders out of one of the most natural elements without which there would be no life, that is water. However, aware of the liquidness of the Aegean, at the same time, they try to take advantage of its particular composition and complexity, by emphasizing the need of a common sea, even though this 'comoness', as we shall see in the following chapters, is based on an economic openness which automatically excludes all subjects that are not entitled not only to profit from the Aegean but even to move across its waters. According to Turkey, for example, in its ministry of foreign affairs webpage, the bilateral Turku-Greek relationship in the Aegean has to be based on the following principles:

> The Aegean is a common sea between Turkey and Greece. The freedoms of the high seas and the air space above it, which at present both coastal States as well as third countries enjoy, should not be impaired. Any

> acquisition of new maritime areas should be based on mutual consent and should be fair and equitable.[17]

It is absurd that states should even point out the 'commons' and 'freedoms' of elements such as water and air, as they expand their nationalism to these outer spaces. Indeed, even more so today, we know that the freedom of such spaces is not the case; the words 'common', 'freedom', 'fair' and 'equitable' that are being emphasized in relation to sea and air-spaces by the Turkish foreign ministry, are words that in themselves are problematic, due to the very fact that this 'commonness' and 'freedom' is not being enjoyed by all groups of people equally, even in such 'thin' spaces; borders which ultimately coincide with managing movements and governing the routes and the speed of mobility for certain groups of people, such as the Turkish tourists while making more and more difficult for others, such as people fleeing from war torn countries, as we shall see further down. At the same time, we have what Freedman (2015) describes as 'a situation in which neoliberal politicians are protecting freedom of movement for capital through initiatives like the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership while barring people who are fleeing poverty and persecution and then refusing to help them when they vanish into the sea'.[18] In other words, the idea of open sea-spaces contrasts with what is experienced on the ground and with the lived experiences of certain groups of people, even if the sea still provides them with a better chance of entering 'Europe' than the land does, since the vastness of the sea is difficult to be patrolled and monitored in its entirety.

It is not in the scope of this thesis to go into a detailed discussion about each issue of the 'Aegean dispute'. While, I have already touched upon the delimitation of the territorial waters, in the following chapter, I will talk about how the delineation of the islands on the Aegean and how the disputes over their demilitarization contribute to the 'liquidness' of the border. This will help us, moreover, to understand, in continuation, the ways in which the status of these islands (re)produce and affect the different patterns and agents of mobility on the Aegean, particularly those of the Turkish tourists and the undocumented migrants. Indeed, as we will see, the Eastern Aegean islands, along with the smaller islets and even rocks constitute an important

[17] http://www.mfa.gov.tr/background-note-on-aegean-disputes.en.mfa

[18] https://www.opendemocracy.net/des-freedman/can-we-afford-to-ignore-what-katie-hopkins-says-about-migrants-drowning-in-med

part in the migrants' journey to 'Europe' (are crucial in their journey to 'Europe') but also, albeit upon different degrees, in the Turkish tourists' journey.

1.3. The 'liquid' spatialities on the Aegean: The delineation of the islands

Returning to my conversation with the Greek coastguard on the ferry boat 'Ariadny' that I mentioned in the introduction, I remember, our discussion turning to two main topics that appeared to be at the center of the coastguard's work on Lesvos; the new migratory movement and Greek-Turkish relations. One comment, especially, caught my attention. According to the coastguard, who was stationed for one year on the island of Kos before being transferred to Lesvos, different types of migrants (meaning from different social and economic backgrounds) arrive at each island. However, while, in Kos the 'Turk' is usually perceived as a 'threat', in Lesvos he is presented as a 'brother'. The coastguard with his story (obviously unintentionally considering his occupation) challenges the idea/image of a homogenous national border, undifferentiated Turkish-Greek relations and homogenous groups of peoples arriving on the islands. Similarly Sofiane Ait Chalalet and Chris Jones, the two journalists-activists who are living in Samos island, in their blog *Samos Chronicles*, argue that 'there are many local variations (between the islands). On Chios for example, we learnt yesterday that you will see refugees out in the main town, some staying in hotels, and many gathering in the coffee bars. This is not the case in Samos, where the refugees are still locked away in the camp and not allowed on the streets and in the cafes'.[19] If at the macro-level of international relations, both the Turkish and Greek states are trying to construct a homogenous national border on each side of the Aegean that will expand as 'deep' and far out as possible on its waters, these same waters transfer a heterogeneity of peoples, objects, stories and memories from one side to the other. In this sense, the islands before anything else are the products of conflicting and distinct narratives which the islanders reproduce but also contest in their everyday lives. Hence, when thinking of the 'Aegean dispute' in relation to the islands we need to conceptualize them primarily as offshore 'liquid' spaces outside any clear cut national and legal definitions, literally and metaphorically.

[19] https://samoschronicles.wordpress.com/

The main issue of the 'Aegean dispute' is the fact that a number of Greek islands (inhabited and uninhabited) lie particularly close to the Turkish coastline and, consequently, affect the delimitation process (Green 2010). If even uninhabited islets and rocks lead to open confrontations between the two states, we realize how important the strategic, economic and geographic position of the Aegean is for both Turkey and Greece. In this way, the islands on the Eastern Aegean become border zones and 'security regimes' against the 'threat' of the other side. At the same time, exactly because there can be no *domus* on the sea, no monumentalism, no stone memorials to the glory of human achievement and the nation (my emphasis) (Connery, 2010: 688) the islands are being 'utilized' for this; like all border regions, with the presence of the military, numerous national flags, and other acts demonstrating national sovereignty, are spaces which reconfirm the existence and presence of the nation. Indeed, I have never seen so many national flags in one place, hanging from windows of houses, in front of local shops and eating places and posted in squares, than I encountered in Ayvalik and Lesvos.

De Genova explains that:

> Borders, in this sense, may be considered to be a kind of means of production—for the production of space, or indeed, the production of difference in space, the production of spatial difference. As enactments in and upon space, like any means of production, borders must themselves be produced and continuously re-produced. Yet, they are generative of larger spaces, differentiated through the relations that borders organize and regiment, facilitate or obstruct. Nonetheless, the differences that borders appear to naturalize— between 'us' and 'them', between 'here' and 'there'—are in fact generated precisely by the incapacity of borders to sustain and enforce any rigid and reliable separations (Plenary Debate: 'The free movement of people around the world would be utopian', International Union of Anthropological and Ethnographical Sciences, 17th World Congress, Manchester; 9th August 2013 at: http://nicholasdegenova.net/13.html)

Indeed, while with the Treaty of Lausanne Greece and Turkey supposedly achieved their goal of exterminating from their lands any Muslim or Christian element, this was not so simple to achieve on the actual Aegean Sea (waters). Indeed, the 'liquidity' of the Aegean, does not give in to national aspirations so easily. As Cassano points out 'the fundamentalism of land is rooted in totalitarian forms of belonging, such as ethnicity, culture, language and especially place'. But the fear of mobility and of encountering the other that the fundamentalism of the land implies is

not resolved by replacing it with the fundamentalism of the sea' (From translator's introduction, 2012: xiv). The Aegean, in this way, functions as a reflection of what Greece and Turkey but also the European (Western) powers were trying to do within the territorial space; create a homogenous territorial-national state by eliminating any element that was considered to be 'foreign' and hence a 'threat'. With this module as the ideal form of social organization in their agenda, 'Europe' along with Greece and Turkey continue to fight against certain 'strangers' crossing the Aegean.

This incapacity of borders to sustain and enforce any rigid and reliable separations (see De Genova above) is evident on the Aegean and in a particular way on the islands. Indeed, the geographical/geomorphic, historical and cultural complexity of the Aegean occludes any solid and straightforward (re)production of the border, as we have seen in the previous chapter. The islands in and by themselves complicate this already 'intense' space, since islands, islets and rocks as such are being approached and defined as 'strange' and ambiguous spaces both in geopolitical terms (the realm of international relations) and in the cultural imaginary that has evolved within the field of literature and art, where frequently they are being described as utopias per excellence.[20] In other words, islands, as spatial entities, tend to be more resistant to national restrictions and limitations compared to other spaces. That is, the nature of their territory will always be met with a resistance that reflects underlying dynamics that are both social and geophysical, and which is decisive for an alternative future of the Aegean, that moves beyond national and also racial, as we shall see further down, claims/discourses.

In the case of the Eastern Aegean islands this ambiguity becomes apparent with the Aegean disputes between Greece and Turkey concerning the continental shelf. According to the background note from the Turkish Ministry of Public Affairs' official webpage the continental shelf dispute has a bearing on the overall equilibrium of

[20] 'Ancient and medieval Europeans', says Gillis, 'saw islands as holy sites and conjured a geography of mythic isles just beyond the known world. Early moderns located paradise and utopia on islands that explorers were beginning to glimpse. Enlightenment thinkers and later anthropologists imagined islands as ideal laboratories where natural man could be studied in isolation from the corruptions of civilization. And in a contemporary world, we still think of islands as remote havens of rusticity and authenticity, with the iconic island summer cottage being a refuge from urban modernity and a place to recapture lost childhood' in *Islands of the Mind: How the Human Imagination created the Atlantic World*, Editorial Review.

rights and interests in the Aegean.[21] We see that the conflict over the continental shelf is about whether the Eastern Aegean islands should be taken into consideration in the delimitation procedure of the continental shelf and given full effect or not. What is at the center of the problem (is being questioning), therefore, is the island as an exceptional space per se. Indeed, what exactly constitutes an island, what is the difference between a rock and a small island, or an inhibited island and a rock, are questions that the UNCLOS III (1982) tried to solve with a much more detailed provision, in which it stated that:

> 1. An island is a naturally formed area of land, surrounded by water, which is above water at high tide.
> 2. Except as provided for in paragraph 3, the territorial sea, the contiguous zone, the exclusive economic zone and the continental shelf of an island are determined in accordance with the provisions of this Convention applicable to other land territory. 3. Rocks which cannot sustain human habitation or economic life of their own shall have no exclusive economic zone or continental shelf.[22]

According to the Greek claims, these islands close to the Turkish coastline are inhabited and can sustain economic and social life, and therefore cannot be characterized as "rocks" in the way that the UNCLOS describes them (Lantza, 2011). Greece, in other words, claims that all islands must be taken into account on an equal basis which would result in Greece gaining the economic rights to almost the whole of the Aegean. With a focus on the official arguments of Turkey and Greece it is obvious that both states fear the Aegean becoming predominantly 'Greek' or 'Turkish'. The spatial metaphor that the Turkish officials use in this respect is revealing: 'Turkey regards the Greek policy as an attempt to establish "fait accomplis" with a view to close-off the Aegean Sea as a Greek lake'.[23] It is interesting to notice here how the images of 'liquid' spaces are being used to express the fears over loss of control and (national) sovereignty, that is, how 'liquid metaphors express 'liquid' fears; the Aegean Sea should not become an exclusive Greek lake accessible only to Greece but should remain a sea which Turkey can also have access to and economically benefit from.

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[21] http://www.mfa.gov.tr/background-note-on-aegean-disputes.en.mfa
[22] United Nations Convention on the Law Of the Sea, 10 December 1982, 1833 UNTS 397, *reprinted in* 21 ILM 1261, (entered into force 16 November 1994) [hereinafter, UNCLOS] at p. 49.
[23] http://www.mfa.gov.tr/background-note-on-aegean-disputes.en.mfa

In other words, since 1923 with the Treaty of Lausanne and up until our days, the Aegean region is transformed into a space of struggles and claims over its securitization by different and often competing actors in the region: Greece, Turkey and 'Europe', which, as we shall see further down, often turns into a collaboration of the three against the undocumented migrants. Moreover, many of the uninhibited 'disputed' islands, which, nevertheless, officially belong to Greece have a rather strong Greek military presence (bases, camps and forces), something strange considering the small size of the islands. At the same time, Greek coastguards and the European Frontex are frequent visitors to these islands.

By focusing specifically on the Aegean border islands we see how the fisrt (previous) and present traces of a gradual militarization overlap on the Aegean. The effect of militarization on the Aegean can be seen in the case of the island of Pharmakonisi where in 2013 the tragedy of the drowning of eleven Syrian migrants, among them children, took place. Based on the testimonies of the few survivors and the reports of different NGOs working for migrants' rights at sea, the death of these migrants was not an accident but carried out meticulously by Greek coastguards that had arrived (to arrest the migrants) on the waters of Pharmakonisi.[24] The presences of the military forces on the Eastern Aegean islands in general and on Pharmakonisi in particular, affect to a great extend the journey of the migrants on the Aegean, as we shall see in the following chapters. Indeed, from recent reports published by Amnesty International and Pro-Asylum we learn about 'push-backs', tortures and other violations of the migrants' rights, taking place on what are considered to be 'deserted' islands, but what for certain groups of people, are spatial entities and producers of pain and death. In other words, even though, Turkey has not made any attempt at challenging the Greek possession of these islands on the ground, due to a number of minor military incidents, Greek military forces are considered to be a necessity, that is, make it appear as if this has been the case; and while, the Greek military in the last and recent years has never had to openly confront the 'Turks', I content that, it takes its 'revenge' by abusing physically and psychologically 'other groups of people' that happen to be passing by.

[24] On January 20, 2013, a boat carrying twenty-eight Afghan and Syrian migrants capsized near the Greek island of Farmakonisi in the Dodecanese area of the Aegean Sea, while being towed by a Greek coastguard vessel. Nine children and three women from Afghanistan and Syria lost their lives in the Pharmakonisi tragedy.

Ultimately, there are many inhabited and uninhabited islands and rocks on the Eastern Aegean, which, although the international community officially acknowledges them as Greek, Turkey refers to them as 'grey zones' of undetermined sovereignty (such is the case also of Pharmakonisi). According to the Turkish argument, these islets, while not explicitly retained under Turkish sovereignty with the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, were also not explicitly ceded to any other country, and their sovereignty has therefore remained objectively undecided.[25] Maps from that period also contributed to the controversies, with some of them assigning these islets to Greece and others to Turkey, additional evidence that it is impossible to find an objective truth on the Aegean and the exact point where the border stands or rather should stand. One of the most outstanding examples of such a controversy is the case of the Imia/Kardak islets which in 1996 became internationally famous due to the great 'national fuss' they caused between Turkey and Greece, a 'fuss' that was rather inconsistent and exaggerated (and, thus, by/in itself a paradox) considering the actual size of these islets. A reference was made to the Kardak/Imia Rocks in the 28 December1932 Turkish-Italian Documents; however, legal procedures with regard to the latter were not completed, neither was it registered with the League of Nations,[26] opening in this way the ground for the subsequent disputes to develop. What this case reveals, however, when in 1996 a Turkish merchant ship stranded on their shores, provoked a national outburst, is what a 'liquid' border on the Aegean is all about (the essence of the 'liquid' border); traumas and fears hiding beneath the surface of the waters ready to burst out like waves at any opportunity. In the case of the Imia/Kardak Rocks, these waves of nationalism found their expression in the simultaneously raising of the Greek and Turkish flag, when prior to the 1996 crisis on these rocks there hadn't been any national flag, any trace of nationalism, and, hence, 'national fuss'. But as John Gillis concludes his survey of the meaning of the island in western civilization, 'the less they are occupied the more they preoccupy us'.[27]

Indeed, while international law/community fusses over the national sovereignty/jurisdiction of the island-spaces, the people I met were not so sure about the identity of the islands and provided me with different and often conflicting

[25] http://www.mfa.gov.tr/background-note-on-aegean-disputes.en.mfa
[26] Ibid.
[27] Gillis John R., *Islands of the mind*: *How the human imagination created the Atlantic World,* Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

narratives on these particular islands' identity and belonging. During my stay in Lesvos, I came across with many people who were not sure whether some of the smaller islets on the Eastern Aegean were Greek or Turkish. In addition, similar to Lesvos, there were many locals on Ayvalik that expressed a certain confusion when I asked them about the islands between Lesvos and Ayvalik; I heard opposing narratives, some referring to them as Greek, others as Turkish, and many others addressing them as the border, the 'over there' islands, which do not belong neither to Turkey nor to Greece. Or sometimes, I heard the exact opposite; there are the islands that are both Greek and Turkish. What strike my attention the most, though, were the comments that I heard from some of my fellow students at my university. One graduate student was confused, when I mentioned to him that I was going for the semester break to Mytilini and after a moment telling him that I would be in Greece; he looked at me surprisingly and asked: 'Didn't you say that you were going to Mytilini'? He thought that Mytilini was in Turkey (Can, graduate student, Istanbul, October 2014). Another graduate student from Turkey, who had visited Lesvos in the summer, emphasized to me that it was not politically intelligent to give these islands to Greece, because if there was ever to be a war between the two countries, these islands would be at great risk due to their geographical proximity to Turkey. 'These islands should have been Turkish for the safety of everyone' were her exact words (Ayfer, graduate student, Istanbul, September 2014).

In this way, the question 'whom do the Eastern Aegean islands belong to' that haunts the people who live on and across the islands is part of the larger 'ghost' of the Aegean that reappears in the question, 'whom does the Aegean belong to'. Indeed, during times of political crisis between Greece and Turkey the islanders-residents on the Eastern Aegean islands fear that the border on the Aegean may 'wake up at any time and reveal its teeth'. Such was the case with the Cyprus crisis in the 70s when there were rumors that the Turkish state would invade the island of Chios, if the Greek state would support the Greek Cypriots and send troops into Cyprus. 'The 'liquid' border between Greece and Turkey, subtended by the threat of violence, animates, generates and organizes particular types of perceptions and practices around it' (Myrivili 2006, p. 2).

Conceptualizing the Aegean through the lenses of Turkish-Greek relations helps us to understand how the Aegean space is being produced as a space of loss, (military) abuses of airspaces and sea-spaces, and, thus, competing victimhoods. The 'liquid'

border on the Aegean is traversed by national waters producing 'choppy waves' of power and difference. In this sense, the Aegean space is a border per excellence where history itself has been dichotomized, as it creates discontinuities in space and in time, discontinuities that create dislocations (Myrivili 2006). Indeed, as we shall see in the following chapter, there are different layers and degrees of (dis)continuities and (dis)locations taking place on the Aegean, within the more recent phenomena of Europeanization.

1.4. European mapping(s) of the Aegean

> We were all about to have our lunch, when an announcement from the loudspeaker was heard. Surprised we listened to the voice of the general who was telling us that just a few minutes ago a Turkish vehicle was spotted exiting the 'Jale' ferry; therefore all of us should postpone our lunch and be on guard. I knew that the general was not really concerned but most probably trying us out. However, as we were so bored this piece of news brought an alert and excitement to our camp and many young soldiers could not but succumb to a nationalistic feeling of adrenaline. This is why it was so strange for me when I again visited the island on holiday last year to see so many Turkish vehicles, Turkish tourists and hear the Turkish language everywhere on the island. Even all the menus in the tavernas had been translated into Turkish! And all this must have happened really fast! It was as if the locals had been waiting for such a time to come, for such an opportunity! A friend of mine, who is currently serving his military duty there (on Lesvos), told me that now their job is not about the Turks, it is the migrants who are the target and causing the fuss. This is why they have started to turn the military bases on the island into detention centers for the migrants because in the last few years they keep arriving and there is no place to host them. And Lesvos has so many military bases that are not being used for anything, that are of no use now that the Turk has become our friend (laughter), so why not use them for the migrants who do not have anywhere to stay but the harbor, why not turn these spaces into something meaningful and practical? (Panos, doctoral student, Sabanci University, Istanbul, December 2014).

The above quote is from the personal account of Panos, a Greek citizen who had served his military duty on Lesvos in 2008. During the interview I conducted with Panos back in Turkey, where he is currently completing his doctoral studies, he told me that in the year of 2008 whenever a Turkish vehicle would drive out from the 'Jale' ferry onto the port of Mytilini, it would cause a great turmoil at the Greek military

base which was placed outside the capital of Lesvos. Indeed, it was a time when the 'Turk' was still the 'enemy' and when Turks hardly ever visited or appeared on the island (and, thus, the 'Turkish presence' on the Aegean was a matter of concern).What Panos is narrating above is a border transformation, or rather, the sudden juxtaposition (simultaneously existence) of more than one border on the Aegean. In this chapter, then, I will discuss the production of the 'European border regime' on the Aegean against the perceived 'threat' of the undocumented migrants. Until now I have talked about the production of the Aegean border and its 'liquidness', that is, ambiguity, as the result of the 'Aegean dispute' between Greece and Turkey. Now, I will attempt to capture the meaning of the Aegean space as a 'periphery' of 'Europe' and its gradual transformation from a national border towards a European one. How is the Aegean maritime border space being constructed by 'Europe'? How does this 'new' border relate to the Aegean being a historical disputed border (region), as we discussed it in the previous chapters? These are the questions that I will try to answer now, in order to discover how the different European agencies operating on the Aegean perceive the Aegean border-space within shifting configurations of sovereignty, territoriality and governmentality.

In the previous section, we saw the ways in which the exchange of populations between Greece and Turkey with the Treaty of Lausanne marked a particular border on the Aegean; a national one that resulted from the forced migration of certain groups of people, according to their religion, and the consequent restrictions of these people to move freely from one side to the other, contrary to what they were able to do in the past, when the Aegean was part of a common ottoman region. The 'European border regime' building upon the idea of national belonging and exclusion, as the ideal form of social organization, imposes its own version of nationalism; a European belonging based on the concept of European citizenship. The Eastern Aegean, in this way, becomes the border separating what has been defined as 'Europe' and what is known as Europe's 'other', the 'East', (in our case) starting from Turkey on the Aegean. 'Indeed, in spite of its campaign for admission to this European constellation, Turkey has remained, at least for now, resolutely 'beyond the pale,' and demarcates a decisive ('oriental') frontier' (De Genova, forthcoming). All non- 'European' elements, therefore, crossing from one side to the other become a 'threat' from the very fact that they attempt to transcend, this time not Turkish or Greek waters but 'European' ones. Hence, the question 'where does Turkey end and Greece begin on the 'liquid' border'

is transformed into the question 'where does 'Europe' begin and end on the Aegean', with EU agencies and their operations (patrolling, monitoring and surveillance) struggling to construct 'answers'(in the form of separations and borders) on 'liquid' grounds.

According to Sarah Green, 'the differences that borders make as their location and meaning undergo revision usually also help towards making new, and remaking old, similarities and differences, because today's performance of border exists in the company of past performances of border that linger, not only in people's memories, activities and understandings, but also in theories, places and things' (2010: 265). Indeed, in the case of the Aegean, we encounter such a remaking of old similarities and differences, as it once more becomes a 'security regime' within the Europeanization process. It was important, therefore, to touch upon the historical context and development of the construction of the Aegean space from 1923 with the Treaty of Lausanne, in order to understand in further depth the meaning of this securitization along with its continuities and discontinuities as it transforms into a 'European' border. Exploring the Aegean's border markers/zones as it was mapped out as a sea-space by the law of sea and its UNCLOS I, II and III, and then its more specific construction as the Aegean sea with the Treaty of Lausanne (1923) and the 'Aegean dispute' between Greece and Turkey, we realize how EU's migration apparatus entered a space already occupied (by nation-states). In other words, the 'material and practical conditions of possibility' (Tazzioli 2014) and I will add discursive and ideological ones, were already there, making its further militarization by European agents a matter of development under the pretext of increased securitization rather than entering an 'empty space'. In this way, 'Europe' along with its arbitrary regulations on migration policies at sea, succeeds, on the one hand, in escaping from any responsibility when it comes to the violations of migrants rights on the Aegean, referring to them as 'national' obligations of the member state. On the other hand, the situation on the Aegean provides some additional complications with the disputes between Turkey and Greece and the arbitrariness around the location of the borderline, making it more difficult for 'Europe' with the collaboration of the Hellenic coastguards to monitor and patrol all the Aegean waters.

Over the past years the new migratory movement across the Mediterranean has transformed states' perception of 'security' and 'threat' on the maritime Greek-

Turkish border,[28] indeed precipitated a new "security regime" through construction of new detention centers and increasing involvement of the intelligence driven EU-agency Frontex since 2006 (Kasli 2014, Migreurop 2009; ProAsyl 2012; Tsianos &Karakayali 2010). As we saw in the previous section, the protection of the southeastern external borders is entrusted to the Greek authorities (Hellenic Coastguard) and the European Border Management Agency (Frontex). The Ministry of Shipping and of the Aegean developed and implemented a complete strategy on the enhancement and effective protection of Greece's sea borders. This includes the interception of migration flows utilizing surveillance measures for the early detection and interception of boats carrying undocumented migrants. It also entails inter-sector cooperation led by the 'National Coordination Center' in the frame of the Eurosur Surveillance System.[29] Today, in other words, we see the emergence of new forms of mobility control that operate in the liminal spaces between the public, the state and supranational organizations (Tsianos and Karakayali, 2010). Between 2011 and 2013, moreover, the European Commission has given Greece €227.6 million to bolster border controls and expand detention facilities, while allocating a mere €12.2 million to support the country in integrating refugees (AI, 2014c: 7; AI, 2013a). Along these lines, as Panos also emphasized above, out of use military bases/sites on Lesvos, Samos and Chios, with Lesvos having more than 15 military bases, are gradually being transformed into detention camps/centers for undocumented migrants, under EU funding schemes. The Greek state refers to them as 'centers of first reception, 'hospitality centers,' and 'pre-departure detention centers for strangers, like the one that is currently being build on a military base outside the village of Moria in Lesvos. 'The austere directives of the European Union fund the Greek state's immigration enforcement, detention and deportation practices— even as the European Court of Human Rights denounces them' (Carastathis, 2015:78).

It is important, therefore, to acknowledge the traces that remain from (the) previous border-makings, such as the ones Panos, whose narrative I quoted above, experienced as a 'soldier' during his stay on Lesvos. Additionally, with Frontex's

[28] Undocumented migrants choosing the Eastern Mediterranean route and arriving on the Aegean islands are coming mainly from Syria, Afghanistan and African Horn countries, such as Eritrea and Somalia. I will discuss their journey and patterns of mobility in details in Chapter III.

[29] http://www.proasyl.de/fileadmin/fm-dam/l_EU_Fluechtlingspolitik/proasyl_pushed_back_24.01.14_a4.pdf, p.5-6

Europe on the Aegean, it is not the first time that European powers take part and interfere in the (re)-mapping of the Aegean. The Treaty of Lausanne in 1923 that sealed the border between Greece and Turkey was overseen by the League of Nations, while prior to this, the catastrophe that took place in 1922 with the burning of Smyrna and the flight of thousands Asian Minors escaping from their obvious deaths by the Turkish army, in overcrowded boats heading for the closest Greek islands, was closely observed by offshore large British ships with loud music playing, in order the screaming of the fleeing crowds not to be heard (Clark, 2006). In the same way, Frontex agents turn a blind eye to the abuse of migrants' rights at sea perpetrated by the Hellenic coastguards (Amnesty International 2014, Migrants at Sea 2015, ProAsyl 2013). And while the League of Nations was not interested in the lived experiences and desires of the actual people of the exchange (Hirschon, 2008); likewise, Frontex's Europe's concern and priority is also not the migrants, the defense of their rights and their well being/integration into the host societies. Indeed, amid the current tragedies and deaths in the Mediterranean and the Aegean, Fabrice Leggeri, the head of Frontex, during the emergency meeting that the EU officials organized in Brussels on the 23th of April 2015, to discuss the possible 'solutions' to the tragedies in the Mediterranean, emphasized that:

> Triton cannot be a search-and-rescue operation. I mean, in our operational plan, we cannot have provisions for proactive search-and-rescue action. This is not in Frontex's mandate, and this is in my understanding not in the mandate of the European Union.[30]

1.4.1. Frontex mappings: A struggle against the 'waves'

Towards the making of this 'new regime' on the Aegean, Frontex's role is crucial. Operating on the sea, Frontex conceptualizes the semi-enclosed space of the Aegean by determining the conditions of the visibility of certain peoples on its waters (crossing on and through its waters). Frontex has been providing operational assistance to Greece at its external land and maritime borders through various operations since

[30] Available at: http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/apr/22/eu-borders-chief-says-saving-migrants-lives-cannot-be-priority-for-patrols

2006 and is described in its own website as 'a specialised and independent body' of the European Union, whose main task is to help with EU border security.[31] Besides the operations along the sea- and land-borders, Frontex is a significant part of the training and technical armament of border police forces, the externalisation of borders through cooperation with third countries, the creation of and the participation in the border surveillance system EUROSUR, the border control operation Mos Maiorum, as well as executed charter-deportations (Kritnet 2015, ProAsyl 2014, Migrants at Sea). The Agency started its operations on the Aegean Turkish-Greek border in 2008. Already, since its first operations at sea there are numerous testimonies, reports and accounts by migrants, activist groups, human rights and NGOs groups that emphasize how the agency is responsible for a violent politics of deterrence. For example, we read in 'Kritnet', an online platform which includes migrants' stories and their experiences during their journeys, that 'in order to polish its tarnished reputation, Frontex purported in the past years to observe refugee conventions, human rights and the law of the sea, that this now, once again, proves to be a merely cosmetic measure, a dishonest image campaign for an agency that, since 2005, acts as the driving force of the EU border regime.'[32]

According to the European's Commission website, 'based on the principle of solidarity, the EU needs to be able to provide support to Member States to compensate for these differences'[33], differences that the Commission defines as being 'different situations faced by the Member States' due to the geographical location, and the patterns of travel flows and migratory routes'. We notice, here, the three main criteria with which Frontex's EU understands and judges the Aegean: geographical location, patterns of travel flows and migratory routes. These three domains/parameters that are asked to be identified and analyzed by Frontex data, shows us how the Aegean is being constructed within the Europeanization process, that is, along the lines of who and what (meaning from where, how and for what reason) is allowed to go where in its waters (cross its waters).

As part of its activities, Frontex organized a joint operation on the Aegean, with the agreement of the Greek authorities, and using security force resources provided by

[31] http://frontex.europa.eu/

[32] http://kritnet.org/2015/push-back-frontex-against-a-new-dimension-of-left-to-die-policy-at-sea/?from=box-c1

[33] http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-11-130_en.htm

several EU states, including Italy. The operation called Poseidon Sea (in the Greek mythology, the sea god, Poseidon) which resembles the 'Triton' (in the Greek mythology, the son of Poseidon), the Frontex-coordinated operation for security in the Mediterranean, which is supposed to be substituting the Mare Nostrum, 'our sea' (that ended in November 2014), echoes the 'sovereign's rule and power at the sea. As Hoare (2015) points out, also for the Mare Nostrum, 'the name is a telling one, since it was ancient Rome that declared the Mediterranean *Mare Nostrum*, "our sea" – an evocation of imperial power, rather than responsibility' and I will add freedom for everyone to move on and through its waters. Indeed, 'that phrase was replaced by *Mare Liberum*, a free sea, a phrase that speaks to the notion that the ocean can liberate'. And this is why, according to Hoare, 'contemporary migrants place their trust in it'.[34] In other words, even in the case of the previous Mare Nostrum we encounter the militaristic function of every humanitarian intervention on the Mediterranean in relation to migration; while 'securitization' provides the perfect excuse for such military interventions.[35]

According to the European Commision's website:

> Poseidon Sea 2010 was a permanent operation in which 26 Member States participated. It was carried out at the maritime borders at the Aegean Sea. The strengthened maritime controls had a strong deterrent effect (23,700 detections in 2009 - 6,600 detections in 2010 at the sea borders) but also resulted in a shift of the migratory routes to the land borders.[36]

The idea of the Aegean, in this way, is ultimately linked to its identification (and monitoring) as a route through which 'risky' subjects transit and enter into 'Europe', as land border crossings become more difficult to achieve. This was the case in 2012 with the construction of a 10.5 meters wall at the Turkish-Greek border in the Evros region, which forced migrants to turn to the more hazardous sea-routes.[37] The erection of walls in Europe and elsewhere, in other words, does not seem capable of repressing migration movements. On the contrary, it appears that the latter 'does not work

[34] http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/apr/21/the-sea-does-not-care-wretched-history-migrant-voyages-mediterranean-tragedy

[35] For a thorough analysis of how militarization and humanitarianism coincide on the Mediterranean in relation to migration see Tazzioli's papers in academia.edu.

[36] http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-11-130_en.htm

[37] It is important to mention that the wall in Evros was funded financially entirely by the Greek state.

primarily through constraint, 'a power to say no' (Foucault 1978: 85) but by setting the framework for action, that is, the scope and content of the room for manoeuvre' (Shaw 2003 in Gammeltoft-Hansen, T., & Aalberts, T. 2010:.458). While 'structuring the possible field of action' for the migrants, that is, the particular routes that they are able to take, the European border regime that has until now been enthusiastically enacted by the Greek state,[38] transforms the socio-economic geography of border zones.

That is to say, the Aegean Sea becomes (once more) a highly contested space due to the 'flows' of migrants attempting to cross it. The term 'flows', according to Tsianos and Karakayali 'denotes the affinity between the fast, flexible multidirectionality of the mobile subjectivities of migration and the knowledge and network based technologies of their surveillance' (2010:374). In a general manner, the exchange of information within the various EU reports published by the Commission is articulated around the notion of a migratory "threat", confirming the perception that prevails during the process of these analyses. Moreover, the information in Frontex published reports confirms that these risk analyses do not take into account the "protection" dimension and the conditions and reasons for the departures (Migreurop 2014). This is also achieved through the representations of Fronext's maps which like all modern route maps are in de Certeau's words, "procedures of forgetting" rather

[38] I am adding 'up until now' due to the fact that while I am writing my thesis there is a political transformation with the change of government taking place in Greece. The coalition government, which was elected in 25th Janaury 2015, componing of the left wing party Syriza and the nationalist right party Independent Greeks the country with Syriza and proposing and introducing declarations of developing a new migration regime/policies starting from the periphery/border at Lesvos. For example, it has announced that there shall only be open reception centers for undocumented migrants, everyone who has been detained for over 18 months should be immediately released and foreigners born in Greece are entitled to a Greek citizenship status. According to Chalalet and Jones writing from Samos where they live and keep a blog:

'The recently elected Syriza government has made some difference. We have found that the police in the camp as well as the coastguards have been more co-operative when we have visited them. They have been prepared to let us meet and talk with some of the unaccompanied minors in the camp. They have also modified their language. Syriza has insisted that refugees are no longer to be called illegal immigrants (…) They have declared that push backs to Turkey will not be tolerated. The effectiveness of this measure is not clear as refugees are still reporting push backs. For example, a group of five refugees landing in Lesbos in the middle of April reported that they had been pushed back by coastguards from Samos prior to their journey to Lesbos'. Available at: https://samoschronicles.wordpress.com/

than representations of the experience of movement (Steinberg 2008:475) and the feelings of the subjects who have abandoned their homes and embark on these perilous journeys. That the seas in general, and the Aegean in particular, are becoming spaces of forgetting, is part of a particular knowledge production of these spaces, which in turn is ultimately linked to the regulation of social movements and governance of peoples within sea-spaces but also before, while and after they cross the 'border'. In the case of the 'liquid' border on the Mediterranean, recently migration management agencies and politicians increasingly respond to such events with calls to mobilize EU border management agencies to block migrants before they attempt to cross dangerous sea borders so that they do not risk their lives in perilous journeys[39], revealing the main question at stake: 'where is the migrant'.

Observing Figure I (p.31), we are informed on the density of apprehensions in the South Eastern Mediterranean sea region (1 Jan to 31 Oct 2014), published in the most recent report (January 2015) on the results of the operation Mos Maiorum, the 'European police' operation. [40] We can see how the Aegean is being organized and governed into different layers in relation to the patterns of mobility that take place on and through its space. In other words, the Aegean's already ambiguous spatial zones and conventions (into territorial waters, contiguous zone, continental shelf and international waters/high seas), are being rearranged by Frontex's Europe into demarked and outlined routes in relation to the density of apprehensions and types/groups of peoples (origins, gender, age, facilitators) crossing them. Actually, migration maps are part of a reactive and responsive cartography "based on a logic of spying and hijacking migrants' routes" (Tazzioli, 2014:144). In this way, the data is organized into separate categories of what Frontex calls 'irregular migration routes'. One of these sections is titled the 'Eastern Mediterranean Route' and which further down is divided into two smaller spatial categories, 'land borders' and 'maritime' which is the Turkish-Greek border on the Aegean.

It is interesting to see, how these categories in themselves construct and define spatial differentiations by defining certain routes irregular and risky, and which,

[39] 'New Keywords: Migration and Borders', A collective writing project involving 17 co-authors, co-edited and introduced by Nicholas De Genova, Sandro Mezzadra, and John Pickles (Special Thematic Section in ***Cultural Studies*** Volume 29, Number 1), 2015, p. 20.

[40] http://www.statewatch.org/news/2015/jan/eu-council-2015-01-22-05474-mos-maiorum-final-report.pdf

according to the EU Commission, should be monitored, fixed' and intervened upon by the Frontex-Agency; in this way, these sea-routes from 'choppy' will become 'calm', where choppy refers to a spatial state of concern and risk in opposition to a calmness where everything is arranged and ordered into fixed categories, in relation to the people moving through its waters. Indeed, the front-page of the latest Annual Risk Analysis 2015 published by Frontex illustrates exactly this idea: A photograph of a choppy sea composed of (dominated by) big and threatening waves. [41] Moreover, the way in which the photo has been taken (obviously at the forefront of the Frontex vessel), gives the sensation that we are also on this vessel and dealing with the waves. In this way, we are lead to identify with the Frontex agency/vessel rather than empathize with the migrants who are crossing on and through these dangerous waters. It is the struggles of the EU authorities at sea that we end up supporting rather than the migrants' struggles with the waves, while, at the same time, who is the actual 'threat' in this image and for that matter, in the report as a whole, the waves or the migrants, is not clear. In any case, the Frontex vessel appears as the savior and the responsible agent to calm the sea, by eliminating the waves and/or the migrants passing through them.[42] The border, in this way, holds out the promise of a solution to these hazards (Walters, 2008), in the case of the maritime border, to the waves and the migrants.

Returning to Frontex's spatial map of the Aegean, what we see, is, indeed, a reshaping of the Aegean space as an area of intervention, with different spatial entities characterized and outlined by specific groups of people: the Greek Eastern Aegean islands, the Turkish coast, the Greek coastguards and a sea that is continuously crossed by unwanted subjects; the 'irregular migrants'. In the Mos Maiorum Frontex report we read that:

> In 2014 on the Eastern Mediterranean route, the highest number of apprehensions has clearly been registered at the Greek-Turkish maritime border. From 1 January to 31 October 2014, more than 35 000 irregular migrants crossed the Greek-Turkish sea border. This figure shows a 330% increase on the Greek Eastern Aegean Islands compared to the same period

[41] http://frontex.europa.eu/assets/Publications/Risk_Analysis/Annual_Risk_Analysis_2015.pdf

[42] In fact, this is what Frontex exactly does; based on the European border policies of securitization, Frontex 'rescues' the migrants in order to detain or deporting them afterwards and this succeeding in 'protecting' Europe's borders.

> of 2013. In addition, the Greek authorities apprehended 191 facilitators and prevented the crossing of more than 300 migrant boats, which had departed from the Turkish coast.[43]

The geographical puzzle of the Aegean produced by Frontex's Europe, therefore, is about 'suspicious' and 'strange' movements, and, thus, a space in which the different categories of mobility, groups of peoples and target destinations need to be defined intercepted and analyzed. At the same time as it attempts to territorialize terror, the EU uses the Aegean shores and installations in a 'tactically postterritorial' way. The Eastern Aegean region is only the most visible outpost of a broader network of military installations, many of which exist on foreign soil and are negotiated through rental agreements with foreign states, such as Turkey. In practice, it is closer to what Solzhenitsyn called a "gulag archipelago," 'a network "scattered through the sea of civil society like a chain of islands," a military parallel to the contemporary offshore and outsourced economies' (Solzhenitsyin 2000 in Comaroff, 2007:397). In this way, the EU succeeds in spatially turning the European problem of migration into a Greek and Turkish one (externalization of the problem), that is, an issue characteristic to this particular geographical region and where, therefore, all the 'dirty work' must be done.

But the fact that the Aegean is ambiguously located and perceived does not prevent it from playing an important spatializing role in the "war on migration." It would seem 'an attempt to reterritorialize a mode of conflict that has become postterritorial' (Comarrof, 2007:397). According to Comarrof (2007), 'the problem of asymmetrical warfare is precisely that it cannot be imagined in international terms, or as a stand-off between blocks of states in the manner of the Cold War, *pace* the difficult question of "who the enemies represent," or in the case of the Aegean, 'the specious definition' of Turkey and Greece as "enemy'' states" (ibid.). In this context, the Eastern Aegean would play a metonymic role in an attempt to localize "threat," to provide a 'phantasmic bulwark' against an enemy that could be anywhere, at any moment (ibid.). Thus, the unpredictability and uncertainty of where the 'enemy' is, results in what the authors of the *New Keywords* see as 'the definition of the border increasingly referring not to the territorial limit of the state but to the management

[43] http://www.statewatch.org/news/2015/jan/eu-council-2015-01-22-05474-mos-maiorum-final-report.pdf

practices directed at 'where the migrant is' (2015:19).The construction of the 'enemy' is also managed with the method of debriefing interviews that members of Frontex conduct with the migrants as soon as they are intercepted and gone through the screening process at Moria detention center on Lesvos, with the aim to discover the routes the migrants take and the profile of the migrants.[44] Although Frontex Agency claims that the interviews are voluntary, Migreurop (2014) questions the impact of these observations and of the annual reports published by Frontex, insofar as they are part of an internal mechanism (migreurop 2014).

From the above mentioned we realize that the mapping of the Aegean Sea by EU's Frontex ultimately involves a mapping of the migrant's identity - nationality, gender, age- is articulated with, and in part superseded by, questions related to "what do they do?"; namely, on migrants' activities and "modus operandi", as the most recent report with the results of the operation Mos Maiorum, the 'European police' operation, puts it. In the Annual Risk report 2015 published by Frontex we read that, 'not knowing the nationality of migrants who are illegally crossing the border and travelling within the EU is evidently a vulnerability for EU internal security'.[45] Spying on the Aegean is about spying on the migrants, creating, therefore, what Martina Tazzioli (2015) calls 'generalizable singularities'.[46] The identification of certain groups with specific spatial markers, whether these are routes the migrant are traveling through, the places from which they come from or the places they are targeting, is also evident in the case of the drownings of eleven women and children near Farmakonisi island; the refugees who perished in the sea that early morning are known only through the name of the small landmass they were trying to reach, Farmakonisi: 'the place-name substitutes for the 'nameless' victims who died near there, out of place, casualties of the 'global war on migration'' (Panourgià 2014 in Carastathis, 2015). Certain groups of people become 'illegal' through the routes that they are forced to take and the types of journeys that these routes entail. In other words, we understand how the invisibility of the migrant as a subject is a by-product of the geographical territory itself; that is, the geographical/geomorphic composition of the Aegean sea-space, the ways in which it has been constructed and mapped by the 'security regime'

[44] migreurop-2014-new-report-on-greek-turkish-borders-and-frontex/ p.42.
[45] http://frontex.europa.eu/assets/Publications/Risk_Analysis/Annual_Risk_Analysis_2015.pdf, p.20.
[46] http://www.euronomade.info/?p=3880

of Turkish-Greek relations and Frontex Europe, produces among other things the invisibility of the refugee as a (legal) subject.

1.4.2. Liquid 'friendships'

One more important part of the European delineation/Europeanization of the Aegean sea-space is what the EU Commission refers to as 'mobility partnerships'. Until now I have talked about the separations/borders that Frontex's Europe is struggling to create on the Aegean. It is important, however, to be aware that if Europe is reinforcing the border making on the Aegean, at the same time, these 'liquid' borders are creating what the EU refers to as 'mobility partnerships'. Tsianos and Karakayalis speak of 'a postliberal sovereignty which extends beyond the European borders through agreements with neighboring countries and whose main function is to regulate mobility flows and to govern the porosity of borders (hence porocratic)' (2010:374). We can argue that this is a form of 'border imperialism' (Walia, 2013 in Carastathis 2015) that is mandated by the protectionist policies of, and funded by the European Union while simultaneously it is being enacted by its neighboring countries. It is important to understand, firstly, how these 'mobility partnerships' not only produce what has be called 'migration' but also how they reinforce the official and popular discourse around the type of mobility that is acknowledged as migration, beyond the borders of 'Europe'. According to the EU Commission,

> The Council underlines the need to promote all relevant forms of cooperation on a performance-based approach in the field of migration, mobility and security with the countries of the region that are sufficiently advanced in their reform progresses, and that effectively cooperate with the EU and its Member States in preventing illegal migration flows, managing their borders and cooperating in the return and readmission of irregular migrants. The Council stresses the need for early progress in the area of return and readmission in the case of relevant third countries, and recalls in particular that all States have an obligation to readmit their own nationals.
> This dialogue should in first instance, focus on the identification and promotion of measures which can contribute in a concrete and effective way to the prevention of illegal migration, to the effective management and control of their external borders, to the facilitation of the return and readmission of irregular migrants, and to the development of protection in the region for those in need, including through regional protection

> programmes. Subsequently, this dialogue could explore the possibilities for facilitating people-to-people contacts using instruments such as mobility partnerships.[47]

From the above excerpt we see that not all types of mobilities are undesired. Some are desired, such as the development of mobility partnerships, contrary to the type of mobility that is being defined as migration which is presented as negative and risky and, thus, one that needs to be normalized. Migration policies frame a complex spatiality of the Mediterranean, creating different channels of access to mobility – visa requirements, free movements, mobility partnership, patterns of excellence – and consequently envisaging clandestinization as a mechanism to handle those who don't fall into the channels criteria (see Tazzioli, 2014, 'Unspoken maps', http://ec.europa.eu/index_en.htm). The development of 'mobility partnerships', moreover, is suggested as one possible way to proceed towards this direction of 'normalization'/'normalizing' mobility. We see once again, how mobility in itself becomes problematic since migration in actual fact is nothing more than a construction introduced by 'Fortress Europe'. In other words, the Commission in the above reports pronouncedly confirms the bitter truth and undeniable fact of the actual migratory apparatus; that if they were no borders, they would be no migration (migrants) just mobility (De Genova 2013). That migration is a construction produced by the border regime is confirmed and emphasized by the fact that 'mobility' and 'migration', even though they appear here as two separate categories both of them are related to 'security', that is, to the border operations/missions of Frontex's Europe. Ultimately, while mobility is being identified as something irregular, the sea, the ultimate symbol of mobility, is also perceived as a negative and abnormal space, in this way.

Part of 'this dialogue that explores the possibilities for facilitating people-to-people contacts using instruments such as mobility partnerships', to calm the seas, is the recent 'Migration Routes Initiative', an experiment that attempts to coordinate migration management strategies by re-orienting border management away from a focus on defending a line (even, if it is a moving front-line) to establish border control as a series of points along an itinerary.[48] According to the authors of the *Keywords* this

[47] ttps://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/jha/121479.pdf
[48] 'New Keywords: Migration and Borders', A collective writing project involving 17 co-authors, co-edited and introduced by Nicholas De Genova, Sandro Mezzadra, and

neighbors-of-neighbors attempt, 'calls for transnational coordination between denominated "countries of origin, transit and destination" to intersect migrants in their journeys, kilometres further away from the target borders (New Keywords, p. 20). In order, in other words, for the EU and its agencies to succeed their goal and to be able to control and monitor the vast majority of the ambiguous waters/sea-spaces, and, thus, combat successfully 'undesirable' human mobility, it seeks to establish collaborations, 'mobility-partnerships- with non EU-members whose shores are Europe's external borders. The report published by Frontex in 2015, presents as a successful example the cooperation between Spain and Morocco in the Western Mediterranean region:

> As regards the Western Mediterranean region the patrolling activities of the Moroccan police and, at the same time, the high level of cooperation between Spain and Morocco are two of the main pillars with regard to preventing and curbing irregular migration in this region. Should these patrolling activities and/or cooperation levels decrease, the number of migrants arriving in Spain might increase significantly.[49]

Moreover, the importance that the EU Commission gives to connections and collaboration at sea between members and non members of the EU can be seen in the following excerpt from the JHA Conclusions on the management of migration from the Southern Neighborhood (April 2011), in relation to Tunisia:

> The Council calls on FRONTEX to continue to monitor the situation and prepare detailed risk analyses on possible scenarios with a view to identifying the most effective responses to them, and also invites FRONTEX to speed up negotiations with the countries of the region – and in particular with Tunisia – with a view to concluding operational working arrangements, and organising joint patrolling operations in cooperation with Tunisian authorities and in application of all relevant international Conventions, in particular the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea ("the Montego Bay Convention".[50]

In the case of the Aegean, the creation of' mobility partnerships' has been a long process characterized by further difficulties due to the 'Aegean dispute' between Greece and Turkey. Indeed, the disputes on the Aegean between the two states have

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John Pickles (Special Thematic Section in ***Cultural Studies*** Volume 29, Number 1), 2015, p. 20.

[49] jan/eu-council-2015-01-22-05474-mos-maiorum-final-report.pdf

[50] ttps://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/jha/121479.pdf

complicated any 'solid' and straightforward European surveillance/monitoring of the Aegean space. Moreover, there have been incidences in the past, when Frontex, while, patrolling the Eastern Aegean, has been accused by Turkey of violating Turkish airspace. The strategic role of Turkey in managing what the EU Commission defines as an increase in migratory 'flows' on the Eastern Mediterranean border of the Aegean, therefore, is significant. The press released database published by the European Commission n March 2011, emphasizes the following,

> Cooperation with Turkey is of fundamental importance. Frontex has informed the competent Turkish authorities about the launch and the scope of the RABIT operations. Bilateral talks between Greece and Turkey on both political and operational level took place as well and there were promising signs that border control has been stepped up on the Turkish side of the border area. However, there is a clear possibility to further enhance the operational cooperation with Turkey.[51]

One of the main goals of EU border externalization throughout is "pre-frontier detection" referring to a type of overall intelligence picture of those spaces through which migrant pass, whether they are within the EU or far beyond it.[52] Once a vessel has been detected, authorities of the Turkish shore are informed of the "distress" of the migrants and asked to coordinate 'rescue', and thereby to assume de facto responsibility for rescuing and disembarking to third countries.[53] In other words, 'pre-frontier detection' is an essential part of the EU spatial mapping of the Aegean, due to its geographical position between Greece and Turkey, and, thus, consists one of the most effective and often deadly means, as we shall see in the following section, of migration management on the Aegean sea.

As more maritime surveillance through the expensive "Eurosur" system[54] and mechanism for controls keep on growing indefinitely, while, readmissions of third-country nationals is by now a fact in Turkey. Indeed, as the authors of the *Keywords* note, 'programs of selected mobility and joint patrolling of borderzones have been included as "clauses on migration" in economic agreements and investment rationales,

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[51] *europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-11-130_en.doc*
[52] 'New Keyowords', p. 20-21
[53] Ibid.
[54] According to Frontex's homepage: Eurosur is the information-exchange framework designed to improve the management of Europe's external borders. It aims to support Member States by increasing their situational awareness and reaction capability in combating cross-border crime, tackling irregular migration and preventing loss of migrant lives at sea, at: http://frontex.europa.eu/intelligence/eurosur/

dealing with visa permits on the one hand and border enforcement and repatriation agreements on the other'. I will talk about the interrelation between the 'softening' of visa policies for certain Turkish tourists visiting the Aegean islands and the 'hardening' of border controls at the Turkish side of the Aegean in Chapter IV (in the chapter on the actual patterns of mobility and journeys that take place on the Aegean border/waters). Here I want to just point out that 'measures such as the setting up of contact points at both sides of the border, reinforced controls by the Turkish authorities within the territory and along the borders of Turkey, enhanced trans-national police cooperation in combating the 'criminal' organizations dealing with the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings, and raising migrants' awareness on the risks lined to irregular migration'[55], were other imperatives that, according to the Commission, could be implemented in the short term.

Thus, Greek and Turkish relationships appear to be transformed as they are asked to become 'mobile partnerships' on the Aegean against the undocumented migrants. For example, when spotting a boat on their advanced surveillance systems, Greek border forces call their Turkish 'colleagues' so that the latter can "rescue" the passengers by bringing them back to the coast, regardless of their wishes. These new security methods bind Greece and Turkey in a common struggle against the undocumented migrant, where the migrant is perceived as an 'invading army' of 'illegal immigrants'. Additionally, we learn from the PRO ASYL report that:

> High ranking Greek and Turkish governmental officials held numerous meetings throughout the year. In March 2013, 25 bilateral agreements were signed with Turkey. Among them, an agreement, concerning irregular migration and readmission issues. However, its content was never disclosed by any side. The two officials have con- firmed in statements on a number of occasions their very close cooperation regarding migration issues at an operational level.[56]

[55] http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/docs/pdf/customs_bgs_final_en.pdf

[56] PRO ASYL To Vima, 'Which are the 25 agreements signed with Turkey in Istanbul', (Common Declaration on the reinforcement of cooperation in the field of illegal migration and readmission). Available at: http://www.tovima.gr/politics/article/?aid=501499, in http://www.proasyl.de/fileadmin/fm-dam/l_EU_Fluechtlingspolitik/proasyl_pushed_back_24.01.14_a4.pdf, p.4.

Indeed, what we observe is a 'mobile' partnership, in which changing border regimes and constructions of 'strangeness' are translated into practices: the shift in emphasis from 'Turks' (as the target) to 'undocumented migrants'. This new turn in the Greek-Turkish relations is part of the larger Turkish-Greek reapproachment process that has particular effects on the Aegean space and the different mobilities that take place there, as we shall see further down. This does not mean, however, that previous disputes on the Aegean have been solved, nor that on the ground confrontations between Greek and Turkish coastguards don't take place. In other words, we cannot and shouldn't see this as a 'smooth' and 'solid' spatial transformation from a 'continental shelf' area to a 'pre-frontier' issue taking place on the Aegean. Both in the case of the 'continental shelf', as we saw in the previous chapter and in the case of the 'pre-frontier', we are talking about 'liquid' spaces and which in the case of the Aegean are contested and ambivalent 'areas' to say the least. Even if they appear as 'solid' spatial entities on paper, in practice they keep transforming according to whom is crossing their waters, when for some groups of people they are more 'liquid' compared to others who are crossing. Questions such as where does the continental shelf of 'Greece' end and where (at which point on the Aegean) does the 'pre-frontier' in 'Turkey' begin, add to the layers of an already complicated and disputed border on the Aegean and cannot but affect the journey of the migrants travelling on these waters. We should question, in other words, how, when, why and for whom does the 'pre-frontier' space of Turkey coincide with the 'continental shelf' of 'Greece' and when not (they consist of two separate spatial entities, when more solid and whn more liquid). Indeed, exactly because of the arbitrariness of the borderline on the Aegean, the two sides take advantage of this situation when it comes to issues connected to migration. Thus, depending at which point the migrants are 'intercepted' on the Aegean, within the limit of the 12 or 6 nautical miles, the authorities of both states due to the existing territorial dispute (of where exactly the border is) can easily-more easily 'throw the responsibility' of the migrants to the other 'side' (play around with the border and the migrants who are crossing it).

Finally, even though, on the macro-level different agreements are leading to a reinforcement of cooperation in the field of migration between Greece and Turkey, at the micro-level on the ground this is not being experienced. During my stay in Lesvos, for example, I heard, many times, 'locals' blaming 'Turkey' and the 'Turks' for what

they saw as an invasion of 'illegal' migrants on their island. In other words, they argued that Turkey was purposely allowing the migrants to enter Greek waters or even 'dumping' them there, while, there were others who claimed that Turkish smugglers were making huge sums of money and profiting from the migrants by charging them a high price for the boat journey. The coastguard that I mentioned in the Introduction, also, held the Turkish coastguards patrolling the waters of the 'other-side', responsible for the successful border crossing of the undocumented migrants. At one point in our conversation, he argued that:

> Right on the border, I have encountered Turks who will exchange cigarettes with us and who are generally very friendly, sometimes we even sing the same songs, we in Greek they in Turkish. There are other times, though, that the Turks have been extremely aggressive to us and then I swore to myself that, however, close Turkey is and, however, curious I am to visit the other side, I will never go, at least not while I continue to work as a coastguard. And then, again it is the Turks who are mostly responsible for the increased numbers of illegal migrants arriving in our waters. This is why, Europe apart from having to take its share of responsibility concerning the migrants, it should also force Turkey more than it is doing now to impede migrants from embarking on boats from the Turkish side. Europe should make this the condition for visa-facilitations for Turkish citizens wishing to visit Europe.

In the following chapter (Part III), I will talk about the spatial transformation of the Aegean into a cemetery of and within 'Europe' as the result of what we have been discussing so far; (that is), it being a space of competing regimes, national and supranational ones, in which legal ambiguity is resolved only temporally through 'shifting configurations of sovereignty, territoriality and governmentality' (Thomas Gammeltoft-Hansen &Tanja E.Aalberts, 2010). Indeed, the construction of walls at 'Europe's frontiers, like the one that was build in the Evros region, don't only transform the Eastern Aegean Sea into one of the main routes for migrants entering Greece through Turkey, as we have seen, they also turn this space into a highly securitized border and, as a result, the Aegean Sea into one of 'Europe's most contested graveyards.

CHAPTER II

THE CEMETERY ON THE AEGEAN

'I didn't escape the war in Syria to risk my life and lose my family in the Aegean' (Syrian father who lost his wife and children during the Pharmakonisi push-back operation on 20th of January 2014)

'The Alarm Phone demands safe and legal possibilities of entry and requests 'ferries not Frontex' in order to end the dying at sea'[57]

In this section, I will talk about the Aegean Sea between Greece and Turkey as a graveyard/cemetery at the periphery of 'Europe'. This was the case also in the past, when, in an attempt to escape the massacres and the destruction of their houses in Asia Minor, thousands of refugees from Asia Minor tried to reach the island of Lesvos in over-packed boats. Under these circumstances of immediate flight many refugees perished at sea, among them children. Up until today, there are stories of pain and death that narrate this flight and that have survived in the form of a trans-generational memory which one can hear very often in Lesvos, especially by the elders. But in our present times, such 'death-boats' are not absent. And in the Aegean Sea, (once again) many migrants lose their lives in its waters, while others disappear without any traces. I will discuss, in other words, how the shipwrecks and disappearances of some migrants at sea is the mark of the politics of letting people drown and die that in part characterize the government of mobility at sea (Tazzioli 2014). The border in this way becomes a graveyard of and within 'Europe', (re)producing, once more, the image of

[57] http://watchthemed.net/reports/view/115

the ghost-ship' and the feelings of 'haunting' that create a particular atmosphere on the Turkish-Greek border. While I write this chapter, catastrophic shipwrecks and loses of human lives are taking place at this very moment on the Mediterranean, which have lead to the deaths of more than 1.700 human beings this year. The Aegean Sea is also part of this deadly 'liquid' border, full of catastrophic and haunting images. Only last week (April 20th 2015), a shipwreck with more deaths took place off the island of Rhodes on the Aegean. At least three bodies were recovered — a man, a woman, and a child (Rodiaki News).

Additionally, in this chapter, particular attention will be given to the 'push backs' that take place on the Aegean and, therefore, in the section 'Push-backs', I rely specifically on the data from PROAsyl reports that include testimonies of migrants who survived the journey, along with accounts/narratives that I heard from some Greek coastguards, since they support my general argument on how Greek-Turkish relations and the recent migratory movement overlap on the Aegean. What my theoretical frame/organization adds, however, to what exists already in these reports, is the emphasis that is given to the quality, materiality and composition of 'liquid' borders, which, like ghosts collapse binary oppositions such as past and present, presence and absence, life and death, endlessly implicating the one term in the other (Myrivili 2006).

2.1. The 'liquid' cemetery

When talking about death at the sea, we can think of the Aegean Sea as a graveyard along the lines of the Foucauldian framework of heterotopias, particularly, the example that Foucault gives of the graveyard as a heterotopic space:

> It is only from that start of the nineteenth century that cemeteries began to be located at the outside border of cities…The cemeteries then came to constitute, no longer the sacred and immortal heart of the city, but the other city, where each family possesses its dark resting place (Foucault, 1986:25).

Indeed, these migrants have been 'buried' outside the border, not only of the cities but also of the nations-states themselves. Likewise the Aegean becomes a graveyard with the death of the migrants. The migrants that perish at sea remain

undocumented and nameless, thus, reproduce the 'othernesses' of the Eastern Aegean region, a space that is already being perceived and defined within the 'core-periphery' dichotomy as marginal (one of 'Europe's' margins). While the exact 'flows' of the undocumented migrants through the Eastern Aegean sea route (along with their origins/ethnicity, gender, age, mode of travelling and route of destination) are being 'hunted down' and documented in details by the research-campaigns conducted by Frontex (as we saw in the previous chapter), it is striking that the same agent does not mention the details concerning the deaths of the migrants at sea, who they are, where they came from, or how many exactly are they (the dead of the Aegean). By a way of contrast we can think here of Katherine Verdery's anthropological insights on dead bodies, particularly the ones of publicly known figures. We notice that, contrary to the way that the publicly known figures' deaths, that Verdery describes, are commemorated, there is a general absence of the afterlives of dead bodies on the Aegean.

Moreover, although, Verdery's focus of ethnographic study is on the ex-Yugoslavia Balkan states we notice some analogies in her conclusions on the border makings in this region with the border making on the Aegean and its relation to the dead bodies. According to Verdery (1999) 'where the political change includes creating entire nation-states, as in ex-Yugoslavia and parts of the Soviet Union, resignifying space extends further: to marking territories as "ours" and setting firm international borders to distinguish "ours" from "theirs." The location of those borders is part of the politics of space, and dead bodies have been active in it.[58] Indeed, Verdery's argument is also relevant for the 'liquid' border on the Aegean where the dead bodies of the migrants are part or rather the effects of the border separating what has come to be considered 'Europe' from 'Asia' and the 'non-West' starting from Turkey on the Aegean; in other words, a border that marks 'territories as "ours" and setting firm international borders to distinguish "ours" from "theirs"', resulting in the deaths of many of those coming from 'over there'(beyond Turkey). The relationship between borders and dead bodies at sea (floating in the waters), also, characterizes the construction of the national border on the Aegean during the population exchange in 1923, when many refugees perished at sea on the boat journey but also before the exchange, as people were being uprooted from their homelands and massacred along

[58] https://www.nytimes.com/books/first/v/verdery-bodies.html

the coastlines of Asia Minor. The border in this sense, cannot but evoke memories of pain, lose and death, while, just as in the past, likewise now, the 'liquid' border is ultimately tied to the unfolding of catastrophes on the waters that end up on the nearby shores, affecting also the lives of the peoples living close by them.

Turning to the current deaths at sea, we learn from reports published by different activists groups defending migrants' rights at sea that in the Mediterranean; more than 1.700 people have already died this year as they seek European shores, while in 2014 the numbers of death surpassed 3.000. With the effective closure of the land border in the Evros region, people have been forced towards the more dangerous sea crossing on the Aegean, resulting in at least 18 shipwrecks, 191 recorded deaths and 33 disappearances in the Aegean between September 2012 and May 2014 (FIDH et al, 2014: 6). According to the IOM, about 1,727 migrants had died so far this year in their attempts to reach Europe from Africa. That toll is about 30 times higher than last year's total at this time; it is said by the IOM. More than a hundred of the dead (deceived) were children. The spokesman Joel Millman told journalists in Geneva: 'IOM now fears the 2014 total of 3,279 migrant [deaths] on the Mediterranean may be surpassed this year in a matter of weeks, and could well top 30,000 by the end of the year, based on the current death toll. It could actually be even higher.'[59] But only on the activist blogs and through groups such as 'Welcome to Europe' do we ever hear the voices of the migrants themselves.

In the case of the disappeared there is no grave, no sacred place where they can be mourned for and no traces of them left behind, apart from the memories of their friends, families and loved ones. The majority of the dead bodies are buried in the cemetery in Mytilini, which in most cases are identified by a number accompanying their nationality written down on their grave, (e.g. Afghan 3) since their names are unknown. Their traces, like the cemetery which, according to Foucault, has been removed to the outskirts of the city, are being purposely removed from the conscious of the 'Europeans' living 'deeper' in 'Europe', since they are presented as tragic 'accidents' befallen on groups of people coming from 'outside' Europe and dying in non-'European' spaces, or at least in marginal spaces (what has come to be thought of as the 'peripheries' of Europe), even when many times these 'accidents' take place a few kilometers off the shores of 'Europe' and under the gaze of European agents

[59] http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/apr/21/migrant-shipwreck-toll-may-include-up-to-100-children-mediterranean

patrolling the waters (ProAsylum 2013). But regardless of nationality, they are the disappeared of and within Europe, even if EU Member States and Frontex-Agency alike reject their role and denounce their responsibility for the migrants' journey and the passengers who travel on and through and towards 'European' waters.

The official/mainstream discourse of the European Commission, however, argues that it is the smugglers who are to blame for migrants' hazardous journeys at sea and, thus, also for their deaths. The EU Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris Avramopoulos, referring to what happened in Lampedusa on the 8th of February 2015, tweeted the following: "The drama is ongoing. Our fight against smugglers continues in a relentless & coordinated way. More has to be done".[60] In other words, we see that, in line with the core of European rationale, legality needs to be enforced in all respects, from economic austerity in the countries of the South, like Greece, to the control of its borders' (Calori 2015)[61], again in the Southern and Eastern peripheries.

Similarly, even the self proclaimed liberal newspapers such as the British *Guardian* publish and promote this point of view, that is, that it is a matter of choice for the migrants to undertake this type of journey, with the smugglers promoting and encouraging them to do so by making huge amounts of profit. Sofiane Ait Chalalet and Chris Jones writing in their blog from Samos Island, criticize Helena Smith, the *Guardian's* reporter in Athens, who noted (*Guardian* 23 April 2015*)* that the migrants 'elect to travel in the clapped out boats of the smugglers', by asking her whether 'the refugees coming to Samos packed in rubber boats choose to come this way instead of on the daily ferry which now comes to the island from Turkey'.[62] The 'smugglers', in other words, represent/signify a particular route that the migrants are forced to take, they are a particular medium of mobility, thus, what is being posed as threat on the waters, once more, by combating the 'smugglers' are the specific spaces of mobility for certain groups of people and for which these very 'smugglers', albeit under inhuman conditions, provide them with a way and in fact the only way to move on.

The EU Commission, in other words, purposely neglects to mention the obvious and what different human rights organizations working with migrants (e.g. Amnesty

[60] http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-15-4455_en.htm
[61] https://www.opendemocracy.net/can-europe-make-it/anna-calori/from-mare-nostrum-to-triton-europe%E2%80%99s-response-to-mediterranean-crisis
[62] https://samoschronicles.wordpress.com/

International 2013, Humans Right Watch, Kritnet 2015, Migeurop 2014, Migrants at sea 2013, ProAsyl 2014) are continuously and purportedly pointing out to: that if it wasn't for the construction of the effective wall in the Turkish-Greek land border the migrants would not be forced to cross the more hazardous Aegean border, and, hence, not experience an increase in deaths in this region since the construction of the wall in 2012. Deaths could become history by tomorrow if refugees and migrants were able to simply buy ferry- and plane-tickets and travel as safely and cheaply as tourists'.[63] Without wanting to claim that the land border does not entail its own dangers for the people who are travelling undocumented, however, it is certainly safer (less riskier) than crossing the Aegean-Sea, due to its clearer cut paths, directions and fewer obstacles that occur on the way; especially, since the demining of the Evros region in 2010, this border has become less hazardous in comparison to the Aegean, where the migrants, some of which are seeing the sea for this first time, are exposed to bad weather conditions (storms at sea), overcrowded and malfunctioned/unseaworthy boats and aggressive coastguards. In other words, the land provides a more 'solid' journey, if only due to its geomorphic composition, that is, the Turkish-Greek border at Evros being a territorial border as such, is more 'solid' due to its clearer cut (demarcated) separations between the two sides (Greece and Turkey) of the border.[64] Likewise, if there was a more 'solid' way to cross the Aegean and the seas in general, such as a ferry boat or a sea-worthy passengers' boat with which all people from any geographical region could embark on, if they wished or were forced to move to

[63] http://kritnet.org/2015/push-back-frontex-against-a-new-dimension-of-left-to-die-policy-at-sea/?from=box-c1

[64] I am by no means defending the existence of one border over another, or arguing for one type of crossing over another. Both the border crossing and Evros and the sea crossing on the Mediterranean are inhuman, dangerous and, thus, nobody should have to cross them. All borders and routes that have been defined as 'illegal' should be abolished in order to stop people losing their lives there. However the increased number of deaths on the Aegean and the Mediterranean in general is due to the fact that more and more walls and fences have been constructed, such as the one in Evros, which leave people with no other option than the sea. In this sense it is not the smugglers who are responsible for the deaths at sea but the construction of borders, old ones and more recent ones, whether land or maritime ones. In this sense, due to the existence and production of borders some people profit from, such as the facilitators/smuggles and for some they are deadly, such as all non-European citizens who fleeing persecutions, wars, dictatorships and severe economic crisis at home, lack the necessary documents to enter 'Europe' in the same way that EU citizens and travelers with documents are able to enter and exit different countries. Both smugglers and deaths at sea are the effects of the deadly border regime.

'Europe', the degrees of 'liquidity' of the journey would not be the same and the crossing not a deadly one but one where the hopes and dreams of so many people, at least, would not drown at sea.

As I have shown in the previous chapters, the 'liquidness' of the Aegean border is re-enforced both by its delineation along certain zones imposed by the UN law of the sea, a law that does not lack a certain arbitrariness and the 'Aegean dispute' between Turkey and Greece, starting with the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923 and culminating with the development of the different UN laws of the sea. This historical depth of the Aegean, what we can think of as its volume (particular reality and complexity of conditions, have dire consequences for the migrants caught in the middle. 'Each of these properties', Steinberg and Peters argue 'can be ascribed to land as well (land too has depth, underlying mobility, and transformation across physical states), but in water these properties are distinct in the speed and rhythm of mobility, the persistent ease of transformation, and the enclosing materiality of depth' (2015:252), in the case of the Aegean its historical depth (for example, the exchange of the population). And it is this 'liquidness' and 'rhythm of mobility' of sea spaces in general and of the Aegean in particular, that Member States and Frontex-Agency take advantage of with their migration policies, something that is not so easy to do within the territorial state, that is, once the migrants have entered the territorial state. For here, 'unlike on terra firma the precise division and content of sovereign rights and obligations remain contested and subject to varying interpretations' (Thomas Gammeltoft-Hansen &Tanja E.Aalberts, 2010:448), which affects to a great extent the journey of the migrants and many times lead to their deaths, as they adrift at sea in unseaworthy boats for long periods of time, with neither Turkey nor Greece, or Frontex, willing to 'rescue' them.

The Aegean Sea in itself being a 'strange' spatial and legal entity becomes even more 'liquid' for the migrants who cross through its waters. Compared to the migrant or asylum-seeker arriving at the territory of his or her destination state, the migrants who find themselves in distress or encounter migration control on the high seas and also within territorial waters (especially when they are contested, as in the case of the Aegean), will have obvious difficulties in accessing NGOs, media, lawyers or relevant authorities to make a plea for their case. 'As it may be hard to prove independently where and in which SAR zone those rescued have been picked up, it is left to captains to decide whether or not boats are actually in distress, and asylum claims are easily

‘overheard’’ (Gammeltoft-Hansen 2008: 183). In the law of the sea and its agreements there is an unavailability of mechanisms to address violations of duties by states. Due to the elastic nature of international law, in other words, coastal states are able to ‘turn the other way’ when it comes to engaging in rescue missions, what from, at the beginning of the 20th century they were striving for, that is, their sovereign rights/responsibilities at sea. And the Turkish-Greek relations and disputes concerning the borderline on the Aegean add another layer of complication and confusion to the situation on the Aegean waters. Thus, we realize that the protection rules cannot be separated from the rules on disembarkation of migrants in a ‘safe’ third country and that ‘nationalism’ and national expansions at sea easily turn into racism on the land (or how nationalism at sea and land supplement one another).

Even more appalling, member states (like Britain) claim that rescue operations provide a 'pull factor' for more migrants to make the dangerous crossing, knowing they will be saved (Manieri &Hieber, 2015). The falsity of this argument, which, even at the time it was announced by the British government was harshly condemned by human rights organizations and various scholars advocating for the rights of migrants (see for example, see above Anderson’s article in Open Democracy[65]) as unethical and illogical, is revealed with the current situation on the Mediterranean: despite, the cancellation of the rescue and search operations of the Mare Nostrum last October (October 2014), due to the desperation of people dealing with the unbearable in their everyday lives, whether stranded in transit countries such as Egypt, Libya and Turkey or in their own countries and the reign of terror and violence that has expanded all the way along the Sub-Saharan countries, from Afghanistan to Pakistan, from Yemen to Iraq and Syria and from there to Libya at the Mediterranean coast; more and more people are forced to take the dangerous sea route from Turkey into the Aegean or from Libya and Egypt into the Mediterranean. And the result a deadly ‘liquid’ border which the migrants, coastguards, the doctors and health care agents present at the disembarkation of the migrants on land, experience and narrate as haunting and dreadful moments (a haunting situation at sea).

[65] https://www.opendemocracy.net/5050/ruben-andersson/mare-nostrum-and-migrant-deaths-humanitarian-paradox-at-europe%E2%80%99s-frontiers-0

2.2. The 'push-backs' (on the Aegean)

When I was on Lesvos walking along the promenade, one morning, I came across with a group of coastguards who had just returned from their evening operations/missions at sea. I heard them mentioning something like twenty capsized migrants and I immediately guessed or presumed that they had been engaged in a 'rescue' operation. Noticing that there were no other people on board apart from the coastguards, I asked them what happened to the people at sea. The answer I received was plain and simple: 'They called us for nothing. It was not our business; they were in the other waters. We called our neighbors and they saw to them' (from a conversation with two coastguards, Lesvos, August 2014).Whether the migrants actually were in Turkish waters or they were pushed back into 'Turkey' without the Turks noticing, I could not be sure. We should not ignore, however, the role of the 'European' presence on the Aegean and the 'pre-frontier' detection as part of the European border, in the 'push-back' operations. As the authors of the *New Keywords* point out 'interception and rescue have become indiscernible practices, and when coupled with pre-frontier detection they constitute a new strategy in which de facto push-backs are operated without EU patrols ever entering into contact with the migrants' (2015:20). In other words, what took place even in the above case, can be thought of a 'push-back' within the wider European context.

During 'push-back' operations in the Aegean Sea, some refugees claim to have dialed the emergency number, and sent out distress signals from their boats, only to be pushed back when they were located by the Greek authorities. In addition, push-backs have occurred, even when the migrants were very close to the shores of the Greek islands, or worse, after having got off shore and walking on the Greek islands' streets.[66] Moreover, we learn from migrants' accounts (from the interviews Proasyl

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66 http://www.proasyl.de/fileadmin/fm-dam/l_EU_Fluechtlingspolitik/proasyl_pushed_back_24.01.14_a4.pdf. This report is based on 90 in person interviews held with people who have tried at least once to cross the southeastern external European borders with Turkey, and have been illegally removed (pushed back). 'Interviewees came from Syria, Afghanistan, Somaliaand Eritrea – prima facie, persons in need of international protection. Among them were many members of vulnerable groups, such as unaccompanied children, sick and elderly persons. The vast majority of those affected are Syrian refugees trying to enter

conducted with undocumented migrants who have been pushed back) that on the Aegean, migrants are being dumped on islands that under 'normal circumstances' are defined by the Greek state as 'Greek' national entities/possessions but due to their disputed territorial waters, the Greek coastguards are relaxed to abandon the migrants there and then push them back to 'Turkish' waters, while, they themselves await hiding for the Turkish coastguards to come and collect them. This brings us to the words of the coastguard that I mentioned in the Introduction that the reality at sea is different and being on the water continuously brings one face to face with dead bodies, darkness, Turkey, waves and again death. This reality of the sea as a dangerous space or the sea as a 'threat' is perceived and experienced by both the coastguards and the migrants, albeit, being on the opposite side of the struggles at sea.

However, the images and narratives that prevail in the mainstream but also more liberal media texts, when referring to the migrants' deaths at sea, highlight the (manly/masculine) courage of the coastguards, the risky conditions in which they work and their vulnerability at sea, along with their mighty struggles 'against the waves'. On the contrary there is hardly any mentioning of the 'push-back' operations and the atrocities that many of the Greek coastguards commit against the migrants on the Aegean waters. Similarly to the image-photograph of the Frontex vessel in the Frontex Annual Risk report 2015, that I discussed in the previous chapter, it is the side of the coastguards that we are encouraged to take against the migrants and the 'smugglers' that are presented as the causes of the 'waves' at sea; even if, it is many times the 'push-back' operations that literary create waves on the Aegean in particular and the EU border regime on the Mediterranean in general, as we saw in the previous chapter. We see once more how European expansionism at sea is based on feelings of nationalism and masculinity and how in turn they end up as clearly xenophobic acts of

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Europeto seek international protection or to reunite with their families who live in Germany, Sweden, the United Kingdom and various other European countries. Interviews were held in Greece, Germany and Turkey, where refugees have either finally managed to arrive or where they remain in limbo after having been allegedly pushed back by the Greek authorities. In Turkey, they are confronted by an ineffective refugee protection system, subjected to deploring living conditions and exposed to a series of other human rights violations. Furthermore, certain nationalities are exposed to the risk of refoulement. Therefore, Turkey cannot be considered a safe country for refugees'.

racism. The discourse of the 'White Man's burden' a pattern that dates back to colonial and European imperial times, re-appears in the image of the Greek and/or Italian coastguard that is forced to 'rescue' the undocumented migrant, only to demined her/him as a burden and inferior subject once brought 'inside' the nation-state, repeating a similar process and perception of the colonial subjects that found themselves in the colonies controlled at the 'margins' of the empires and nation-states.

What is particular to the Aegean is the increased number of 'push-backs' comparing to other European maritime borders and which are one of the main causes for migrants deaths on the Aegean. Push-backs are in breach of national, European and international law[67] and they are usually managed by the Greek coast guard vessels by towing the boat toward the Turkish coast at high speed creating in this way big waves which can overturn the migrants' boat (the new Syriza government has apparently instructed to cease these human rights violations). In January 2014, nine children and three women died when their vessel sank near a Greek island early on Monday morning while being towed by the Greek Coast Guard. According to the survivors, the Greek coast guard vessel was towing the boat toward the Turkish coast at high speed when the boat capsized. Survivors tell that they were crying out for help, given that a large number of children and babies were on board.[68]

What is interesting to see in the 'push-backs' operations conducted by Greek coastguards is the 'sudden' disregard for national sovereign rights on the territorial waters when it comes to the rescue and lives of the migrants. In other words, in the realm/at the level of Turkish-Greek relations both Greece and Turkey are particularly eager to defend their territorial rights on the Aegean and to expand the border line as much as possible to their own benefit (on their own behalf). In relation to European laws referring to migrants' rights at sea, however, Greek coastguards very often 'push' migrants back to what they call 'Turkish waters', even when they are 'intercepted' in 'Greek' national waters, or argue with the Turkish coastguards after having received an alarm/warning call from the Turkish side about a boat in distress, that the boat carrying migrants was not detected in 'Greek' waters but in 'Turkish' ones, and, therefore, Greece is not responsible for them, as we saw in the above quote from my dialogue with the two coastguards at the peer. Hence, in the waters of the Aegean, we

[67] Ibid. 'summery', systematic human rights violations, p.xii.
[68] http://www.proasyl.de/fileadmin/fm-dam/l_EU_Fluechtlingspolitik/proasyl_pushed_back_24.01.14_a4.pdf, p.38

observe how nationalism works against the different degrees of ‘otherness’ (the different degrees of nationalism on the Aegean), and how the shifting meanings of ‘Turks’ and ‘migrants’ travel on the Aegean. De Genova places this attitude within the wider ‘European’ context (argues something similar when referring to the neo-nationalists in the European context). He explains that ‘perhaps paradoxically, the neo-nationalists are often quite ready to relinquish national sovereignty when it comes to policing the borders of the larger 'European' space. More generally, then, we must be alert to the emergence of new forms of expressly 'European' conviviality, particularly as these may articulate aversion or antagonism to (non-European) migrants (De Genova, ‘European Question’, forthcoming).

From the above mentioned we realize that the ‘Aegean dispute’ between Greece and Turkey is also about the more recent migratory movements. In the sea, an international phenomenon that is migration reawakens national conflicts on the ground. Indeed, even though, Greece and Turkey have defined some clear lines and points that determine national waters and the border that separates them and which are recognized by both sides, and even if Lesvos itself as an island undoubtedly belongs to the Greek side, this does not mean that the Aegean does not continue to be a space of controversy (for the two sides), and that many times one nation accuses the other of transgressing its national waters. And of course, these points being what they are, liquid lines and delimitations, cannot be known by the migrants who are crossing the Aegean, and can even be points of confusion for the experienced ‘facilitators’ or ‘smugglers’ who are more experienced in these waters. This shows, indeed, how much ‘liquid’ the liquid border is on the Aegean, as it changes it’s degrees of ‘liquidity’ depending on who is crossing where (Turkish coastguards or undocumented migrants) and who is ‘intercepted’ at which point and by whom; in one case causing a national reclaim/outburst, like in the case of the Kardak islets/rocks, and in the other a rejection of (any kind of) ‘national’ responsibility.

We see, in other words, how the migrants enter a space that is already producing and still dealing with its previous ‘enemies’. The Aegean is a space in which different degrees of ‘threat’ and enimization prevail; whether Turkish, Greek, undocumented migrants and even European with the recent austerity measures causing a humanitarian threat to Southern Mediterranean countries. Darkness, Turkish authorities, Greek coastguards, Frontex vessels, are what the migrants experience on the Aegean, however, whether during different moments of their journey, they all constitute an

obstacle towards their 'moving on' and into 'Europe'. With the majority of the push-backs taking place at night (lack of visibility) (while of course the migrants are travelling anyway during the night), most of the refugees alleged that such a push-back operation lasted for approximately more than one hour. Sofiane Ait Chalalet and Chris Jones writing in their blog from the island of Samos where they have been living for the last years, emphasize that the risks are multiple because 'the refugees who come across to Samos from Turkey do so at night, often when there is no moon and when the weather is bad and the sea is rough (…) because they need to evade the patrol boats of Frontex and the Greek coastguards'.[69] Moreover, in all cases, push-back victims were not officially registered by the competent authorities, nor were they asked for any personal details, apart from their nationality, even in the case of Farmakonisi Island where migrants had been detained up to three days. [70] According to the report released in 2013 by PRO ASYL (that I will be mentioning further down more in more details):

> In three reported push-back incidents from Farmakonisi – an island uninhabited, apart from a military unit – involving dozens of refugees from Syria, interviewees claimed to have been apprehended by Greek coastguards either just off the coast of the island, or after their arrival on the island. The refugees say that they were detained incommunicado and deprived of any rights for periods ranging from 16 hours to three days, before being pushed back and left adrift in Turkish waters.[71]

Consequently, Farmakonisi Island becomes a small Guantanamo, a prison island of detention and torture. As a refugee from Somalia put it: 'We are thrown into terrible prisons and Europe sends its troops to fight us at sea' (woman from Somalia, 2009: No borders camp interview). At the same time we can speak of the Farmakonisi island and the other border islands that the migrants find themselves apprehended and detained on as a form of what Comaroff (2007) calls 'spatial anomaly' in terms of legal geography when describing prison islands. I find this term adequate for describing the spatial contradictions that characterizes the Aegean as a whole, that is, the simultaneous national (Turkish versus Greek) and European sovereignty over this space, along with a dismissal of any kind of responsibility when it comes to the

[69] https://samoschronicles.wordpress.com/
[70] http://www.proasyl.de/fileadmin/fm-dam/l_EU_Fluechtlingspolitik/proasyl_pushed_back_24.01.14_a4.pdf, p. 26-27
[71] Ibid.

migrants while Farmakonisi island becomes also a fantasy realm where Europe attempt to exert their control over a specific space by torturing and combating a particular 'enemy' they are unable to control in reality, that is, in the wider geographical region of 'Europe'.

In this way, migrants that do make it to 'Europe's borders risk being pushed straight back across them (back to Turkey). Even if they succeed in entering Greek waters this is not equivalent to/with entering the territorial state, (as would be in the case) when crossing the land borders in Evros.[72] This fact leads not only to an increase of the dismissal of asylum claims on the Aegean, even if the migrants have entered Greek (hence European) territorial waters, but also to their deaths at sea; in the majority of cases, the pushed back refugees claim to have been left in life-threatening situations upon being pushed back in the Aegean,[73] as they are abandoned in 'Turkish' waters, many times under bad weather conditions or left on inhibited islands without any water and food, as I have already mentioned. By violating the non-refoulment law, Greece denies the migrant the right to even apply for asylum and have his story told the reason for which she/he embarked on such a perilous journey in the first place. We read in the *Guardian* about Ahmed Salih, an asylum seeker from Syria who unlike his friends, who were travelling with him, had survived the shipwreck that took place on the Mediterranean in 2014.While waiting in a refugee camp for his next interview in Denmark, expressed the following: '(…)I still feel for all the friends who were with me on board the ship. They got asylum in the sea'.[74]

[72] However, even in the Greek-Turkish land border 'push-backs' operations are frequent.
[73] http://www.proasyl.de/fileadmin/fm-dam/l_EU_Fluechtlingspolitik/proasyl_pushed_back_24.01.14_a4.pdf, p. 26-27
[74] http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/oct/20/-sp-migrants-tales-asylum-sea-mediterranean

2.3. Liquid traces: The 'wet' objects of the Aegean (reminisces of debris and death)

Turning once more to the Aegean's historical past (Aegean's narratives about the past); we encounter a similar 'cemetery' on the Eastern Aegean for a particular group of peoples attempting to cross from Turkey to the Greek islands. With the burning of Izmir in 1922 and the 'Population Exchange' that took place between Greece and Turkey in 1923, under the 'Treaty of Lausanne', again, we have many refugees from Asia Minor fleeing their homeland, obligated to abandon their homes, lands and other properties, in order to reach the 'safety' of the other side-Greece. And again, many of these refuges didn't make it to 'Greece' but lost their lives in the Aegean Sea. Likewise there are many narratives of pain and disaster in relation to the boats with which they travelled on. Indeed, the boat departing from Smyrna in flames has become a symbol of the Asia Minor disaster; images of the burnings boats and people overcrowding the boats, falling into the sea and drowning, or parents losing their children at sea, such as many of the male children that were thrown into the sea by the Turkish forces, are still very vivid in the narratives of the descendents of refugees and of the islanders in general on Lesvos. In other words, it is about the desperation of people who do not have any other exit/way out but the sea.

This 'once againess' of the migratory experience in this particular space of the Aegean, brings as once more to Foucault's notion of *heterotopias.* In Foucault's words, 'heterotopias are typically linked to slices of time (…) heterochronies'. According to Foucault, 'this intersection and phasing of space and time (...) allows the heterotopia 'to function at full capacity' based on an ability to arrive at an 'absolute break' with traditional experiences of time and temporality (1986:26). Indeed, 'the time of place and the time of space may thus not coincide. Sites, whether virtual or not, may themselves not be self-contained and distinct units' (Parvati, 2007:30). And the continuous movement, material reformation of the waves and non-linear temporality of the sea in general and the Aegean in particular provides us with exactly such an experience, that is, the experiences of a rather 'liquid' time to paraphrase once more Bauman.

This 'once againess', can also be found in the ways in which the refugees coming from Anatolia are received by the local people and how today's migrants from

Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Somalia and Sudan are being treated by 'Europeans' in 'Europe'. Without wanting to ignore the important discrepancies between them, it is usually the case that migrants become the 'scapegoats', a subject of suspicion, in a particular society-nation state, the 'strangers' as the potential enemies that threaten the already fragile order (of the nation-state). Bruce Clark in his novel *Twice a stranger* (2006) narrates the Minor Asia refugees' experience in Greece, where, after been violently uprooted from their homelands in Turkey, they were being discriminated and excluded, once again, and labeled 'strangers' by the 'local' people in Greece.

Moreover, there were times during my stay on Lesvos that I felt that the Aegean Sea was almost haunting the locals living next to it, due to its past narratives/histories of loss and deaths, the proximity to Turkey but also the more recent experience with migrants crossing the Aegean. In the summer of 2014, I visited many beaches, some of which were more isolated and less touristic than the others. I remember once, I went swimming at a beach that looked towards the Turkish coastal town of Altınoluk. In fact, I was at the part of the island that was closest to Turkey (separated a few kilometers from Turkey), described to me by the locals, as the village where you could hear the sound of the crows from Turkey: from Korakas cape – the most north part of Lesvos island. Before entering the waters, a woman approached me with the following words:

> 'If I was you I wouldn't go into these waters just now. In the early morning another boat sank with illegal migrants and some of them have still not been found. You just don't know what you might touch while swimming in these waters. Last week, for example, we found washed up tins and cans on the shores, obviously the belongings of boat people who were crossing the Aegean. In the past months we come across with many different objects, children' toys, water bottles, books and even photographs and of course bodies. Even the ones that are washed up on the shores are still wet, like these poor people who arrive on the island straight from the sea…. This is why I would wait a few days before swimming here' (mother of two children, Lesvos, July 2014).

I was shocked to be hearing such comments, as I was just about to enter the bluish-green waters. But this would not be the last time; I would come across with many such narratives. With such stories, we experience the significant symbolic meaning that the corpses of the undocumented migrants adopt on Lesvos. The emphasis on the wetness of their clothes and objects reflects the attempt of the islanders to comprehend/conceptualize the unbearable precariousness and

deterioration of the migrants' but also their own lives. Especially, when the timing of the Greek crisis and the socioeconomic upheavals that they brought to the island more or less coincides with the arrival of the undocumented migrants, and, thus, also their washed up bodies on the island's shores. Greece, economic crisis (hunger, poverty, unemployment), refugees (from Asia Minor), Europe, austerity, the sea, dead bodies, Turkey, migrants (that is not always linear temporalities) appear to connect/are connected in the imaginaries but also daily experiences of the islanders on Lesvos, sometimes in unpredictable and unrecognizable ways, as we shall see in the following chapters. Analyzing the affectual we arrive at Stephanie Merchant's (2014) description of the water as having 'overbearing surroundings' through its depth and the motion through it. Moreover, in her analysis of shipwrecks under the sea she presents 'a churning from present to past and from above to below, with each dive (into the water: my emphasis) initiated' (in Steinberg and Peters 2015:259).

Here we can also think of migrants' extensions floating in the water being seen as dirt, along the lines of Mary Douglas's anthropological analysis, as "matter out of place" (Mary Douglas). According Mary Douglas (1966), dangerous dirt is that which is recognizably out of place and in ambiguous status. Unclear identity is a threat to good order because it has potential to confront rules. Similarly, as we saw above, the graveyard as a typical heterotopic space in Foucault's theoretical/conceptual frame of heterotopias, is built at the outskirts or border of the city, when, according to Foucault, at the beginning of the 20th century death and dead bodies started to become a topic and objects of fear and perceived as a threat to the living order of society, whether economic, social, political and/or all three. The dead bodies and what they carry with them, in this way, symbolize the literal and metaphorical borderline between the dead and the living, the undesired and desired which ought to be separated by the borderline, in our case the 'liquid' border, as kind of solution and guarantee to this order. Due to its 'liquidness', however, this is never quite the case; 'things out of place' always end up (succeed in arriving) on its shores (the Aegean shores). Indeed, more than the actual migrants who were arriving on the island and hanging around the port waiting to be taken to the screening center in Moria, it was interesting to see that in certain occasions it was the floating and washed up objects that were haunting the islanders who encountered them while swimming or wandering on the beach. For these objects, as one 'local' put it to me:

> ‘revealed a past that had been abandoned and a life that was lost to the sea. These wet objects spoke of moments of people’ lives back at home and hopes for better lives that were drowned in the waves of the Aegean. Above all these were objects that would never be claimed by anyone, yet we do not feel comfortable to take them either’ (Interview with local in Skala Sikamnias, Lesvos, July 2014).

These objects that are brought by the sea are traces of the border on the Aegean. According to Taylor (2003), ‘the scenario’, and in this case the border, ‘structures our understanding. It also haunts our present, a form of hauntology that resuscitates and reactivates old dramas’. And their wetness, contrary to something dry, symbolizes exactly this, a ‘matter’ that should be avoided until it is dried up, or one dries it up. Wetness is, indeed, a strange state of existence, with a peculiar textuality/materiality, since, contrary to something dry, that has completely dried up (and hence lifeless and entirely dead), a wet object, I content, bares still traces of (its previous) life, continues to have something alive about, a possible recover/return, as it represents the threshold between life and death; it is neither completely dead nor completely alive, like the fishes who have just been pulled out from the sea by a fisher’s rod/net, and it is exactly this that is haunting, canniness and hence unbearable of such a condition. Like the sea itself, ‘wet’ objects (that have become wet due to their timely contact with the sea) bring with them to the shores unanticipated understandings of remembering, knowing and living continuously beside the waters. Another grandmother reacted differently and in the following way to these objects:

> I told my grandchild to keep the notebook that she found washed up on a rock on the beach in front of our house. Keep it, I said, you never know, maybe one day its owner will come here and ask for it back. My mother when she left from Asia Minor never forgot about the objects she had left behind and the ones that she lost during the journey at sea. Borders can’t separate everything. They take but they also bring you things (Molyvdos, Lesvos: August 2014).

The above narratives also bring us to Yael Navaro Yasin’s chapter on looted objects in *Make believe space* (2012), her discussion on how one claims the objects but never quite possesses them and, thus, how they continuously haunt their not legitimate owners. Indeed, as we will see in the following chapter, many of the survivors of the capsized boats did return again to Lesvos, not to claim their missing objects but to claim and mourn the lives of their loved ones at the memorial of the

fishing village Thermi, to their loved ones who lost their lives at sea, while, crossing the Aegean.

As we arrive at the end of this section, it is important to point out the dangers of analyzing the Mediterranean Sea in general and the Aegean in particular, exclusively as a graveyard for the 'wasted' and 'unwanted' lives at the borders of 'Europe'. First, by continuously referring to the Aegean as a graveyard risks reproducing the image of the migrants as passive victims who due to their own mindfulness opt for the hazardous sea-routes and fall prey to malicious 'smugglers'. Additionally, the identification of certain groups with specific spatial markers, whether these are routes through which the migrants are traveling, the places from which they come from, the places they are targeting or the spaces in which they lose their lives, leads to an overshadowing of the actual people and their individual stories by an exclusive remembrance of these particular spaces, as I have already argued above.

Moreover, in relation also to the current situation on the Mediterranean and the tragedies and deaths that are taking place there, we should beware not to fall into the trap of a colonial mentality when with good intentions we react towards and harshly criticize the politics of deaths on the Mediterranean and how its waters have become a graveyard of and in Europe. We shouldn't ignore, in other words, the fact that other non-'European' regions have also become graveyards for undocumented migrants due to the same EU border regime. Similarly, Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia turn away boats with thousands of people fleeing Myanmar and Bangladesh, however, the dire and deadly conditions of these peoples abandoned at sea has not been given nearly as much attention compared to the attention given to the deaths on the Mediterranean, which points out to another sign of nationalism based on the colonial imagination and order of things. By exclusively protesting against the graveyards of and on 'Europe', in this way, we are not only repeating a colonial discourse but ultimately what Glenda and Tazzioli (2013) have called a 'European nationalism' (this ignorance of certain geographies as unimportant and inferior is ultimately linked to a European nationalism).

At the same time, the massacres that are taking place on the Mediterranean and that are reaching the headlines of the European news, are ultimately connected to what is happening concerning the restrictions of movement in the seas off the African shores; that is, the construction of ('liquid') borders once again by 'Western' powers. Here we only need to think of the European Commission's recent proposal concerning

the current situation on the Mediterranean, which involves France, Lithuania, the UK and Spain preparing a draft UN Security Council resolution for the use of force to interdict, board or destroy traffickers' boats—following the model of Operation Atalanta against piracy off the coast of Somalia. In other words, this particular sea off the coast of Somalia is being used as a space of experimentation of EU maritime border policies, which apparently are claimed to have been successful and, thus, an appropriate model to follow in relation to the migratory situation at seas geographically close and of 'Europe', such as the Mediterranean Sea. In this sense, what has been taking place on the Mediterranean and what will begin to happen in this sea cannot and shouldn't be thought separately from the operations and militarization of non-'European' seas in relation to the mobility on and through them.

Secondly, as we shall see in the next chapter, the maritime Turkish-Greek border, like all borders, doesn't only reek with the politics of death, but also with life. This is true for both land and maritime borders, however, even more so for the later, where waters literally and metaphorically don't only separate but also connect. In the last few weeks, we keep hearing from the EU officials that 'we must prevent more deaths for occurring in the Mediterranean'. However, apart from having to be generally critical and skeptical towards the honesty of this EU approach against the people on the move, we should also question what these deaths are linked to or what they further provide for those who don't end up drowning in the Mediterranean; entry into 'Europe' and the hope and opportunity of creating a better life there. Not allowing the migrants to die in the Mediterranean is the result of 'a place not to be' for certain groups of peoples not allowed to move. In other words, these deaths are also linked to life and freedom, the kind of freedom that only colonial subjects are able to appreciate and hence willing to risk their lives for in order to obtain it within their colonial struggles. In this way, what the European policies preventing, once again, from the colonial times until now, is the right to move and the right to be, and, thus, the very right to live in certain spaces for these groups of people. That is to say, it is not the death at seas that the EU officials should seek to prevent or the 'smugglers' actions there but the abolishment of borders which are the ultimate cause of migrants deaths in the first place.

Additionally, if national and supranational forces (migratory apparatuses) are trying to control mobility on the Aegean Sea, we should not forget that the sea is above all the spatial metaphor for mobility per excellence, on and through which, not

only coastguards and Frontex operations travel and flow but also human rights organizations, activists and counter-surveillance (mapping) teams working directly at sea. In this sense, even the 'smugglers' are part of the connecting waters, since thanks to them, some of the migrants are able to escape the conflicts in their own countries and reach 'Europe', even if under inhuman/perilous conditions, as I mentioned in the previous section. Indeed, the 'smugglers' create routes even if patchy routes not to be revealed. If we are to celebrate and discuss connectedness we cannot ignore the contribution of the people smugglers in the mapping of such routes and connections: routes between Africa, Asia and Europe, as they themselves seek to survive (being the victims of the same border-regime system). Moreover, there are not only 'push-backs' and deaths but also 'moving on(s)' and survivors, many of which return to the Aegean border to provide help and support to the newly-arriving migrants, as we shall see further down. On the Aegean border, activism itself, therefore, is ultimately linked to migration and vice versa (is ultimately interrelated to migration and vice versa). To be activated means to move and to be moved (refers to movement) what migration, after all, is all about.

CHAPTER III

PATTERNS OF MOBILITY AND DEGREES OF PROXIMITY TO 'LIQUIDITY' ON THE AEGEAN WATERS

Part III proceeds in four sections. The first section discusses the image of the ship along the lines of Foucault's analytical framework of *heterotopias.* It shows how Foucault's analysis of the 'ship' helps us to dwell on the links between the present journey of the migrants crossing the Mediterranean and the colonial journeys between the 16th and 18th centuries again by boat at sea. My analysis offers a contribution to Foucault's conceptual frame by focusing on concrete examples of ships' journeys around Lesvos and how they delineate different heterotopic experiences. Thus, the second section turns to the most recent and characteristic patterns of mobilities that have developed simultaneously on the Aegean, the Turkish tourism and migratory movements. At the same time, it uses the 'ship' as a theoretical tool to capture the materiality that is attached to specific meanings and experiences on the Aegean, in relation to the two above mentioned journeys. It presents the actual agencies of these mobilities, the types of journeys that they create and their degrees of proximity to 'liquidity' on the Aegean border, that is, the watery flows of 'privilege' and vulnerability on the Aegean. This analysis is extended in the third section to what I call the journeys' 'effectual meanings of liquidity' as the result of the interrelating and often conflicting borders on the Aegean, past ones and more recent ones, the traces of which affect both patterns of mobility on the Aegean (the Turkish tourists' and the undocumented migrants' journey) and the ways in which they are being perceived and imagined by the locals on Lesvos. This section provides us with one of the main arguments of my thesis, which is, the particular historical and current mappings of the

Aegean contribute towards the making of particular experiences and affected (political) loaded spaces on, through and next to its waters. The final section discusses the 'ship' that crosses the Turkish-Greek border along the lines of what Gilroy calls a 'floating micro-cultural and micro-political symbol in motion', in order to understand how cultural movements/activities and events intermingle with political ones on the Aegean, while, some types of multiculturalism are being encouraged on the border (e.g. Turkish-Greek multiculturalism) versus a more 'planetary cosmopolitanism' (what I see to be the migratory journey on the Aegean), however, undesirable by the main political actors operating in this region. Hence, this section's main argument offers a twist to Foucault's theory of 'heterotopias' ship by taking its conceptual frame a step further and linking it to Gilroy's conceptualization/description of the ship as the vehicle with which not only colonizers/imperialists travel, but, also, with which, waters, ideas, activists, moving peoples and objects connect. Ultimately, this section will examine the limits of a planned neoliberal multiculturalism that is being promoted on the Aegean as opposed to the potentials of an alternative, spontaneous and more radical form of motion, and a migration of becoming that is the effect of routes rather than roots.

3.1. The 'ship'

According to Foucault the ship is the heterotopias per excellence:

> Brothels and colonies are two extreme types of heterotopia, and if we think, after all, that the boat is a floating piece of space, a place without a place, that exists by itself, that is closed in on itself and at the same time is given over to the infinity of the sea and that, from port to port, from tack to tack, from brothel to brothel, it goes as far as the colonies in search of the most precious treasures they conceal in their gardens, (you will understand why the boat has not only been for our civilization, from the sixteenth century until the present, the great instrument of economic development (I have not been speaking of that today), but has been simultaneously the greatest reserve of the imagination. The ship is the heterotopia par excellence.) In civilizations without boats, dreams dry up, espionage takes the place of adven-ture, and the police take the place of pirates (Foucault, 1986: 27).

The above passage highlights the connection between the maritime explorations of the European powers in the 16th century, the construction and delineation of sea-spaces along territorial lines, the creation of the colonies with their trade-routes and the development of capitalism. Indeed, the colonial ship has been the 'great instrument of economic development' due to the transnational trade routes that it established by connecting Eurasia, Africa and the Americas (via the trans-Atlantic trade route), consolidating, in this way, the capitalism system as the primarily economic system in the 'West' and the territorial nation-state as its ideal form of social/political organization.

At the same time, Foucault argues that the ship is also the 'greatest reserve of the imagination'; here we can think how 'central to the imaginary of Western capitalist and colonial modernity, the sea has long been intertwined with a range of problems for representation and conceptualization' (Connery, 2010: 691). Indeed, as we saw in Chapter I, the delineation of sea-spaces is ultimately connected to the first explores and their journeys and expeditions at sea. That is to say, the 'exotic' lands of the colonies (to be) entailed the 'greatest reserve of imagination' for the 'Europeans' who started to conquer them along with their products and inhabitants. I take Foucault's concept of the 'heterotopic' ship a step further by arguing that when speaking of the Aegean today and the peoples who arrive on its waters, we see that it is mainly the inhabitants of the post-colonies that are inspired by the idea of 'Europe', a 'Europe' that becomes the 'greatest reserve of imagination', a place for which certain groups of people risk their lives at the borders in their attempt to move 'deeper into' what they imagine to be Europe. In this way, one can observe in today's EU border apparatus with the Fronext agency restricting undesired movements at sea towards 'Europe', the 'espionage' that Foucault mentions, whereas, the pirates that turn into 'police', can be thought of as the coastguards and the other agents of the border securitization regime.

> 'The two "ghost ships" discovered sailing towards the Italian coast last week with hundreds of migrants – but no crew – on board are just the latest symptom of what experts consider to be the world's largest wave of mass-migration since the end of the second world war.'[75]

European narratives as they construct the public and political imagination on the migrants' journey, through the mainstream and even more liberal media, frequently

[75] http://www.theguardian.com/world/commentisfree/2015/jan/03/arab-spring-migrant-wave-instability-war

refer to the 'ghost boats' (are abounded with the image of the 'ghost boat'). There are many reasons why the migrants are being constructed in the grand European narrative as 'ghosts' at sea: due to their deaths, disappearances, and of course the shipwreck. Especially lately, in the case of the Central Mediterranean in the waters between Libya and Malta and Italy, the EU Commission in an alarming tone is speaking of the so called 'ghost-ships', large cargo ships floating on the Mediterranean with no captain but numerous migrants squashed on top of each other, with the majority only able to afford a precarious place at the bottom/lower deck of the ship. The anonymity, the indefinable of the ship and the obvious fear that it provokes by its very mobility on the Mediterranean towards 'European' territories, with no captain, flag and national identity, creates a turmoil among EU officials dealing with migration, as they struggle to control every single movement on the Mediterranean, even before they start to set off from the off-shore/coastal neighboring countries, as we can understand from the above quotation from an article published in the *Guardian*. Similarly, the very absence of the flag on the rubber boats, with which migrants travel, is perceived as an 'anomaly', a 'matter out of place' (to remember once more Mary Douglas) on the Aegean that needs to be detected, cleaned and 'cured' by Turkish, Greek and/or EU officials who are there 'to calm the seas'.

Indeed, the mainstream media and popular discourses (political actors) present the migrants' boats as 'ghost-ships', mysterious entities coming from another world and place, something out of the order/normality at sea, and which, present a threat to 'Europe' and the 'Europeans' living there ('the latest symptom of what experts consider to be the world's largest wave of mass-migration': from the above article). The image of an anonymous ship entering 'European' waters creates the idea of an unknown 'enemy' intruding 'Europe', where the ship is perceived as a warship and the situation at sea a maritime warfare against the unknown 'enemy'. The construction of these imaginaries around the migrants journey at sea entails a historical irony in itself, for the very fact that the Europeans are all too familiar with these sea-routes and journeys from their own ignored and not so celebrated histories of colonialism. Indeed, their ships and their (imperial) function from the colonial times starting in the 16th century until their transformation into bombardment planes in our present times of 'Western' imperialism, mark a particular geopolitical interference creating turmoils that take place in the same geographical regions that the 'West' has been and continues to interfere in and, because of this, the inhabitants of these lands are now

making the same journey only this time from and towards the opposite direction; whereas, sometimes it becomes the exact repletion of the same route, that is, of the middle passage, the transatlantic trade route that Gilroy mentions in his felicitous *Black Atlantic*.[76]

Additionally, this discussion brings us to the "water wars" that specialists have long predicted will characterize the geopolitics of the 21st century, with the post-colonial regions being already the first to suffer from such scarcity of waters. Indeed, there is a particular relevance here to the crisis in the Mediterranean, that is, to the fact that the impact of climate change is geographically asymmetric. Warming is more likely in the Polar regions, especially the near-Arctic, and on the tropical and sub-tropical land masses, and, thus, the Mediterranean basin and south-west Asia are especially likely to heat up and also experience declining rainfall, the overall effect being substantially to decrease the yields from some key food-growing areas.[77] Migration, in this way, is ultimately linked to water or absent of waters or in other words migration will link the absent of water to watery connections, that is sea routes, through which peoples will migrate in search of available water sources elsewhere (in order to survive).

Even now, however, the 'floating piece of space' of the ship in Foucault's analysis which 'is given over to the infinity of the sea', the migrants who constitute 'post-colonial' subjects, start their precarious journey to the 'West' not in search for the most precious treasures, as Foucault highlights about the European explorers of the heterotopic ship, but, I contend, for basic human needs and rights, like housing, food, education, peace, liberty-freedom, safety and protection. This journey reveals the migrants not only as the 'wasted lives', to use Bauman's (2003) term, of a post-capitalist era, but also, following Stoler's (2013) argument, the 'imperial debris' of colonial forces that continue to structure our world today. However, even Bauman speaks of the production of 'human waste' as the effects of a couple of centuries or so, when 'the north-western peninsula of the Asiatic continent, called 'Europe', as a

[76] Indeed, testimonies show that some African migrants travel for up to four years trying to reach Europe. Many Somalis, for example, are asylum seekers in Colombia. They cross the African continent eastbound, then stow away on transport ships from Angola to Brazil, and from there cross into Colombia.

[77] https://www.opendemocracy.net/paul-rogers/mediterranean-dreams-climate-realities.

solitary island of modernity in a vast, planet-wide premodern sea, and so enjoyed a worldwide monopoly of modernization; it was therefore the sole part of the globe afflicted with the bane of human redundancy' (2012:161). And it is our current stratified world 'that is now haunted by racial phantoms, fantastic figures derived from political exigencies defined at the terminal points of European trading activity' (Gilroy, 2004: 18). Indeed, the poverty and conflict stricken countries from which the migrants are fleeing are partly (if not entirely) the consequences-results of a colonizing 'West' that has its roots, as Foucault mentions, in the 16th century, and which took the form of a 'new imperialism' in the 19th century, the effects of which we can observe in the current situations of many of the 'post-colonized' countries.

Moreover, the migrants are not only fleeing from the 'ruination' that is taking place in their own regions but also encounter a similar economical, social and political 'ruination' in the countries of destination-reception, where the 'West' continues to exploit subjects and certain groups of people as cheap labor from the so called 'Third World' countries. The inflatable rubber boat with which the migrants travel on, and which many times are washed up on the Aegean shores, after a shipwreck, is, indeed, the great instrument of economic development, as was the case in the 90s in Greece, when it experienced an 'economic boom' due to the great numbers of undocumented migrants arriving in the country, mainly from the Post-Soviet bloc and which provided the country's industry sector with new and cheap labor forces. In other words, migrants don't only experience literally shipwrecks while crossing the Aegean (at sea), but, also metaphorical 'shipwrecks', once they enter the territorial nation-state (on land), as they struggle with severe economic, social and political conditions. In this sense, when speaking about the 'liquid' border on the Aegean, we ought to also consider the various borders that follow the migrants to the 'interior' of the nation state. That is to say, the border for the migrants does not stop at the maritime Turkish-Greek border but follows them to the interiors of the urban spaces, spaces which deeply inflected by migrant practices have likewise become premier sites of border struggles (De Genova, 2015).

Ultimately, it is important to point out that the migrants themselves during their journey on the Aegean (while crossing the Aegean) encounter 'ghost-ships'. I have already discussed the numerous testimonies published by PRO ASYL, Amnesty International, Migeurop and others, which reveal that in a situation of distress at sea, there are many occasions, when the migrants notice a ship in the horizon to which they

cry out for help, only to see it by-pass them, leaving them abandoned as they sink in the waters. In the words of a refugee who managed after three attempts to reach Lesvos:

> '… then suddenly, a large ship appeared, stopped for a moment, we waved our hands into the air and cried (started to shout) for help but in vain. The ship after a few seconds continued its journey. It was safe and dry on the waters while we were cold, wet and drowning in the waters'.[78]

In the case of the Aegean, survivors spoke to ProAsyl interviewees about masked men in black that appear suddenly in the waters like ghosts as they flash their lights on the migrants' boat before detaining and torturing them on their vessels and finally pushing them (the migrants) back into Turkish waters. The sudden arrival of these men, who undoubtedly are the representatives of the Greek military forces and whose bases occupy many of the smaller islands between Turkey and Greece (for example, the Pharmakonisi island, as we have seen), reveal once more the construction of the Aegean along gender lines and how the intense presence and even show/performance of masculinity intermingles with nationalism on the Aegean space, as it does in every space colonized by the nation state and/or empire. Additionally, in the refugee's narrative we notice the emphasis that is given to the agency and responsibility of the ship (by the migrants) as it adopts different symbolic meanings and roles for them at sea; it is the ship that represents the migrants' hopes when it appears in the horizon and again it is that same ship that destroys their hopes when it abandons them to their own fate at sea. As Phillipe Hoars argues, 'in our secure western world, we look out to a sea we have conquered and called into our dominion, exploited and even polluted in the process. But that same sea offers thousands a different hope. For them, it is a last resort.[79]

This is a 'cruel optimism' to borrow from Berland's (2011) conceptual frame with which she describes the ordeal and inherent contradictions of capitalism that construct/provide the hopes and dreams for a better and 'good life', while, at the same time, it is this very same system that occludes these hopes and dreams from ever being fulfilled for the precarious/'wretched' of this world. In the same way, the 'ship' with

[78] http://www.proasyl.de/fileadmin/fm-dam/l_EU_Fluechtlingspolitik/proasyl_pushed_back_24.01.14_a4.pdf
[79] http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/apr/21/the-sea-does-not-care-wretched-history-migrant-voyages-mediterranean-tragedy

which the migrants travel on the Aegean Sea represents the ultimate hope and dream for all those seeking a better life in 'Europe', however, it is this very sea and the Fronext vessels' that the migrants encounter on the waters, which provide the obstacles for this better life from ever taking place in 'Europe'; before the journey, drowning regions, such as the African countries, Syria, Afghanistan, during the journey, drowning bodies in the Aegean, and drowning lives even after the journey in 'Europe'. That the Aegean sea and the Mediterranean in general represent the broken promises and illusions of an egalitarian and freedom of movement for everyone European space, is culminated in the words of the chief of Frontex, the agency (and which I referred to in the previous chapter) that is supposedly there to make sure that all the human rights and the law of the sea are applied by all member states on the Mediterranean:

> Triton cannot be a search-and-rescue operation. I mean, in our operational plan, we cannot have provisions for proactive search-and-rescue action. This is not in Frontex's mandate, and this is in my understanding not in the mandate of the European Union".[80]

According to Paul Gilroy in *Black Atlantic* Du Bois establishes the slave ship as the inaugural location both for his own skepticism and for the ''tangle of thought and afterthought' in which the critical ethical and political questions of the age must be decided' (1995:118). Reflecting on Du Bois's idea of the ship as it is discussed in Gilroy's *Black Atlantic,* I want to pause and reflect on the possible connections between the slave ship of the colonial times and the present 'ship' with which today's 'imperial debris' cross the Mediterranean, in relation to the critical ethical and political questions of our age that must be decided. Because what is being decided on the waters of the Eastern Aegean, for example, are also about critical ethical and political questions that must be decided over the rights of movement (of certain groups of peoples) at a planetary scale, when the very basic and natural element of what it means to be human, that is to be mobile, has become a political issue of debate. At the micro-scale on the ground, that is, on the actual Greek coastguards' 'ship' (vessel) there are also critical ethical and political decisions to be made; as we have already seen, it depends on the coastguards' decision whether they will 'rescue' and bring the

[80] http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/apr/22/eu-borders-chief-says-saving-migrants-lives-cannot-be-priority-for-patrols

migrants safely to the Greek border islands or push them back to Turkish waters, leading many times to their deaths at sea.

Focusing on the Eastern Aegean, I contend, that the 'ship' is a particular border marker of the Aegean, literally and metaphorically. On the one hand, as it crosses the Aegean, it delineates the specific boundaries along the territorial lines of the two nation states, Turkey and Greece, as one can notice in the interchange of the national flag at a certain point on the 'liquid' border, while, at the same time, it demarks a more invisible 'European' border, with the sea becoming more or less 'solid', in relation to the passengers who are crossing it. That is to say, the movement of ships, beyond and across, as well as within a bounded territory, on the one hand, serves to reproduce the territory that is being bounded (Steinberg 2009). Indeed, boundaries also regulate and are reproduced by acts of movement, as we saw in Chapter I, when referring to the explorations of the 'Europeans' at sea in the 15th century. On the other hand, the 'ship' with its movements challenges and transgresses these very boundaries. In other words, it becomes a destabilizing movement of space through the breaking down of mainstream spatial and cultural coordinates. In this perspective, the 'ship' allows the possibility to disturb rather than to demarcate borders, thus, opening up the space for new connections that migrate beyond existing social, cultural, or political frameworks; and such is the case with the migrants that succeed in arriving on the Greek islands.

According to Steinberg and Peters, 'the fluid unknowability of the ocean generates lines of *connection* that cut through classic geopolitical lines of *division*, much as the ocean similarly facilitates both connection and division in economic and cultural spheres' (2015:253; Steinberg 1999). Departing from Steinberg and Peters' suggestion to 'think *with* the ocean as a theoretical tool, by paying particular attention to its materiality, which can never be separated from either the experience of the ocean or the meanings that we attach to oceanic experiences' (2015:256), in this chapter, I propose to think with the Aegean sea. And, indeed, if one wants to explore the Aegean's particular materiality which 'cannot be separated from either the experience of the Aegean or the meanings that we attach to the Aegean's experiences', the 'ship' that travels on the Aegean, I argue, is an ideal space (in movement) from where to start our examination, since attached to its materiality are particular and often discordant meanings and experiences, as we shall see in the following sections. On the Aegean Turkish-Greek border, in specific, the 'ship' becomes the material symbol (and empirical example) of the recent transformations that take place on the waters. At the

same time its presence on this part of the Aegean is also 'haunting', due to the Aegean's recently constructed borders that cannot but evoke the memories of past and unresolved historical borders whose traces are still affecting the people living next to its waters.

Hence, my theoretical discussion in the remaining part of Chapter 3 contributes towards Foucault's notion of heterotopias by offering some new ways of using it when dwelling upon ships, migrants and connecting waters around Lesvos. With the ship as the 'great economic instrument of development' and the 'greatest reserve of the imagination' according to Foucault, I am able to scrutinize the two types of mobility on the Aegean border: a more 'solid' one with the ferry that brings Turkish tourists to the Greek islands though a new visa regulation/scheme, the 'pilot visa', as the effects of neoliberal flows on the Aegean and another more precarious one with the inflatable rubber boats that the migrants travel on, as the less privileged subjects of a more securitized border. It is to these two types of mobility (spaces in movement) which matter significantly to all subjects and actors involved (Greek and Turkish authorities, coastguards, EU agents, fishers, migrants, Turkish tourists and migrants), that I am turning to in the following section.

3.2. The 'liquid' relation between nationalism and racism on the Aegean: The Turkish tourists and the undocumented migrants' journeys on the Aegean

By degrees of 'liquidity' on the Aegean, I am referring to two types of journeys, that is, ways of crossing from the Turkish side to the Greek one and their distinct groups of passengers that they entail: the Turkish tourists which recently are finding it easier to cross the border and the undocumented migrants, for which the crossing from one side to the other is becoming more and more of a struggle. Specifically, I will focus on the 'passage' between the coastal town of Ayvalik on the Turkish side and the island of Lesvos on the Greek side. These two types of journeys share the common point that they both involve a crossing of a 'liquid' border and, thus, its passengers are using the 'ship' as a means to cross from one side to the other. In other words, their boats as they travel on the Aegean delineate certain 'liquid' lines that separate 'Turkey' from 'Greece' and 'Asia' from 'Europe'. Hence, like all borders, 'liquid' borders are especially ambiguous and the Aegean border even more so due to its

historical political past and its more recent transformation from a national border to a transnational one, that is, a European border.

Indeed, what is taking place now at the Turkish-Greek border (both the land and the maritime one), as I have already mentioned, is a transformation that signifies a shift in emphasis from 'Turks' to undocumented migrants, that is, a gradual transformation from a site of antagonism between the Turkish and Greek authorities to a site of collaboration of the two against the undocumented migrants, with the support of Frontex agency. This results often in violations of the migrants' rights at sea, such as the push-backs and the readmissions agreements between Turkey and Europe (see Proasyl). This gradual change at the macro-level, I argue, is also evident on the ground in the different crossings of the border and on the Greek border islands, as one can encounter in the daily conversations with their inhabitants, who in the last few years are experiencing rather intensely the arrival of 'Turks' and 'migrants' at their 'doorstep'. Even though, both groups of 'strangers' have arrived on the islands by boat from the 'other side' and, thus, crossed the same border, their journeys or rather their patterns of mobility, however, are the effects of different border regimes and practices and, hence, involve distinct and, I would argue, unequal experiences and privileges (political, economic and cultural). This is why we cannot speak of one 'liquid' border but instead degrees of 'liquidity' on the Aegean, depending on which mobilities are desired and which aren't, creating, in this way, simultaneously 'solid' and secure journeys alongside more 'liquid' and precarious ones. How and when do these two types of mobility coincide on the Aegean and what additional layers does this interrelation add to the intensity of the Aegean and the struggles that take place there? I will try to answer this question by elaborating firstly on the two different types of 'passengers' and the historical, social and political contexts in which they are travelling.

3.2.1. On the 'ship'

Crossing with the Jale or Turyol ferry-boat from Ayvalik on the Turkish side to the Greek island of Lesvos, one struggles to understand where exactly the border on the Aegean stands. In fact, it can become an enjoyable game to try and notice the small but significant details and rituals which represent the passage from Turkey to Greece;

at which point Turkey ceases to be Turkey and at which point Greece becomes Greece. Since we are dealing here with a 'liquid' border one would expect and, thus, tries to find answers and signs in the waters themselves. During one of my crossings, I remember a small child asking its mother 'does the color of the sea change in Greece?' This rather naïve but at the same time very meaningful question was met with disappointment by the child when its mother turn round and said 'now this is Greece, we are in Greece now'. The child very carefully looked at the waters below it, then at the small inhibited islets around him and finally at the sky up above him. Pulling at his mother's jacket he said in a disappointing tone 'but it is just the same'. I was not able to hear the explanation the mother gave to the child about the absence of difference, if she gave any, nor did I find out how she realized this change, that is, what made her to decide that now we were in Greece and not Turkey (rather than a little earlier or later). Was it because Lesvos island was visible in the distance, or was it due to her sense of time, her knowing that the boat journey would last one and half hours, and the journey was coming to an end, therefore, we must be in Greece now. Or it was just about checking her mobile phone (I-ped) and noticing that she had been connected to the Greek Cosmote? Most likely, however, for this particular person, like most of the tourists crossing the Aegean, the when, why and how of the border does not really matter (however, as we will see later on this is not the case for all the groups travelling on the Aegean).

Departing from the child's question, which, like all children' questions tell us a lot about the state of things, we realized that the border on the Aegean, like all borders, is not something natural but a construction and, thus, can be easily disputed and challenged. And the fact that the Aegean border is placed on something as natural as water (its spatial entity is water) adds to its complexity and meaning. The water naturally should change color at the border but it doesn't. However, some other things do. In all of the eight crossings that I made from one side to the other, I tried to depict signs, both in the geophysical environment around me and on the actual boat that would indicate the presence of the border. Concerning the physical surroundings, what one immediately notices when travelling by boat from Ayvalik to Lesvos are the many small uninhibited islets and rocks. Indeed, the sea-space between the two territorial states in this part of the Aegean is anything but empty. Green islands, rocks, abandoned churches, ruins, fortifications, national flags, fishing boats with their fishers, private ships with people drinking and singing on the deck and of course our

own small passengers boat. While leaving the port of Ayvalik behind, the abandoned old Greek houses of Cunda Island follow you for a long time. Turkish red and white flags are dominating this space until you arrive at a point where the land splits in two, leaving a kind of openings that leads to the open blue see. 'Ah this must be the border', I thought, since it is here where the land ends with a fortification on it that holds the Turkish flag, as if indicating the Turkish border. But no, this is not the case. I hear some passengers claiming that we are still in Turkey, that there is still time for us to arrive in Greece. Indeed, the captain's assistant has not yet changed the flag on the boat; the Turkish one remains as do the ones on some of the islets that we are now encountering.

A little further on there are more rocks and islets, however, these don't have any flags, and, thus, shine naturally on the waters. Are they the disputed islands on the Aegean, the ones which both Turkey and Greece are claiming their sovereignty over? Was this then the border? Were we in international waters, the so called 'high-seas', which are not 'Turkish' nor 'Greek'? Looking at these islands my mind immediately turned to the undocumented migrants who mainly at nighttime travel across this same space that we are crossing now. What meanings do these islands and rocks have for them, during the many times that they find themselves accidently upon them? If these islands are objects of dispute between Turkey and Greece, how does this affect the movements of the migrants at sea?

Suddenly, as we continue to be surrounded by islets, the young assistant takes the Turkish flag down and pulling the rope puts up the Greek flag. The moment of this action appears to be obvious to the boy, who without any hesitation raises the flag up to the air. 'Are you sure we are in Greece now?' I ask him. 'Well, of course we are! Don't you see the flag?' was his reply that didn't lack a certain tone of sarcasm. The visibility of the flag, however, did not convince me. Had we indeed just crossed the border? The island of Lesvos did not seem any closer than before. In each one of my eight journeys, I practiced the same game/exercise. I tried to see whether the flag was replaced at the same moment and point on the Aegean (of our journey). But this was impossible. As Myrivili (2006) argues 'liquid borders cannot be photographed'.

I hear some passengers saying that 'here is the border', as they point out to a couple of large rocks next to us. Hadn't they seen the flag, I thought, while at the same time, I understand their need to identify the border with something more solid; to turn

its ‘liquidness’ into something tangible and visible, to apply their analytical perceptions of internal and territorial spaces to external sea-spaces.

Lesvos now is much closer. You recognize the harbor, the castle on the hill and the statue of liberty at the old port. As we enter the harbor, I approach the captain of our boat and ask him whether he will stay on Lesvos or return immediately to Ayvalik.

> ‘No, I am leaving; the boat is scheduled to depart in half an hour with the Turks and Greeks for Ayvalik. And can I tell you something, since you seemed to be so interested in the border: For me, there is no border. The Aegean Sea is my home. My parents are from Crete and in 1923 we came as refugees on an overcrowded boat to Turkey and settled in Ayvalik. I was just a baby. My parents for many years at home spoke Cretan and all my life I have spoken both Greek and Turkish. Now, I am a captain and I speak the language that is most close to me, the language of the Aegean. It is the language that I know the best, for it is the language closest to my heart’ (Conversation with captain of ‘Jale’ ferry, Mytilini, October 2014).

3.2.2. The Turkish tourists’ journey on the Aegean: Flows of economic and cultural privilege on the Aegean

For more than a decade, the eastern Mediterranean has been affected by a wave of multicultural nostalgia, a longing for times perceived as more cosmopolitan and peaceful (Della Dora 2006). This wave of multicultural nostalgia is also affecting the Eastern Aegean region between Turkey and Greece where inhabitants of both sides are reflecting on the Aegean their longing for a ‘lost paradise’ when the Turks and the Greeks are thought to have lived side by side in a ‘cosmopolitan’ environment. Whereas, this nostalgia for a ‘lost homeland’ has always been present in the narratives of the descendants of the refugees from Asia Minor living on Lesvos (Hirschon 2009), this is a rather new phenomenon for the Turks living on the opposite side (with the exception of the Turks whose ancestors came from Crete during the population exchange), who up until recently have been indoctrinated in a republican-kemalist nationalist ideology, which since the ‘war of independence’ (1922) against Greece, has constructed Greece as the ‘national enemy’.

While the official education and history school books in both Greece and Turkey project the ‘other’ as the ‘enemy’, in the Aegean region we encounter some

particularities; whereas for the Greeks living on Lesvos, at least in times of political stability between the two countries, it has been easy to cross over to the Turkish side and visit the town of Ayvalik in order to shop every Thursday in its local market (Myrivili 2006), this was not the case for the Turks, from whom, even those who had the 'green passport' due to their occupation in the civil service sector, the Greek state was demanding a visa, not to even mention all the other Turkish citizens; Turkish citizens had to go through the extremely complicated, bureaucratic and expensive procedure of applying for a visa. In this sense, we can already speak of different degrees of 'liquidity' and privilege on the Aegean, as we encounter an unequal relationship between the two sides, with the 'Greek' and, more recently 'European' citizens, able not only to visit and shop in Turkey by just showing their ID card at the border controls but also those whose ancestors came from Asia Minor were able to visit the neighborhoods and houses of Ayvalik that they were forced to abandon in 1923. On the contrary, the Turks and all non-'European citizens, starting from the Aegean and moving deeper into 'Europe' are not entitled to this freedom of movement, primarily, because Turkey is not part of the EU, never mind the Schengen-land. The Greek islands, in this way, appeared to be very distant and 'strange' for the Turks living on the Aegean side, exactly because they were are only within a few nautical miles reach from the Turkish mainland, however, not easy to approach. Thus, we see here how the border transforms the spatial imaginaries around the meanings of 'closeness' and 'farness/remoteness', as it can make a place that is geographically very close –natural proximity- almost unreachable and a place that is geographically further away easier to approach and, thus, closer.

Along these lines, Hirschon (2009) discusses refugee memory in Lesvos in the aftermath of the population exchange (1923). Due to the island's geographical composition and its proximity to Turkey, she encountered a distinct process of remembering from the one on mainland Greece. In specific, she argues that while for the refugees settling on Lesvos integration was easier due to the fact that it's 'landscape' is similar if not identical to the one they left behind (environment, climate, physical elements and even smells), psychologically and mentally they went through a harder process from the refugees who were settling on the Greek mainland (making the process of settling down at times unbearable), for although they were very close and even able to discern the houses of their 'lost homeland' it was not possible to return. In this sense, the experience of geographical 'closeness', what it means to feel

close to the opposite side of the Aegean border and be able to see the 'other side', has been and still is something very ambiguous. At the same time, it differs within each historical period (for example during the Cyprus crisis in the 70s the border was once again closed, that is, they were hardly any crossings) not only for the different peoples living on the two sides (Turks and Greeks) but also for those individuals, coastguards, fishers, undocumented migrants, refugees, activists, from diverse geographical regions who at different historical/political moments have to and wish to cross the Aegean.

Turning to Lesvos, I learned that only a few years ago, whenever you did hear about the Turkish presence on the Aegean, it was from the Greek coastguards who would speak about their encounters with the Turkish coastguards on the waters and how 'the Turks with their aggressive attitude had insulted them', or from fishers who would set a meeting with the Turkish fishers on the 'liquid' border in order to exchange cigarettes (on the waters), or in the media about Turkish vessels violating the Greek sovereignty on the Aegean. That is to say, on Lesvos I understood that in relation to the Turkish crossing, the Aegean border was not so much about the actual Turkish people, on the contrary what was (being) perceived as the Turkish presence and movement on the Aegean border by the islanders were the assaults committed by Turkish boats, vessels and/or aircrafts representing in one way or another a 'Turkey' that was threatening 'Greece' on the Aegean with its 'warships'. In some cases the avoidance of any mentioning of the word 'persons' (or similar terms) is brought to the extreme, when, for example, the Greek authorities recognize the applicability of "rights of the accused" for "violations committed by a Turkish vessel" , as we read in various Greek national newspapers of that time. I have already spoken about the authorized and unauthorized movements and how they link to suspicious vessels on the Aegean. In other words, similarly to how the undocumented migrants' movement on the Aegean is presently being defined and thought of as a 'problem', the Turkish presence on the Aegean waters was indispensable from the idea of transgressing the 'Greek' border, that is, from a kind of 'illegality' (suspiciousness) of their movements.

In order to understand the previous imaginary of the Turkish presence on the Aegean by the locals on Lesvos better, it is worth remembering the personal account of Panos, the Greek citizen who had served his military duty on Lesvos in 2008 and whose narrative I discussed in Chapter II. We remember his account of the year of 2008, when he was doing his military service, that whenever a Turkish vehicle would drive out from the 'Jale' ferry into the port of Mytilini, it would cause a great turmoil

at the Greek military base which was placed outside the capital of Lesvos. What is even more compelling is that just recently I learned from Lesvos' local newspaper *Embros* that the mayor is trying to persuade the minister of defense to let them have the military base in Petra, a touristic resort (sea-side) village of Lesvos that lately is attracting the majority of Turkish tourists who visit the island. According to the mayor this space lies unused while it could be exploited for tourism, that is, for different cultural and artistic events, functioning as a site of attraction for the Turkish visitors. In (ironic) twist of events, when the above space in the past was being used as a military base against the 'enemy', the 'Turks', what we could call a 'push factor', with the shifting meanings of the 'liquid' borders, there is an attempt to transform this same space into a site of attraction, that is, a 'pull factor' again for the 'Turks' (tourists). At the same time, we have seen how some of the military bases on the island are used as detention centers for the undocumented migrants, as a 'push factor', a deterrent (slow down), in other words, for these groups of people to immediately and directly move deeper into 'Europe' (even though, migrants use these detention camps on the Aegean exactly for this very reason, that is, as a stop over which provides them with a 'ticket' to 'Europe)'.

This sudden transformation taking place on the Eastern Aegean in relation to the influx of Turkish tourists on the Greek border islands cannot be thought independently from the liberal tolerance that started with the AKP government. It is an effect, in other words, of the growth of the mood of liberal tolerance which gained ground in the 2000s in Turkey as a result of the AKP government's veering towards what is known as 'liberal conservatism'. Hand in hand with the liberal policies of the AKP government, open discourse upon various issues, ranging from economic perspectives to ethnic conflicts, take place. As a result of the demands for democratic reforms instigated by the EU, accession process on the one hand and the vitality of the Kurdish movement on the other, the emergence of liberal discourse on minorities has also became more apparent; in other words, the rise of neoliberal cultural politics is evident. According to AKP's liberal discourse, respect for multicultural 'colors' of different ethnic and religious groups can be a means of maintaining the stability and unity of the nation. One could understand this change in Istanbul by the fact, for example, that Greek and Armenian songs started to be heard in all the commercial shops of Istanbul and Greek restaurants opened up as a form of commercialization.

This (governmental) policy of 'respect' and 'tolerance' projected towards the different ethnic and religious groups within the Turkish nation, was reflected also to its exterior 'other' on the Aegean (on the other side of the Aegean), the Greek islands. In this historical context, together with the narratives on the Aegean's multicultural history, the Greek border islands have been opened to Turkish tourism. Suddenly, the Eastern Aegean gained a multicultural visibility in Greek and Turkish media through serial movies, documentaries, intercultural activities and projects/events between the two sides and the opening of museums on the population exchange with a particular emphasis on how it affected 'equally' the populations of both sides on the Aegean. Additionally, more and more Turkish citizens began to learn the Greek language, accompanied by a need to discover their Greek roots that were cut during the population exchange. All these transformations were taking place within the wider context of the Greek-Turkish reapproachment political context, encouraged also by Turkey's accession into the EU. It is important to keep in mind, though, that this multicultural vision, at the same time, supports the concealment of the Turkish state's ongoing violence in the Kurdish and Mesopotamian region, which, in turn is partially the cause for the migratory movements that are currently taking place on the Eastern Aegean, as thousands of people are being displaced from countries such as Syria and other neighboring countries of Turkey, due to an ongoing violence for which the Turkish state is also responsible.

While it is constructed as a space of monist history in the context of the Turkish state's policies of multiculturalism and tourism; remembrance of the "old" Aegean corresponds to the articulation of yearnings towards the music, architecture, food or people of the past for the 'Aegean people'. In contradiction to the state's monist multicultural history, narratives on the longed past condenses around the history of the Aegean. In other words, it is a space that is colonized by the nation state (both Greek and Turkish) and continuously being reconstructed upon the exhibition of its colonized history. Additionally, I heard many Greek islanders on Lesvos arguing that things have improved between Greece and Turkey since Tayyip Erdogan began to govern the country. 'Since the AKP is on power we do not have any problems with our neighbors, we feel this even when we visit Turkey now, the atmosphere in Izmir is so much friendlier. This was not the case with the CHP party', were sentences that I was hearing frequently by locals on Lesvos, which included also the opinion that 'Erdogan has made an organized state out of Turkey and brought money to the Turkish pockets.

What does it matter if more girls are wearing the head scarf? As long as there is money people are happy. And of course as long as they don't bother us', was another argument shared by many locals on Lesvos who were experiencing severe economic crisis on the islands.

While this liberal tolerance towards the ethnic other in Turkey cannot be thought separately from a neoliberalism that seeks to gain economic profit by the commercialization of 'difference' as a product or even letting it to live as museum objects as Zizek has argued elsewhere, likewise, the promotion of multiculturalism on the Aegean is dependent on a neoliberalism that seeks to strengthen the relations of the two sides with the ultimate aim of (economic) profit. In this sense, the visa facilitation pilot program[81] that started to operate in 2011 and which permits Turkish tourists or other non-European citizens visiting Turkey that wish to have a holiday on Rhodes, Kos, Samos, Chios, Lesvos and Kastelorizo – for less than 15 days – to issue visas either through Turkish travel agents or straight from the ports of the islands with the proper documentation, is a crucial step towards the production of a the neoliberal cultural politics on the Aegean. The Greek ambassador in Ankara, Mr. Lukakis who spoke at the ceremonial opening of the forum aiming at a developing of economic cooperative projects between the two sides on the Aegean and which was organized by representatives from the business worlds in both Turkey and Greece, emphasized that:

> One of the most important steps for the consolidation of economic relations is tourism. But tourism is not just about economic relations. Tourism brings the peoples of both sides of the Aegean closer, and it encourages them to get to know each other, to understand one another and to become friends'. The Aegean will become land and we will unite![82]

In a similar manner of speech and discourse, the mayor of the metropolitan municipality of Izmir emphasized the following:

> We live by on the shores of the same waters, we are the children of the same seas, we are the inheritants of the same history, and we are the pieces of the same geography. The geologists say that after 500 years the Aegean will dry up and become land. If sooner or later we are anyway going to unite why don't we unite now? … We must also become good partners not

[81] http://news.gtp.gr/2014/06/02/lesvos-greece-welcomes-turkish-tourists-thanks-visa-free-program/

[82] http://www.dimokratiki.gr/14-04-2015/tourkiki-touristiki-apovasi-sta-nisia-ke-elliniki-antepithesi/

> just good friends. We must see one another not as competitors but as co-investors.[83]

We notice here the emphasis given to the Aegean becoming a land, a land that will unite Greece and Turkey by consolidating their power and sovereignty simultaneously over the Aegean land. In other words, instead of a coexistence composed of connecting waters, there is a desire for a solid one characterized by fixed and exclusionary identities and that, as I will show further down, will not accept difference and alternative types of journeys on the Aegean waters. A distaste towards the infinity and unpredictability of the sea and a desire for fixity and clear cut (predictable) boundaries is revealed by the fact that the Greek authorities in order to convince the EU representatives of the Schengen regime to proceed with the pilot visa (to give them permission to apply this visa), they had to persuade them that this would not cause a problem with 'illegal' migration; that it would not facilitate the entry of undesired subjects passing through Turkey but only desired tourists with money and legal documents. These spaces on the Aegean created by the pilot/tourist visa and migration policies, therefore, instantiate conditional mobilities, that is, journeys that exist only for some categories of mobile people or that are accessible to some only at intervals.

Turning to the actual journey that this new pattern of mobility creates on the 'liquid' border (that is, the actual results/effects of this visa-policy on the Aegean), one notices that what used to be a predominant Greek ferry boat crossing from Lesvos to Ayvalik every Thursday morning, has transformed into 'floating entity' of Greek and Turkish passengers crossing the same border. Indeed, whenever I make the crossing from Ayvalik to Lesvos early in the morning, it is the Turkish language that prevails throughout the journey. But who exactly are these Turkish tourists? For it would be a mistake to presume that this visa 'softening' is addressed and open to all Turkish citizens or that everyone in Turkey is equally affected by the discourse of multiculturalism on the Aegean. On the contrary this new pattern of mobility on the maritime Turkish-Greek border is a (touristic) trend among a certain class and type of Turkish citizens from a particular geographical region in Turkey, those who in general are acknowledged as the 'White Turks', that is, the ones who are attributed with a certain 'governmental belonging' to the Turkish nation (who usually reside in the Western geographical region of Turkey) and who now have been offered an extra

[83] Ibid.

cultural and social privilege, thanks to their national and economical capital, of moving easier on the Aegean within the context of an 'open' border, versus those in Turkey and beyond its borders who are denied such a 'cultural' experience/right, exactly because they lack the necessary/required (that very same) national and economic capital.

Degrees of privilege can be found even among the Turkish tourists who are able and eligible to cross the border. This can be depicted from the fact that even those Turkish citizens that are holders of the much complicated received and costly Turkish passport, when they arrive at the Turkish port of Ayvalik apart from paying 50 TL for the pilot visa, they need to also show the hotel booking/reservation documents, along with their monthly income documents. Only then they are given the visa; a visa which allows maximum up to fifteen days of stay on the islands, however, even this permission of length of stay is not guaranteed; according to a Turkish tour guide who organizes up to sixty yearly visits to Lesvos, it is up to the police officer at the border control customs the number of days that are given to the Turkish tourists wishing to cross. They can vary from two to fifteen days. When I asked the criteria for such decisions he said that it depends on the mood of the police office at the precise moment and location, 'it is completely arbitrary and by chance' were his exact words.

In order to understand better this pattern of mobility and the types of subjects that it includes and mobilizes on the Aegean, it is necessary to turn once more to AKP's Turkey, which in the last years is 'pushing' a particular type of Turkish citizens towards the Aegean Greek border islands.[84] Recent announcements, decisions, and

[84] I should mention here that there have been significant changes in relation to the political aspirations and ideologies of the people from 'Western' Turkey who are mostly travelling to the Greek border islands. As the national elections of 7th June 2015 show us many Turkish voters who in the past were giving their votes to the CHP party chose to vote for the HDP Kurdish party. Politics as something transformative, however, statistics show that there was just a 2% increase in votes given from the CHP voters. In any case the political spectrum in Turkey is changing with the HDP in the parliament now and this is something that should be taken into account in the following analysis, since this thesis was written before the elections took place. At the same time, one should not be too ready to conclude that there is still not a mistrust among the secular 'White Turks' towards the HDP and the Kurdish movement; for example, the last time I made the crossing with the Turyol ferry from Ayvalik to Lesvos, a few days before the elections, most of the Turkish tourists that were travelling, including the captain himself emphasized to me that although they do wish for the HDP to surpass the 10% banner in no case would they give their vote to the HDP party but to the CHP.

actions of the Turkish government are revealing an increasing authoritarian and oppressive leadership in the face of Racip Tayyip Erdogan, even more so, since, he was elected president of the Turkish nation, the previous summer (summer of 2014). This authoritarianism can be observed in the interference in the citizens' private and social lives, such as prohibition of drinking alcohol after a certain hour in the evening, bans on social media, hostility towards couples living together without being married and that every household should have at least three children. All the above mentioned along with AKP's negotiations within the presumably peace process with the PKK, has brought a series of reactions and dissatisfaction among a more 'secular' population in Turkey, who feel that the values of the Turkish republic, which were supposedly introduced and imposed by the republic's leader Kemal Ataturk, such as secularism, women's rights (mainly with the ban of the veil in public spaces), 'westernization' and 'modernization', are being threatened by a more conservative government. In other words, seeing their government oriented towards the 'Middle East'(even though lately Erdogan is losing his support among their leaders due to his aggressive revival of ottomanism/ottoman empire) and distancing itself from 'Europe', the dream of many Turkish citizens who relate being modern to all that is 'Western' and 'European', is shuttered.[85]

From the above mentioned it is logical that the majority of the Turkish tourists travelling to the Greek islands are coming from what is considered to be 'Western' Turkey, that is, the Aegean coast, with cities such as Izmir, Ayvalik, Edremit, Bodrum and Altınoluk, due to geographical reasons (proximity to the Greek border islands) but also ideological/political ones, for the reasons mentioned above. Indeed, since the gradual empowerment of the AKP party geographical spaces such as Dikili (which in the past (during the 80s and 90s) were known for their left wing politics orientation and where different socialist festivals were organized (with the participation of Turkish left wing intellectuals like Can Yücel, Asiz Nesin, etc.), lately, are developing a rather 'militant secularism' and a revival of a kemalism (Ataturk cult) as a form of opposition or resistance against the current government.

[85] Their dismissal of the current government culminated in the Gezi protests that took place in May-June 2013, without this meaning that all the participants of the uprisings were voters/supports of the CHP party, and, thus, a homogenous group, nevertheless, they composed an important part of it.

This is a development, however, characteristic of the Aegean region as a whole: a developing 'militant secularism' that ends up turning to the Greek islands as way of 'expanding' and 'cultivating' itself. In other words, the cities of this geographical region are characterized by their inhabitants' strong alliance to the CHP party that was founded by Kemal Ataturk (the founder of the Turkish republic) and, whose supporters have started to feel uncomfortable and powerless in AKP's Turkey. Indeed, what was once the ruling ideology of Turkey is now beginning to feel itself as a 'minority'. Without even imagining to form an alliance with the resisting Kurdish movement who is also opposing the authority of the current government, due to the majority of Western Turkey's citizens' deep rooted (embedded) perceptions of the Kurds as backwards, patriarchic, uneducated and Easterners (and in this way closer to the AKP) and 'terrorists', in other words, the 'other' and 'enemy within the Turkish nation (and who wants to divide Turkey), it is logical that members of the middle and upper-middle classes of 'Western' Turkey are turning to the Greek islands in order to 'find themselves' as one retired Turkish military officer (who was on holiday on Lesvos) told me.[86]

The above mentioned Turkish tourists manage to 'escape' even if just for a short time from Turkey with the 'Jale' or 'Turyol' ferry. From Ayvalik to Lesvos' capital, Mytilini, the border crossing lasts approximately one and half hour. During the summer months and particularly during the religious Muslim holiday of Ramazan, when the religious atmosphere becomes especially disturbing for the Turks who are not fasting, the boat is full. According to the official data published in *Embros* newspaper, just in the winter period between November 2014 and March 2015, 2547 Turkish tourists arrived on Lesvos, which marks a 39.86% increase in comparison to the period of 2013-2014. In April (April 2015) 1.567 Turkish tourists arrived on Lesvos, according to the information given by the police department in Mytilini. In

[86] At the same time, this turn to the 'Greek' side of the Aegean present us with an historical irony since it was Ataturk himself who declared the Greeks as the 'national enemy' and who fought the 'War of Independence' in order to 'free' Asia Minor from the Greek/Christian presence and Christian elements. In this version of kemalism, however, we notice a shift in emphasis on the 'enemy' from the Greeks to Islam (uneducated East), in which not only the interior 'other' (the 'other' within), the Kurds, form an indispensable part but also the undocumented migrants in the imaginaries of every so called 'secular' whether 'Turk', 'Greek' or 'European' and which I will be discussing further down.

April 2014 the numbers amounted to 1.285, in other words, we are talking about an increase in 291 visitors or a 22.65%.[87] The majority are coming from the larger cities of Istanbul, Ankara and Smyrna and are relatively well off. In the past, the same ferry would make the crossing from Lesvos to Ayvalik and back just once a week, on Thursdays, in order for the islanders to visit and shop in the open market day in the center of Ayvalik (Myrivili 2006). However, since the application of the 'pilot-visa' an increased mobility has started to take place towards the opposite direction , with the Turkish tourists opting to stay more than one day on Lesvos, since their visa permits them to do so. Since 2012 the pilot visa per Turkish citizen costs 35 euros for an up to fifteen days stay on one of the Greek islands that has joined this visa scheme/program. There were talks recently to increase it to 60 euros, its previous cost which includes the extra fine to be paid to the Turkish police at the border, but only a few days ago, due to reactions for different business companies, it has been confirmed that the price will remain at 35 euros per Turkish citizen.[88]

During the high seasons the 'Jale' ferry makes the crossing twice a day; at nine o clock in the morning and six o clock in the evening. Moreover, now it is not just the 'Jale' ferry that is crossing from one side to the other but also the 'Turyol' ferry that happens to leave at exactly the same time of the day with the 'Jale': again, once in the morning and once in the afternoon. As a result there is an intense competition between the two boats concerning the mobility of the Turkish tourists. From the Turkish side the price of one way ticket is 25 euro and 35 euro return which is the standard price for both ferry lines, the 'Jale' and the 'Turyol'. From the Greek side it is 10 euro with return again for both ferries (companies). The lower price from the Greek side is due the EU regulations on transportation and the rule that all EU citizens have to benefit from this journey and transportation. The different 'economic value' of each direction on the Aegean (of this particular route) highlights the degrees of 'liquidity' on the Aegean, due to the simultaneous existence of a European and national border.

Ultimately, there are plans for the next summer to connect the port of Smyrna with Molivdos another seaside village on Lesvos, a journey that would last no more than half an hour. In this way, the island would attract a larger number of Turkish

[87] http://www.emprosnet.gr/article/72283-nea-ayxisi-stis-afixeis-apo-tin-toyrkia
[88] http://traveldailynews.gr/news/article/59840

tourists from the opposite town of Smyrna, the majority of which are currently preferring to visit Chios island because of its easier access (of it being closer). In this way, Turks from Izmir will be able to make a day trip to Lesvos, 'just enough time to have a quick ouzo and nice mezedes at the sea-side while enjoying the view of Turkey from a distance' (from an interview with shop-owner in Molyvdos), instead, of having to go all the way to Ayvalik in order to catch the ferry. And this, of course, will further intensify the dynamics of mobility between Turkey and Greece on the Aegean.

In comparison, the Greek ferry travelling to Athens leaves only once a day, in the evenings, and lasts approximately ten hours. Since the Greek crisis broke out the connections between Mytilini and Kavala, another important port of Greece, has been reduced to once a week and, due to the lack of petrol fuel, the ferry boat moves very slowly, while, the connection between Mytilini and Thessaloniki, the second largest city in Greece, has been cut completely. Needless to say, the sea-connections (by ferry) between the Greek islands on the Eastern Aegean have become even more rare and time-consuming than they were before (in order to save petrol), but, also due to a lack of appropriate ferry boats (many of the Hellenic-sea companies went bankrupt with the Greek crisis). The local newspaper *Embros* in Lesvos, in the last two years has been full of articles discussing the current water connections between the islands of the Eastern Aegean and the complaints of many of the state and non-state actors on the smaller islands that feel their islands are becoming isolated entities on the Aegean Sea. This lack of mobility and fragile connections between the Eastern Aegean islands and the Greek mainland and between the islands themselves, contrast with a more frequent and solid mobility between the Eastern Aegean islands and the Turkish mainland.

Moreover, the dynamics are also changing from the 'Greek' side with many islanders opting to receive their medical treatment and health check-ups/controls on the Turkish side, especially since the Greek crisis started to be felt on the island in 2010, leading to a deterioration of the health and insurance sector and to the gradual 'disappearance' of available doctors in some of the smaller villages on Lesvos. This new type of mobility is logical, as it is less time consuming and costly for the locals on Lesvos to visit the newly open medical center/polyclinic in Ayvalik than the ones in Thessaloniki and Athens on the Greek mainland. In this way, the 'liquid' border on the Aegean becomes particularly ambiguous and ambivalent, as it establishes direct connections between two distinct nation-states, while, at the same time, more and

more invisible borders (due again to economic reasons but in this case with different effects) are separating geographical entities/regions that are supposed to belong to the same territorial nation-state.

There are, however, many signs that the border is still there, 'ready to attack and show its teeth at any opportunity' (Myrivili, 2006). I have already spoken in the introduction about the change of the national flag, a gesture/movement that appears to be innocent, regular and harmless, but, that speaks, nevertheless, of the unconditional of this journey; that is, if it weren't for the flag or rather the interchange of two flags (the Greek and the Turkish one), this journey would be impossible or in other words, 'illegal' and, thus, the boat not allowed to move at all. Indeed, should it be able to move freely the ferry must always carry the national flag (belong to a certain nation), a national 'burden' that signifies the rights and responsibility of a certain nation-state over it, in the case that it is 'harassed' by another nation state or the ship itself violates national boundaries/rights.

Additionally, turning to the passengers of the ferry and their freedom of movement, the Turkish tourists themselves when arriving on the islands have to pass through a separate entrance than the Greek and (other) 'European' citizens, in order to check whether they are eligible to move freely around the island. As any EU passport holder has felt viscerally when passing through passport control rooms of the Schengen area, the installation of separate lanes for "EU citizens" and "other passports" interpellates them to perform European citizenship and identify with the project of the European Union (De Genova, 2014). In this sense, the Turkish tourists on the islands, at the very beginning of their holiday are reminded of the conditional of their visit to Lesvos. That no matter how close they are to 'home' (Turkey) they have arrived on a 'European' territory from which normally (and officially) they are excluded and for this can be refused entry at the customs, as 'non-European' citizens. However, in most cases, their economic capital occludes such a possibility (stops something like this to happen) and, thus, excitingly they head for their reserved hotels (usually the most expensive and highest quality ones on the island according to the *Embros* newspaper) or immediately rent a cat in order to visit the more popular villages of Petra, Molivdos and Eresos. Likewise, without need nor most probably the desire to overstay their visa permit they return after a couple of days on the island to Turkey (usually no more than four days) and, thus, performing the role that is expected

from them, that of the obedient non-EU citizen towards 'a Europe shaped by the ambition to project its soft power and good governance across the world'.[89]

3.2.3. The 'undocumented migrants': Flows of vulnerability on the Aegean

Turning to the second type of mobility, the one that is being defined as migration, the journey of its subjects, the undocumented migrants, tells us another story about the Aegean than the one 'narrated' by the Turkish tourists' journey. In fact their movement across the Aegean, I content, reveals the 'cracks' through which the 'liquid' materiality of their journeys persists, seeps into and transforms itself through; 'cracks' within the official discourse of the political and permitted mobility as such, and 'cracks' within the impossibility of absolute control of the seas in general and the Aegean in particular, due to the 'liquidness' and historical depth (volume) of its waters, as I discussed in the previous chapters.

Whereas the majority of the Turkish tourists from 'Western' Turkey are searching a way out from the oppressive and conservative political atmosphere imposed by the AKP party, or in the context of a kind of 'heritage tourism' are desiring to experience the lost past of 'cosmopolitanism', when Greeks and Turks lived side by side 'as brothers', the motivations of peoples for taking the Eastern Aegean sea route to 'Europe' and embarking on such perilous journeys, on the other hand, are various: These may be a new livelihood, closeness to significant persons in their lives, or escape from untenable, even murderous, situations, such as persecution and war, as well as the opportunity to experience new people, places, and situations (Anderson, Sharma and Wright, 2012). During the past 3 days (1-3 May 2015) 12 boats with 192 refugees were arrested coming to Samos. Over the same period 304 landed in Lesbos,182 in Chios, 104 in Oinousess, 141 in Kos and 64 in Farmakonisi.[90] Apart from the main common characteristic of the migrants arriving on Lesvos, that they do not meet the Schengen visa requirements and have crossed the Greek-Turkish border without authorization, the differences between them in regard to their social

[89] https://www.opendemocracy.net/david-held-kyle-mcnally/from-shore-to-shore-regional-collapse-and-human-insecurity
[90] https://samoschronicles.wordpress.com/

profile, their age and nationality are large. The migrants arriving on the Greek islands are coming from as diverse geographies as Afghanistan, Syria, Iran, Iraq, and Sub-Saharan countries, along with Eritrea and Sudan (African Horn). These groups of people are usually originating from war torn countries, places with armed conflicts-violence and tremendous poverty. In other words, although the migrants are crossing from the Turkish side on the Aegean, they do not originate from Turkey but from further distant (beyond) geographical regions and are using Turkey as a transit zone-country, even if many of them end up staying in Istanbul longer than expected due to economic and-or legal reasons, without this have being, however, their original plan. This type of mobility (migration), therefore, is characterized by many scholars as transnational, that is, between different continents (nations), rather than a migration between two nations, Turkey and Greece, due to the fact that the migrants' country of origin is not Turkey and their indented country of destination for the majority is not Greece but usually a North European country, such as Germany, Sweden, Denmark, France and Britain (Bacas; 2010, Green; 2010, Trubeta; 2012).

Ultimately, it is important just to mention here a different type of migration that took place in the 90s, when many Kurds from the Kurdish region in Turkey were attempting to cross over to Greece by sea from Turkey, again without the necessary legal documents, in order to escape the violent conflict between the Turkish government-military and the PKK, the Kurdistan Workers Party. During this period, the struggle of the Kurdish people in Turkey was highly supported by the Greek government and the Greek people, not independently from Greece's relationship and historical confrontations with Turkey. In other words, the majority of the Greeks welcomed the Kurdish migrants in Greece, even more so on Lesvos, which is being identified as the 'red island' due to its tradition of left wing politics. In this sense their sympathy towards the Kurdish migrants was also a gesture of solidarity and comradeship against a common 'enemy', the Turkish state, while they felt close to the PKK's left wing agenda.

In the following article titled 'Double numbers in comparison with last year' (that was) published in the local newspaper of Lesvos *Embros,* we read the following about the arrival of the undocumented migrants:

> the number of the migrants who are trying in some way to cross to the Greek islands from the Turkish side (coast) reaches around 30.000. The same estimations don't reject the possibility that in 2015 the arrivals will

> be even more than those in 2014. It is reminded that last year we had the most arrivals in comparison with the last ten years and only in Lesvos 12.000 migrants were reported. From the up to now development of the phenomena, speaking always about Lesvos, in January 742 arrivals were reported, compared to 266 that were reported in January 2014 and for the following month the arrivals are more than 900, when in last February the complete number of arrivals had reached 456. It should be pointed out that this winter was much heavier than last year's and that the weather conditions almost every day were not suitable (forbidding) for the way the migrants chose to cross from the opposite shores and yet the number of arrivals in comparison with the previous year was double.[91]

From the above mentioned we realize that during the last two years Lesvos experienced an increase in the arrivals not only of Turkish tourists but also of undocumented migrants. The construction of the wall in the Evros region (Turkish-Greek land border) as the main reason for this pattern of mobility has been discussed in details in Part II. It is interesting, though, to see how Frontex agency experiences and interprets this increased 'flow' on the Aegean that is not classified as a desired and legal form of tourism, such as the 'Turkish tourism'. According to the very detailed new EU report on the policing of Europe's borders published with the results of the operation Mos Maiorum and which is worth quoting at length:

> The shift of irregular migratory flows, which started after the strengthening of land border surveillance activities at the Greek–Turkish land border in August 2012, towards the Greek-Turkish sea border continued during 2014. From 1 January to 31 October this year, the highest migratory pressure was reported from the Greek Eastern Aegean Islands, with nearly 98% of the total number of apprehensions reported in this region. Thus far in 2014, the most targeted islands have been, as last year, Lesbos (9324), Samos (6 164) and Chios (5 918). However, during 2014 facilitation networks operating on the Turkish coast have also started to target other islands in the Eastern Aegean Sea, which reported low numbers of irregular border-crossings during 2013. As facilitation networks are constantly changing the landing points, in an attempt to avoid apprehension, almost all islands in the Eastern Aegean Sea have started to report apprehensions. Following the implementation of the special operations at both the Greek and Bulgarian land borders with Turkey, facilitation networks operating in Turkey have increased their activities on the west coast of Turkey and are now specialising in sea crossings. One of the main 'pull factors', which attracts migrants towards the Greek Islands, is the lack of detention capacity and the fact that after a few days in detention they are released and given an expulsion order permitting, de facto, their stay on Greek territory for 30 days. Therefore, once the migrants reach one of the Greek Islands, they report themselves to the

[91] http://emprosnet.gr/article/70024-diplasios-arithmos-se-shesi-me-perysi

> local authorities in order to obtain an administrative document that allows them to travel by ferry to Athens. It is worth mentioning that in the case of Syrian nationals the administrative document allows them to remain legally in Greece for up to 6 months. Therefore, Arabic speaking migrants from different countries often claim to be Syrian in the hope that they can take advantage of the specific status of this particular nationality. [92]

In the above report Frontex describes the reasons for which the Greek islands are attracting migrants, what the agent calls, in other words, the 'pull factors'. Whereas in the case of the Turkish tourists it is the new visa regulations/policies with the pilot system and which permits Turkish citizens to stay 'legally' on some of the Greek islands for up to fifteen days, according to the above report, the undocumented migrants 'target' the same islands due to the lack of detention capacity and the fact that after a few days in detention they are released and given an expulsion order permitting, de facto, their stay on Greek territory for thirty days. In other words, we can conclude that, contrary to the Turkish tourists, the migrants are attracted to these islands exactly because they do not have to stay there more than a few days after of which their prefer directly to move on to Athens with the 'white card'[93] they receive, in order to apply for asylum or to continue their journey without the necessary documents to other European countries.[94]

In this way, the Greek border islands are not a final destination for the migrants, as they are for the Turkish citizens using the pilot visa, for which the islands are a kind of holiday destination/resort. For the majority of the migrants, the Greek islands are a kind of stop, or rather a necessary step in their journey/way to 'Europe'. Consequently, if they succeed in arriving on one of the Greek islands and are not pushed back to Turkish waters, something that occurs frequently as we saw in Part II, the migrants report themselves immediately to the Greek authorities in order to receive the

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[92] http://www.statewatch.org/news/2015/jan/eu-council-2015-01-22-05474-mos-maiorum-final-report.pdf, p.32

[93] The 'white card' is given to the migrants once they have completed the screening process. With this card they can travel to Athens but they are ordered to leave the country within 30 days. The Syrians are giving a six month period of time to leave the country. For more details see: http://www.w2eu.info/

[94] Now this is changing; many of them prefer to apply for asylum in Lesvos or return to Lesvos to apply for asylum there after having faced the dire situation in Athens. Moreover, access to lawyers has become easier on Lesvos, particualrly for those visiting and staying at Pikpa campsite, the volunteers provide them with legal assistance and access to lawyers and NGOs dealing specifically with migration on the island.

necessary document, the 'white card'. As noted before, though, the migrants might not make it directly to the islands but can be 'intercepted' at sea by the Greek coastguards or on uninhabited islands and if 'lucky' brought to the nearest Greek habited island, mainly Lesvos (due to the main screening there) in order for the necessary and bureaucratic process to take place.

At the same time, however, we realize that in both cases/patterns of mobilities (Turkish tourists and migrants) more and more of the Eastern Aegean islands are becoming a 'target' for the agents of these mobilities. In the case of the Turks, we saw how more islands joined the 'pilot visa scheme', while, others close by to Turkey are wanting and demanding to join, in order to share the economic profit that this particular kind of tourism brings, whereas, in the case of the migrants, as facilitation networks are constantly changing the landing points, in an attempt to avoid apprehension, almost all islands in the Eastern Aegean Sea have started to report apprehensions. In other words, exactly because the initial and main targeted islands, such as Lesvos, are experiencing an increased securitization and surveillance, facilitation networks are specializing in sea-crossings that lead to more islands becoming 'entry points' for undocumented migrants. In this sense, the Eastern Aegean sea-route cannot be thought separately from the Greek border islands that exist on its waters, the meaning of which is essential, albeit for different reasons, for both the Turkish tourists and the undocumented migrants.

Turning to the actual 'ship' with which the migrants travel on the Mediterranean, I am turning to Shady's narrative that we come across with, in the *Guardian* and which supports my argument that immediately follows;

> Fresh off the boat from Zuwara, he says he was lucky to arrive after the boat was crammed with 80 more people than promised; two of the pistons in his boat's engine broke; and the hull began to leak. If the boat had sunk, he might have survived – as a Syrian, he was allowed on deck. But African migrants were crammed in the boat's hold. "It was just racist," he says.[95]

In the above narrative, we see how racism is linked to nationalism at sea, (solid) roots to (liquid) routes, on the very 'ship' with which migrants cross the 'liquid' border. Firstly, the supposed absent of a national flag of boats used by migrants crossing the sea is the pretext allowing states to exercise interception in the high

[95] http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/apr/24/libyas-people-smugglers-how-will-they-catch-us-theyll-soon-move-on

seas.[96] Moreover, racial hierarchies abound, since the color of skin, defines the amount of money one is able to pay for a seat on the boat, and, thus, the kind of journey that one will make (divided into safer and more risky ones), as they are characterized by degrees of 'liquidity', that is, precariousness on the waters; the blacks of the Africas able to pay, usually, much less than the 'whiter' skinned people of Syria, for example, who are able to buy a better and safer place on the upper deck of the boat. But this spatial organization/hierarchization into upper and lower decks, for the first time develops in the colonial journeys when the European ships would cross the 'middle passage' loaded not only with products, materials, spices and other goods, but also with 'human cargo', black slaves from the Africas who were placed at the bottom deck of the ships. The conquest of the 'new' lands and the solidification of nationalism at home in Europe, are ultimately linked to racism in the 'middle passage', whereas with their respective flag each ship becomes what the Watch the Med team call 'a small piece of "floating state jurisdiction".[97] Hence, the importance, I content, of critically scrutinizing every connection on the Aegean, as part of the different patterns of mobility and agency from the colonial times until our present age (of nationalism and racism) and which, I argue, affect every happening on the Aegean sea.

Contrary to the just over one hour journey that the Turkish tourists experience while crossing the Aegean on the 'Jale' or 'Turyol' ferry, they are many difficulties related to the means of transport undertaken by the migrants, as we have seen in Part II. Similarly, the ticket price of the journey for these two groups of peoples differs. As we have seen, the price of the 'Jale' or 'Turyol' ferry is 35 euros with return from

[96] We read that "from a jurisdictional perspective, ships sailing on the high seas are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of their flag state with the express prohibition of boarding foreign ships, save in the exceptional circumstances listed in Article 110 (right of visit). Included in this list of exceptional circumstances is the reasonable ground for suspecting that a ship is without nationality. The fact that boats carrying migrants, asylum seekers and refugees from Africa to Europe in an irregular manner are generally flagless, and therefore not subject to any state's exclusive jurisdiction, authorises the ships of any state to establish and exercise its jurisdiction over these boats. This is in fact the legal basis upon which European Union member States exercise their jurisdictional authority during the interception activities carried out on the high seas off the Canary Islands and in the central Mediterranean." Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly Doc. 12628, Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population, Rapporteur: Mr Arcadio Diaz Tejera, The interception and rescue at sea of asylum seekers, refugees and irregular migrants, June 2011 (from http://watchthemed.net/index.php/page/index/2).

[97] http://watchthemed.net/index.php/page/index/2

Ayvalik to Lesvos and 10 euros return from Lesvos. For the undocumented migrants, though, the price can vary from 1.500 to 4.000 euros. Thus, the captain can earn up to €15,000 per 'transport' (for more details, see Panagiotidis/Tsianos, 2007). Moreover, it has been observed by the Greek coastguards that lately the 'facilitators' are changing their tactics concerning the journey of the migrants in order to increase their profit. Whereas in the previous years, fast-boats were being used, something that was observed particularly last year, when a number of these boats were confiscated by the Greek coastguards, the latest arrivals are happening with rubber boats, most of which don't even have an engine. Moreover, when in previous years the migrants would make the crossing mainly during the summer months (periods) and on days when the weather is relatively good and the sea calm (and as safe as possible for such a journey), as we learned, however, from the above article in *Embros*, the numbers of arrivals this year have doubled even during the harsh winter months, which indicates that the recent wars and atrocities in Syria, Iraq and Palestine have increased not only the numbers of those people attempting to establish a better and safer life but also peoples' increased desperation to reach 'Europe'. In other words, similarly to the Turkish tourists, the migrants are starting to arrive on the Greek border islands throughout the whole year.

Due to the harsh conditions of the Mediterranean Sea and the vulnerability of the rubber inflatable overloaded dinghies, it is not rare that these 'boats' end up sinking and leaving its passengers helpless in the sea, as we have already seen previously. Similarly, when I discussed the cemetery of the Aegean (Chapter II), we saw how the vessels of the coastguards 'pushed-back' the migrants into 'Turkish' waters and how the migrants experienced the coastguards' boats, as spaces of torture and detention. These 'floating spaces' of torture, prison and exile, can be attributed also to the uninhabited islands on the maritime border where migrants are also being detained and tortured by the Greek military, like, what is repeatedly taken place on the Pharmakonisi island, where migrants are being detained and physically tortured for even up to one week. In this way, the boat can be thought of as a 'floating island' and vice versa: the island as a 'floating boat' surrounded by waters, in which migrants' claims for asylum can be either heard or completely dismissed before they even manage to begin telling their story.

From the above discussion, we understand how transformations at the macro-level affect spatial transformations on the ground (a transformation in the use of

different spaces that end up being symbolic transformations), as on Lesvos one experiences the shift from the Turk to the undocumented migrant as the 'enemy', within the different spatial transformations of certain sites, such as military bases, that are loaded with particular symbolic meaning on the island. Hence, I argue that it is not so much about who the 'enemy' is in each historic-political moment on the island but rather about the continuous presence of the border as a spatial entity (the actual border being always present) along with the economic, political and cultural institutions that keep the idea of the 'enemy' always alive. In this sense, it is not so much about a replacement of the 'Turk' as the 'enemy' by the 'undocumented migrant' but how they manage to coincide in this region both as 'strangers' exactly because of the border, even if it appears to be more 'open' now for certain types of travelers, such as the Turkish tourists.

3.3. The effectual meanings of 'liquidity' and how they interrelate in the imaginaries of the islanders on Lesvos

A local photographer from Lesvos, one day, explained to me in details the role and meaning of the 'liquid' (Aegean) border, which further down I will analyze as what I see to be the different effectual meanings of 'liquidity' of the border and how they coincide on Lesvos. It is worth quoting the photographer's description at length:

> The islanders would rather prefer that there was no border when it comes to remembering Asia Minor and their lost homeland. They want to feel united with the opposite lands and be able to cross freely to the other side for their Thursday shopping at the market place in Ayvalik or visit the houses that their ancestors were forced to leave behind with the construction of the border. When it comes to the Turkish tourists visiting the islands, they are happy to see the 'lifting' of the border, to receive their Turkish friends from the other side and to be finally able to host them in their homes and show them their island, while, at the same time benefit financially from the tourists expenses on Lesvos. Yet, the islanders still hope for an invisible border, that is, this softening of the visa policies for the Turks should not be without limitations. The Turks should not overwhelm their island, open their businesses and take over the economy of Lesvos, in other words, they should not mix up the two sides of the Aegean, with the Turks imagining the Eastern Aegean islands as Turkish and re-colonize Lesvos. They shouldn't turn Lesvos into a colony and touristic resort of the Turks! They must not turn Lesvos into a Bodrum by

> destroying the local businesses and peace and quietness of the island. As for the undocumented migrants, the majority of which are Muslims, the people living on Lesvos believe that the border is a necessity, should be there. Even the small minority that does care and provide support to the migrants, develop their help around the hierarchical relationship of the host and the guest. They set the limits of this relationship, where it will begin and where it will end. The majority of the islanders, however, does not want to see their island overwhelmed with scarf-headed women and hear the sound of mosques. Apart from brining back painful memories they detest the fact that Lesvos is being turned into a rubbish dump of Europe. And they are right. Lesvos is suffering from its own economic disaster, things are miserable here, how can it possibly deal with the migrants? Not even the migrants themselves want to stay on Lesvos and why should they? There is nothing for them here at Lesvos'. At the same time, the locals are not helping the migrants as they used to in the first years. They are fed up and have their own sorrows to deal with. They are angry, there is a general mistrust towards the EU; they rightly believe that Europe is humiliating them by dumping at Greece's borders, what is in actual fact their responsibility, the migrants (Interview with local photographer, Istanbul, January 2015).

Based on the above account, along the lines of Foucault' heterotopic ship 'as the greatest reserve of the imagination', I will elaborate on how this affective space of the Aegean is experienced by the locals on Lesvos and reflected in their imaginaries, by turning to some of the narratives that I listened to on the island, in addition to some of the discourses on the border that one encounters in the local newspaper in Lesvos *Embros*. 'Thinking with water', we understand that the mobile human and non-human elements such as the objects washed up on the Aegean shores that I spoke of in Chapter II, and their affects that travel on and through it (the Aegean border) are not merely passively absorbed by the islanders on Lesvos but imagined, encountered, and produced. Thus, this section provides us with concrete examples of how the ship 'as the greatest reserve of the imagination' affects the islanders' imaginary of and on the border.

When talking with the islanders about the 'strangers' on Lesvos, the watery element characteristic of the two types of peoples' crossing the Aegean, was emphasized in their descriptions of the 'Turks' and the 'undocumented-migrants' arrival on the island from the other side. Indeed, many times, I heard them referring to these two groups not as the 'Turks' or the 'migrants' but with phrases such as the 'boat people', 'the people that were brought by the waves', or 'the people from the opposite sea' (with the Aegean Sea imagined as two different and solid seas). This perception of the Aegean changes once more in relation to the Turkish tourists, where there is an

attempt, as we have seen, by the local state actors to transform the Aegean into a 'common' sea, for Greek and Turkish citizens alike. Additionally, the islanders would use the Greek expression 'mia karavia apo Tourkous' which translates into 'a boats of Turkish tourists or migrants' when referring to both these 'strangers' arriving on the island. In other words, we see that, instead, of using the Turks or the migrants as the subject here, and, hence, agent of the sentence, the boat adopts this role while the people who are arriving become just a characteristic of this boat. This metonym is also being used often in the daily discourse (discussions of the border) of the local newspaper *Embros* on Lesvos, as we shall see further down.

Secondly, I would like to argue that from my different conversations with the locals living on Lesvos, I understood that the islanders perceive all the 'boat people' (Turkish tourists and undocumented migrants), as coming from the 'opposite side', even more so because they consider the facilitators of the migrants' crossing, that is, the agents of this particular mobility to be of Turkish nationality. In addition, the majority of the undocumented migrants are able to speak Turkish, since before embarking on the boat for the Greek islands, most of them had spent a substantial amount of time in major Turkish cities, such as Istanbul, in order to gather the required money for the necessary and by no means cheap place in an overcrowded rubber boat. Only a few months ago, the local newspaper *Embros* published an article referring to the sophisticated networks that facilitators were organizing in Istanbul, via online social networks, such as facebook and from which migrants from different countries were seeking help, in order to cross over to the Greek islands. Additionally, another article in *Embros* published around the same time, was highlighting the increased numbers of migrants at the Turkish side of the Aegean awaiting the first opportunity to cross over to the Greek islands (reference needed). In this way, we see how in the local newspaper, the Turkish side of the Aegean is being presented and discussed as the 'strange' part of the Aegean, that is, the side from which 'strangers' come or set out and certain mobilities develop (whether 'positive' or 'negative' ones), even if, the migrants, as we have seen, do not in actual fact originate from Turkey.

Moreover, the majority of the migrants arriving on Lesvos are coming from countries whose official at least religion is Islam and for this reason are being identified as Muslims by the locals on the island which is also acknowledged from the past (during ottoman empire times) until now, as the distinctive marker that separates the people on the Greek side from their Turkish neighbors living on the other side,

even if, as we have seen, the Turkish tourists that visit Lesvos, represent a rather more 'militant secularism'. The locals on Lesvos, in this way, often emphasized to me what they feel to be the presence of 'Islam' on the island, while, at the same time they experience and perceive different layers of the 'East' and degrees of (cultural) 'estrangement', with the undocumented migrants being the 'other of the other' (ultimate 'other') that is, culturally more 'strange' than their 'Turkish brothers' who bring money via the Aegean to their doorsteps (the islands). In this way, degrees of 'strangeness' on the Aegean are linked to degrees of capital and privilege that circulate on its waters, and, thus, arriving, once more, to the meaning of 'liquidity' that Bauman attributes to our present modernity (a more recent modernity) that he observes in the change from a society of producers to a society of consumers (Bauman, 2000) and the production of the different types of 'strangers' that this leads to.

The overlapping in time concerning the arrival of the 'Turks' and the 'migrants' on Lesvos, I argue, produces a kind of 'safety-zone', in which the islanders can express openly their anxiety that is produced by the presence of the border, by overemphasizing their dissatisfaction with the arrival of the undocumented migrants while concealing what I felt to be an equal discomfort with the increasing arrival of the Turkish tourists. Indeed, with the Turkish presence on the island the locals are being haunted by memories and traces from a not so distant past, when the island was under the occupation of the ottoman rule, followed by wars, horrors, massacres and exiles, leading up to the more recent crises on the Aegean with once more the 'Turk' representing the 'national enemy'. In this way, the migrants arrive in a space already occupied/constructed by forces of nationalism and affected by traces of animosity. Moreover, the locals with the arrival of the Turkish tourists go through a process in which they are caught by surprise at the site of 'well off' and 'civilized' Turkish tourists, while, at the same time they are forced to suppress their feelings of discomfort by the Turkish presence who have suddenly turned into 'flows of money'. These suppressed feelings, however, find a way out at the site of the poor, helpless and above all 'Muslim and Third world' migrants. That is to say, just how the Greek coastguards are projecting their anger towards an unreachable Turkish 'enemy' onto the undocumented migrants, similarly the islanders are reflecting over the migrants their deeper fears that are provoked by the arrivals of the Turks; since they cannot express their fear and discomfort with the influx of the Turkish tourists on their islands openly to the Turks, exactly because they need them (their 'pockets' are benefiting from their

arrival) they reflect their uneasiness to the migrants who are weaker and which they anyway do not need (are not useful to them). Many of the migrants in the detention center in Moria speak of acts of hatred towards their religion, Islam, by the Greek guards there. One migrant who spent some time at Moria told the 'Welcome to Europe' activist group that one day he was punished with no food that whole day by the guards, for having prayed in his religion.

That the disturbance by the arrival of what they perceive to be the presence of 'Islam' on the island, cannot be thought separately from the larger fear of another (intense) and much more powerful group of people arriving on Lesvos: (the neighbors from the opposite side), the Turkish tourists, some of which lately are talking about buying property, making investments and, hence, of a more permanent stay on the island, can be seen in the following words of a local on Lesvos:

> Why should I accept the migrants on my island? Why should I have to hear eight times a day the call of the imam? Why should I accept an Eastern to live next door to me and beat up his woman every day? Enough! Our island has already experience hundred years of ottoman rule; we do not need to go through this again' (conversation with high school teacher, Lesvos, July 2014).

Who and what is the source and the real cause of the islanders' fear on Lesvos is rather obvious. Here, I find useful once more Bauman's analysis (conceptual analysis) of 'liquid fears', which he contrasts with the uncertainties that he portrayed in his writings on "solid" modernity, as 'liquid' fears are 'more diffuse and harder to pin down'. Indeed, the fears of the islanders on Lesvos, for example, that are provoked by the simultaneous arrival of the 'Turks' and the 'migrants' are "liquid fears'', not only due to the very fact that they are produced by the Aegean Sea (brought to their island via the Aegean Sea, as they cross over the 'liquid' border) and, hence, 'liquid' but also because they are amorphous and have no easily identifiable referent, as the cause and addressers of their fear coincide and intermingle on the waters around the Aegean islands, creating at the same time easy scapegoats. In this way, although, the 'locals' on Lesvos have many reasons to feel threatened and abandoned due to the severe economic crisis that have hit Greece since 2008, one should not consider this fear of the 'stranger' on the Aegean as something completely new, for as we have seen in the previous chapters (until now), it is exactly at such spaces where national feeling ends and xenophobic racism commences. In this way, interacting with the locals on Lesvos

helps us to understand more clearly the relationship between the border, 'strangeness' and migration on the Aegean.

Indeed, when talking to me about the arrival of the undocumented migrants, I felt the particularity of the Aegean border very intensely. Harbor, beaches, storms at sea (which bring fewer Turkish tourists), shipwrecks, waves, coastguards, east, boats, fishers, past and present, 'enemy' and 'friend', were all terms and elements that intermingled somehow (appeared simultaneously) in the islanders' stories when talking about the 'migrants' and the 'Turks'. Indeed, in many cases, when I would ask about the migrants, not much time would pass that the narrative in the same conversation would turn to the 'Turks' and vice versa. Moreover, when referring to the border, the islanders, similar to the claim of the Turkish coastguard that 'the sea beholds its own reality' and which I discussed in the Introduction, likewise, would emphasized to me how 'the sea is not stable neither are the people that travel on it.' In the words of a local islander from the sea-side village of Molivdos:

> When the border is composed of water its meaning keeps changing. Just like the Aegean sea, it can at times be peaceful, other times more wavy and sometimes bring great storms, like what is happening now with the arrival of the illegal immigrants. It is again because of the border that they are here, or rather the change of the border from a Greek one to a European one. Just like you can never predict the mood of the sea and what treasures or horrors it will bring in a similar way you cannot foresee not only what the border will bring but how it will affect your life… The border is not stable (Conversation with islander, around 40 years old, Molivdos, August 2014).

Moreover, what we can observe in the above narrative is that the Aegean sea in particular entails its own meaning and reality. Indeed, I also felt on Lesvos, that the movements that take place on the Aegean are sudden and intense and can unexpectedly stop just as they began something that adds to its 'haunting', that I spoke about in the previous chapter. And the role of the boat in the creation of such perceptions/imaginaries is crucial with the shipwreck being one of its most outstanding images, as in the case of the undocumented migrants' deaths at sea or the refugees from Asia Minor who made the same passage by boat in order to escape the massacres taking place in their homelands. I was astonished by the narrative of a fisher who I had the luck to talk with, one lazy hot afternoon as he was drinking his ouzo at the peer, in front of the sea. It is worth quoting his narrative at length:

(…) You love the Aegean my girl? I also love it. You know I am from here, I was born here but my mother came from the opposite shores, like many of the peoples' ancestors here. This part of the Aegean is different and how can I say, special. I spent the summer at my brother in law's place in Zakinthos island by the Ionian sea. We went out fishing together every evening and somehow everything felt so calm there. I know it was summer but I am sure it was not just (about) this. I am experienced with the sea (waters)so trust me when I say here the Aegean is different. It can also be calm but this is never a guarantee. You know the border, the Turks and now the illegal migrants. Yes the fact that you can see Asia Minor… It makes all the difference. Even I who have been fishing in these waters since I can remember myself, I still feel that I do not know all its secretes. It always surprises me. Just like in the last two years with all these Turkish tourists crossing its waters from the other side, I never thought that I would accept and allow something like this to happen on the my island, on this part of the Aegean. I am still not sure whether I like it. My mother told me terrible things about the Turks and what she and her family went through. But the Aegean seems to be saying that past is past. And you can't go against the will of the sea (her will). But I am not sure… You can never be sure with the Aegean border. And now, these smugglers that exploit desperate people trying to escape from war and terror. Like my family in the past. They were also feeling war and encountered many difficulties here on the island. But that was different… No it was not like this in the Ionian sea and for this I felt calm but also became so bored after some time that I needed to return here (back to the Aegean) (Mytilini, October 2014).

From the fisher' narrative I felt that what he was trying to describe to me are about what I have called 'the effectual meanings of the Aegean'. Indeed, there were parts in his story that attributed a certain agency to the Aegean, as if it was the Aegean who was deciding who would cross and who not its waters, from the past until now. The element/feeling of unpredictability was also very strong in his narrative. What we can discern in the subtext of the fisher's narrative is the presence of the border, that is, the 'liquid' border's role in making all the difference on the Aegean (as if the Aegean is just a cover up of the border in his narrative). According to Clifford, 'when borders gain a paradoxical centrality, margins, edges, and lines of communication emerge as complex maps and histories' (Clifford (1997:7). It is the effectual space, the meaning of the Aegean border that changes as it adopts different meanings for the inhabitants on Lesvos. This brings us back to the more explicit narration of the Aegean border disclosed by the photographer that I presented at the beginning of this section and which directly referred to the contrasting meanings of the border.

Turning to how the border is being represented and discussed in the local newspaper *Embros*, we only need to look at the editions of the previous month (March 2015) to understand how intensely the border is being experienced and imagined in relation to the simultaneous arrival of the Turkish tourists and the undocumented migrants. The intensity of the border, in other words, is ultimately connected to the way in which the mobility of the 'Turks' and the 'migrants' coincide on the Aegean. At the end of March *Embros's* last edition's headlines consisted of the following articles: '40% percent increase in comparison to the last year: 2.500 Turkish tourists in the winter sezon and 'In a state of emergency: It is intensifying the situation in Lesvos concerning the migratory issue'. Moreover, at least once a week if not more, for the last couple of years the events that constitute part of the newspaper's headlines are the arrival of the Turkish tourists and undocumented migrants on the island, each one of course addressed in a different tone; the first in a more excited/welcoming and celebratory one, the second in a more pitiful and derogatory tone (as it uses the term 'illegal' when referring to the migrants). Concerning the Turkish tourists, recent emphasis is also given to the attempts to create connections between Izmir and other ports on Lesvos, such as Plomari and Molivdos, especially during the summer months in order to increase Turkish tourism on the island. In relation to the undocumented migrants, attention is placed on the shipwrecks and rescue operations on the Aegean and the newly opened detention center (officially referred to as welcome center) outside Moria village and the different problems that are stopping the screening center to function properly as a detention center.

Additionally, the newspaper has two separate columns dedicated to these two groups of peoples which are titled as 'the migrants' and 'the neighboring country' or 'news from the other side', that is, Turkey. It is interesting to notice here how Turkey from a 'national enemy', with the new partnership and touristic/cultural movements on the Aegean, it is being referred to as the 'neighboring country' (title of the column) by the local newspaper on Lesvos. In this way, we see how these two different types of 'strangers' (visitors) and the meanings that they adopt are particular contingent to this particular historical period, while, at the same time, we encounter a new development that cannot but affect the local islanders' imaginaries around 'strangeness' and the Aegean border. Indeed, the new mobility partnerships that the EU is trying to establish with its offshore neighbors, like Turkey, is also being reproduced at the local level, as we are able to see from the local newspaper of Lesvos, where 'Turkey' and the 'Turks'

are suddenly being referred to as 'our opposite neighbor' and 'our neighbors from the other side', contrary to the 'undocumented migrants', who are characterized as 'illegal'.

In some more recent editions there is an explicit connection between these two types of mobility as they are presented in the same article. One of the most recent examples is about the possible negative effects that the site of the migrants sitting at the port has on the tourism, particularly on the Turkish tourists arriving at the port from Ayvalik. The mayor addressing the Greek government in an interview he gave to the newspaper *Embros* was insisting that the first image that visitors capture is crucial, since it is the image that stays with you during your whole stay at that particular place:

> The scene of the migrants in desperate conditions at the harbor will ruin the reputation of the island as a hospitable and friendly place. Even more important, it will give a wrong impression of Greece to Turkey and this is something that we really cannot afford. Our neighbors should have a good picture of Greece and of the islands in particular. We should get rid of their centuries of prejudices towards Greece, just like we overcame our prejudices of Turkey and the Turks when we started to visit the other side. If we manage to impress the Turks with our island and hospitality, then this will be something extremely important in increasing tourism (attracting tourists)…What will they (the Turks) think about our islands when they encounter such people from the East who look more Easterners than the Turks? Is this the image we want to give to our neighbors, that our islands have become more eastern than Turkey?' [98]

In other words, the Greek mayor is aware that these particular Turkish tourists are 'modern', educated and upper middle and upper class advocates of secular values, contrary, to the undocumented migrants that 'arrive with barely their personal belongings, the majority of the women wearing headscarves and, while, speaking, in the same sentence referring many times to Allah' (reference needed). In other words, the migrants above anything else, such as their ethnicity, or the language they speak, are being identified as Muslims, even if some of them are not Muslims and do not practice Islam but another faith or nothing at all.

Indeed it is 'Islam' that has arrived on the island along with what are perceived to be its threatening elements that resonate/echo from the island's past experience of the ottoman rule, and which take a new form today with a spreading islamophobia in Europe in general. This idea of the migrants as corrupted groups of peoples cannot be

[98] http://www.lesvosreport.gr/lesvosmain/%CF%80%CE%BF%CE%BB%CE%B9%CF%84%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%B7/%CE%BA%CE%BB%CE%B5%CE%AF

thought of and discussed independently from the simultaneous arrival of the Turkish tourists since 2012 and the ongoing economic crisis, the effects of which are being felt more recently by the islanders. Thus, while there is a growing mistrust and even opposition towards the EU and its austerity policy that it imposes on the Greek society, this becomes ironic, when we see how at micro-level the majority of the islanders reproduce the EU' main discourse against the undocumented migrants. Here (on Lesvos and in Greece in general), De Genova's (2014) questions in his article 'European Question' become particularly relevant; 'How precisely does each of these new 'National Questions' differ from the analogous complexes of nation-race-migration that respectively prevail in other European countries?' 'And what, furthermore, are their fundamental affinities, as we find a composite formation conjoining nationalist particularism with ('European') racial whiteness'(De Genova, forthcoming)?

I am concluding this section with a focus on the recent visit of the leader of the Greek party, 'To Potami', to Lesvos. The 'Potami' was elected fourth in the last national elections in February (2015) and entered parliament with 17 seats and 6.1% (the neo-nazi Golden Dawn party became third political force in Greece, showing us how fragile the lines between a benevolent nationalism and a racist one are). I am turning to the particular reaction of this leader, towards the 'migration issue' that the Aegean border islands are dealing with, in order to understand better the 'effectual meanings of liquidity and strangeness' that the presence of the 'Turks' and the 'migrants' adopt on this part of the Aegean (on the liquid border and border islands of the Aegean) that I have been discussing in this section. The ambivalent and contradictory imaginary of 'Turkey' can be clearly discerned in the announcement that the leader of the Greek neoliberal party 'Potami' made during his visit to Lesvos and the migration situation there. His narrative begins as follows: 'we are at the start of a touristic period. From this part of the port that we stand, touristic ships depart, cruzships arrive, touristic ferries leave for Turkey or tourists arrive here from Turkey'.[99] And then immediately what follows is the description of another 'Turkey' and 'Turks', not the desirable Turkish tourists that the island must impress but the backwards and not yet European Turkey, the 'other' that brings the other 'other', the undocumented migrants on the island's shores and for which, therefore, there should

[99] http://www.emprosnet.gr/article/71699-fylame-ta-synora-htypame-toys-doylemporoys

be a border: 'We also need to protect the economy of our islands. We cannot allow Turkey to open the border, to leave boats of refugees and migrants to cross over to this side'.[100]

The above speech of the leader of 'Potami' (which refers to itself as a central left wing party) at the port of Lesvos, among the newly arrived migrants who are stranded on this space of the port, shows us how the two 'strangers' of and on the Aegean, the Turkish tourists and the undocumented migrants interconnect in the imaginaries but also in the daily experiences of the islanders living next to the waters.

Taking into account the above discussion, in the final section I would like to approach these transformations on the Aegean that I have been talking about until now from another angle/perspective that might initially seem to be contradicting my main arguments throughout this thesis. That is, if in the previous sections it appears that what I have been discussing so far is about a border that functions as a 'door' for some types of subjects and a 'wall' for others (Kasli 2015) by distinguishing 'solid' borders from more 'liquid' ones on the Aegean, (with the examples of the Turkish tourists' journey as more 'solid', secure and organized as opposed to the more 'liquid', insecure and uncertain journey of the undocumented migrants), in this section, I would like to move beyond this distinction by suggesting that both 'open' and 'closed' borders are the result of the same borderlines of the nation-state and capitalist system that produce a very thin and slippery line between acceptable nationalism and xenophobic racism. By examining the Aegean space we realize, indeed, how 'liquid' these lines are and how in actual fact we are missing something from the whole picture if not distorting it completely, by claiming that we are at a breaking point with the replacement of the 'Turk' by the 'undocumented migrant' as the 'threat', with the former being 'included' while the later 'excluded', the first able to move easily while the second unable to move freely on the Aegean.

On the contrary, in the final section, I want to show how the 'mobility' of the Turks has its own limits whereas the 'immobility' of the migrants entails in its very attempt to go against the restriction of movement the possibility of a more spontaneous and uncontrollable movement, that is, a freedom of movement without documents/papers which is freedom (itself). Only when we critically approach the contradictions of the Aegean by challenging/scrutinizing the meaning of the 'open'

[100] Ibid.

border (what exactly this open border is about and for whom) for the Turkish tourists versus a more 'closed' one for the undocumented, as the (historical, political, economic, social) material patterns with which this very space has been produced and delineated along national and now racial lines by certain mappings (as the result of racial formations and racial projects) that I analyzed in the previous chapters, the story of the Aegean will start to unfold itself to us (and ultimately make more sense to us).

3.4. The journeys on the Aegean: 'Micro-cultural and micro-political symbols in motion'

In order to proceed with the above mentioned analysis, I will focus once more on the 'ship' as a means of reading the Aegean's different stories and pieces, as it simultaneously reproduces and challenges their meanings. Specifically, I will reflect on the two types of mobility on the Aegean along the lines of Gilroy's description of the 'ship' as a micro-cultural and micro-political symbol in motion. With these two examples, I am able to connect Foucault's conceptual frame of the ship as a heterotopic space, the colonial journey and its historical significance (materiality) with what I see to be the present materiality of these two journeys at sea as the results of their meanings and experiences, both political and cultural ones, or rather the effects of the interrelations of the economical, the political and the cultural on the Aegean sea. These two journeys reveal connections between the materiality of the Aegean, its historical depth (volume) and mappings (that I discussed in Chapter I), the development of watery interactions, and debates over policies to regulate these encounters: in other words, a 'confluence of materiality, phenomenology, and policy that speaks to the political power of' what Steinberg and Peters call a 'wet ontology' (2015:260). Thus, in the following section I move on with a deconstruction of the Aegean's particular ontology, as the ultimate effect of the two most recent, characteristic and intense patterns of mobility on its waters.

3.4.1 The ‘Jale’ ferry: A floating ‘frontier’

In this section, I discuss the ‘open’ border in the case of the ‘pilot visa’ along the lines of a frontier, where the meaning of frontier is about expanding and opening, rather than a closed borderline. In other words, I show how the politics of the frontier are experienced around Lesvos, in relation to the Turkish tourist journey on the Aegean. During the numerous crossing that I made by ferry from Ayvalik to Lesvos, I experienced the significance of the frontier expanding with the ferry on the Aegean waters. Indeed, it is the materiality of the politics of the frontier that is responsible for the different flows of privilege and levels of vulnerability on the Aegean, degrees of liquidity, that I spoke of in the previous section. Thus, if we are to consider the ‘Jale’ and ‘Turyol’ ferry along the lines of Gilroy’ ship, as a ‘micro-political symbol in motion’, it is important to understand that the Turkish tourists’ mobility on the Aegean is not only desired and welcomed by the main actors responsible for monitoring and controlling every movement that takes place on the Aegean but also encouraged since it serves the economic aims, in other words, it is profitable for all members/actors involved: Turkey, Greece and the EU. For Greece and Turkey it sets forth economic activities/and coordination in the Aegean region, for which the ‘Aegean-dispute’ (Turkish-Greek relations’ historical past) has been an obstacle. At the same time, this economic partnership is interrelated to the partnership between Greece and Turkey against the undocumented migrants. The flows of economic neoliberalism on the Aegean between Turkey and Greece, in other words, are ultimately linked to the development of a politics of securitization, implemented by the EU border regime and which transform the Greek border islands into not only resort spaces for Turkish tourists but also into spaces of detention, screening and even deportation of another type of ‘strangers’, which officially and derogatory are being referred to as ‘migrants’. Hence, the border mechanism functions in a way that in order for the unwanted subjects to be excluded some others have to be included.

The Eastern Aegean provides us with concrete examples and for this is an ideal site to examine how this tension works and is practiced. That the development of securitization and neoliberalism coincide on the Aegean becomes apparent with the readmission agreements between Turkey and ‘Europe’ that I mentioned in Chapter I. In fact, I argue that the ‘pilot-visa’ itself is a kind of readmission-agreement between

Greece and Turkey with which alongside the more recent readmission agreement between Europe and Turkey, 'softer' visa policies are implemented for (economic) privileged Turkish citizens that enables them to visit some of the Greek islands in exchange for a much solid and rigid border control implemented by the Turkish authorities against the undocumented migrants wishing to cross the same border. In this way, the pilot visa is also about an inclusion through exclusion, in the sense that the freedom of movement of some is conditioned upon the restriction of others. We are dealing, in other words, with a border regime that in order to make some people move through legal channels, which in the case of the Aegean are the Turkish tourists, must push the others, the migrants, into 'illegal' crossings, themselves costly, and at times also intervening directly in sinking the boats, as we have seen. In this sense, we can think of the 'Jale' and 'Turyol' ferry as what Gilroy calls a 'micro-political symbol in motion', where the Turkish tourists are the effectual privileges of certain political arrangements and agreements on the Aegean, similar to what took place in 2011-2013 between Libya and Italy, with their readmissions agreements that allowed softer visa policies for some Libyan nationals (the economic privilege ones) in exchange for Libya (the Libyan government) accepting back all the nationals from the sub-Saharan African countries that arrived in Italy via Libya's borders.

If the ferry travelling from Ayvalik to Lesvos is a 'micro-political symbol in motion', one can argue that it also embodies the crossroads of different cultures, languages and ideas. This is particularly relevant to the undocumented migrants' journey, as we shall see further down; at a first glance, however, it also holds true, for the 'Jale' ferry transporting the Turkish passengers-tourists. In this sense, with the 'softening of visa-policies', one can contend that the Aegean is becoming the space that it supposedly used to be, that is, a crossroads of encounters, where different identities Turkish/Muslim and Greek/Christian elements meet. Indeed, on the ferry both the Greek and Turkish languages prevail. In addition, even though the Turkish tourists within the official discourse are not being classified as migrants (even more so as 'illegal' ones) they are, nevertheless, repeating a route that was taken by refugees in the past (1923) (many of which are their descendants) with the population exchange that sealed the border on the Aegean. Along with the people, cultures, religions, ideas and languages were also exchanged. Before this event Turkish, Greek and Armenian ethnicities prevailed on the ships that were roaming the seas of the Ottoman Empire (that were crossing from Ayvalik to the main harbors and economic/trade centers of

the Black Sea) but after the national border was sealed this 'internationalism' and heterogeneity was also occluded on these waters.

We are reminded, here, of the 'Jale' ferry's captain whose family came from Crete (Cretan Muslims) and who migrated with the population exchange from Crete to Ayvalik, and for this speaks both the Turkish language and the Greek with a Cretan dialect. This brings us once more to the coastguard's argument in the introduction who claimed that the reality of the sea is different from that of the land; where in the first we encounter a fluidity and openness of identities, languages and cultures, in the second, within the territory, we have fixed and closed national, ethnic, and cultural identities. Indeed, the 'Jale' captain speaks the language of the Aegean, a language unique to this particular space, and 'which is the language our ancestors spoke, communicated in and understood, and which they were forced to abandon due to cruel political decisions' (From a conversation with the Captain of the 'Jale' ferry from Ayvalik to Lesvos, October 2014). It is at the sea and on his 'ship', the 'Jale' ferry, where the Cretan captain feels most 'at home'. In other words, there is a certain nostalgic tone in the words of the captain, for times more cosmopolitan, a nostalgia that is not absent from the ferry-ride as a whole.

I argue, however, that this multicultural brand that is being politically promoted on the Aegean should not be mistaken with an all embracing planetary cosmopolitanism. Rather this multiculturalism that this particular class of Turkish tourists are so eagerly searching and longing for is a multiculturalism that turns around 'Turkey', as it is about 'Turkey' and for the 'Turks'; what is Turkey, where is 'Turkey' and who are the 'brothers' of the 'Turks'. In other words, the 'heterotopic' ship as the greatest reserve of imagination', along the lines of Foucault, adopts interesting dimensions and meanings around/of/on Lesvos. Indeed, this particular category of Turkish tourists do not feel that they are visiting a foreign country but their past, that is, what Turkey used to be and ultimately should be (what Turkey deserves and hence has the right to have) but the new ruling AKP power is destroying by taking it away from the more 'educated' Turks; (in this way, what might appear as an irony therefore, in actual fact is not, they are faithfully following the familiar Kemalist discourse of an ideal Turkey that the Turkish nation desires and also deserves to have and enjoy). Statements such as 'Lesvos is so similar to Turkey, it is like being in Turkey', or 'past is past', which I heard many Turkish tourists express on Lesvos, confirms my above argument that this multiculturalism is not actually about the

Aegean region and space but another form of nationalism disguised (the nation state once more), that is, exclusionary identities reinforcing themselves on the Aegean, while power relations and borders continue to prevail and thrive.

During my stay on Lesvos, I heard many Turks expressing their interest in buying property on Lesvos, while, frequently asking about the prices of land on the island that have obviously dropped significantly since the Greek crisis broke out. Indeed, the Greek law permits foreign citizens to buy property in Greece above a certain price. I even met Turks who had started their own business on Lesvos, to the annoyance of some of the islanders. Last summer, I encountered such a case, where a couple from Turkey had started up a 'rooms to rent' business in Eressos and which according to the islanders was doing much better than the local ones. Thus, some of the islanders fear a 're-colonization' of the island by the Turks, starting with these economic activities on Lesvos. As one local that I interviewed on Lesvos told me,

> (…) what is taking place on the islands now is history repeating itself, only this time (it is) the other way round. During the ottoman times, it was the Greeks and the Armenians, in other words, the Christians who were controlling the businesses in Asia Minor because they had the brains and they were much advanced in doing business. Now though Turkey has caught up and even moved ahead of Greece. The Turks, in the last years, have been used to doing business in Turkey contrary to the Greeks. Just wait and see how well all these experienced business men from Turkey will do when they come to our islands in order to take over the business here' (Anna, Eresos, Lesvos, August 2014).

Moreover, last summer, I came across with many Turkish tourists who when asked how they found Lesvos they spoke of a certain relaxed atmosphere that they could not find in Turkey.

> Here we feel that we can sit and drink our ouzo and eat the delicious mezedes for hours without being bothered. It is strange, we are at the border and Turkey is so close, you can even see its hills from where we are standing, yet Lesvos feels so different. Or actually not so different, it is exactly like Turkey only much more relaxed! We love it here, and everything is so cheap! (From a conversation with a group of Turkish tourists in their late twenties-early thirties, in a tavern in Mytilini, August 2014).

These were remarks/comments that I heard frequently, along with questions about the prices of land and property. For these particular Turkish citizens it is not just

about a holiday in 'Europe' but something more than this; a discovery of a common past they once shared with the Greeks, who now due to the wave of nostalgia and desire (however, still nationalist) that I spoke of above, become the brothers of the civilized strata of Turkey, 'our brothers with whom we share so much in common, much more than with the uneducated conservative Turks that are destroying Turkey' (Defne, Turkish tourist, female around 30 years old, Lesvos, August 2014).

In other words, the above statement indicates that this kind of cosmopolitanism is more about enforcing what it means to be 'at home' and 'yourself' with people that are 'similar' to you rather than the ability to live comfortably with difference, with that which is different from us (with the people who are different to us). A similar emphasis and even obsession with 'how similar Greeks and Turks are' can be found also in the different narratives of the locals living on the 'Greek' side. Indeed, the islanders themselves were surprised to see such 'modern' Turkish tourists arrive on Lesvos. 'The women are dressing exactly like the women here, even more elegantly. And, I haven't seen, at least until now, not a single woman wearing a head scarf! (…) They really love to drink our ouzo until early in the morning', while others would remark in astonishment on their wealth 'they come here and spend so much money (Conversation with Giorgos, a hotel owner in Mytilini, October 2014).

> Turkey has developed a lot, while we are becoming poorer and poorer in Greece; in Turkey thanks to Erdogan they are becoming richer and richer. You can understand this when you visit Turkey. Erdogan transformed Turkey from the mess that it was in into a very well organized and developed state. You should have seen their roads in Smyrna: ten times better than ours!' (Conversation with Nikos, around 35 years old, in Plomari, August 2014).[101]

The question that urgently needs to be asked (to all those defending this type of multiculturalism on the Aegean) is what if 'Turks' and 'Greeks' were not so similar, then what would happen, that is who would benefit and who would lose from being different (their difference)? Indeed, the Aegean region in the past has witnessed not so

[101] It is important to point out here that Lesvos provides a particular case in relation to the female Turkish tourists that it attracts. Indeed, Lesvos is known for its strong LGTB tourism that also forms a substantial pattern of mobility between Ayvalik and Lesvos, since many of the LGTBs are coming from Turkey. However, my thesis does not go into any analysis of this pattern of mobility nor the particular activism that it promotes around Lesvos.

peaceful handlings of difference, while, at the same time, it continues to provide us with stories of violent approaches towards 'strangers' on its waters.
The locals on Lesvos, themselves, admit that the Turks visiting their islands are not representative of the majority of Turkey (Turkish people):

> 'They come from opposite, the Aegean coast, from our places; Antalya, Smyrna and Edremit, are the same as here. This is normal, like, we breathe the same air and share the same sea. But not all Turkey is like the Aegean coast. Go deeper into Turkey and you will come face to face with the real Turkey. There things are wild and the people are uncivilized and uneducated. We wouldn't want and accept such people to come here'. (From a conversation with a group of locals in a tavern in Skala Sykamnias, Lesvos, August 2014).

Hence, the answer to the question 'what would happen if the Greeks and Turks were not similar' can be found in the above words of the local on Lesvos ('we wouldn't want and accept such people to come here'). It is along these lines that the islanders are not happy and comfortable with the arrival of the undocumented migrants on the island.' How thin the lines are between a nationalism that tolerates and a racism that openly admits its hatred for everything that is 'strange' and 'different can be observed even in the more leftist discourses of people who are supporting the migrants on the islands, however, on the basis of a common victimhood under the same capitalist system. It is important to keep in mind how' racialised violence secures the politics of austerity in Greece' (Carastathis, 2014). In other words, one should critically question statements (or rather slogans) of 'left wing' and 'anarchists' groups on Lesvos, which, while defending the rights of the migrants at the border, never fail to highlight the fact that both the Greek citizens (and particularly the working class) and the migrants are threatened by the same 'enemy', that of the totalitarian state and capitalist system. By unearthing the different layers of belonging and estrangement (racial and gendered) on the island of Lesvos, it is important to understand what it means to be vulnerable and precarious at the Greek-Turkish border, with some groups of people asserting an entitled relation to national space while being economically disentitled by austerity measures and others (Turks and migrants) who, despite the differences between them, carry the border on them (become the border); that is, by their very existence legitimize the construction of the border in the first place.

I think that it is useful to turn, here, to the distinctions that Gilroy makes between multiculturalism (or rather a multiculturalist discourse) and conviviality.

Gilroy (2005) uses the concept of conviviality to refer to the processes of cohabitation and interaction that have made multicultural an ordinary feature of social life in Britain's urban areas and in postcolonial cities elsewhere. Where multiculturalism describes the absence of racism and the triumph of tolerance, conviviality introduces a measure of distance from the pivotal term 'identity'. 'The radical openness that brings conviviality alive makes a nonsense of closed, fixed, and reified identity and turns attention toward the always unpredictable mechanisms of identification'(2005:Preface xv). Taking into account the different meanings that Gilroy attributes to these two concepts, I proceed with highlighting the limits of a politics of multiculturalism in the context of the Eastern Aegean both for the past (during the ottoman empire era) and for the present attempt of a revival of multiculturalism in the Aegean region. In this sense, it is difficult, I argue, to speak about a 'conviviality' among the Greeks and Turks in our present times and the Christian and the Muslims during the Ottoman Empire time. Where in the past the limits were imposed within the context of an empire, as emphasis was given to the distinctions and hence hierarchies between religious identities within the millet system, in our present times the 'borders' are found within the realm of neoliberalism, where ethnic and racial difference, whether between 'Greeks' and 'Turks' or 'Europeans' and 'Third World' citizens, intermingle with class distinctions imposed by capitalism (hence, in both systems it is difficult to speak of real equality). Turning to the mobility of the Turkish tourists on the Aegean that I defined as neoliberal flows of economic and cultural privilege, then it is not difficult to understand how this mobility is ultimately connected to other borders; for neolibaralism is a particular strategy of capitalism and capitalism primarily requires borders by capitalizing on the spatial differences that borders create (De Genova, 2013).

'Very notably, this has been the case not only with regard to migrant "strangers" but also toward minoritized fellow citizens who may be recast as "enemies" -- within the space of the nation-state' (see Gilroy 2005). Indeed, the limits of the discourse on multiculturalism and the failures of tolerance on the Aegean become apparent not only with the present discrimination that the undocumented migrants experience while crossing from one side to the other, with neither the 'Greeks' nor the 'Turks' identifying with the 'new-comers' and appreciating to live side by side with them, but also in the past, with the Turkish 'war of independence' that was in actual fact a war against the internal 'enemy', a war that propagated the liberation from the Christians

of the ottoman empire. Similarly, in the Greek discourse the events that took place in Asia Minor are likewise being presented and discussed under a nationalistic discourse (took a nationalist turn), with the expansionist projection of the 'Great Idea'[102] and the loss of 'our homeland'.

Thus, the statement of both the locals on the Greek border islands and the Turkish tourists visiting them, highlighting 'we are so similar' should not mislead us to think of an existing 'conviviality' on the Aegean, neither in the present context nor in the past, but rather to critically approach it as an exclusionary politics of multiculturalism with which new forms of discriminations are being produced while previous ones are being left unchallenged under the pretext of a supposed similarity, which, nevertheless, has not yet been cleansed by its deep rooted nationalism, that the exchange of populations brought to the Aegean region and a racism that has been produced by contemporary Frontex' Europe on the 'racial' subjects of the 'new' migratory moments. In other words, these nostalgic and celebratory multiculturalisms of the Aegean can also serve to conceal 'other' unwanted diversities ('strangers'), such as the undocumented migrants from 'Third-World' countries, which are excluded both through spatial and discursive mechanisms.

Returning to the Aegean's past, in the ottoman millet system the integrity of the homogenous, monolithic entities of Christianity and Islam were demarcated (and after all, this is what multiculturalism is all about: two separate but homogenous cultures living side by side). I would like to argue, in other words, that the assumption of these homogenous, monolithic entities is visible also during the Ottoman Empire times with the millet system that separated Christian subjects from the Muslim subjects of the empire and which culminates with the Lausanne Treaty in 1923, overseen by the League of Nations. In other words, the idea behind the treaty of Lausanne, that is, of separate and fixed identities belonging to two distinct homogenous nation-states, was drawn upon already existing (and sometimes violent) borders and separations within the ottoman empire and its political/religious institutions; the imperial conditions and mentalities, whether, the cultural, political and economic institutions of the ottoman empire which have been praised for 'tolerating difference' provided the grounds for

[102] 'Megali Idea' is an irredentist concept of Greek nationalism that expressed the goal of establishing a Greek state that would encompass all ethnic Greek-inhabited areas, including the large Greek populations that, after the restoration of Greek independence in 1830 from the Ottoman Empire, still lived under Ottoman occupation, see in: http://www.nsd.uib.no/european_election_database/country/greece/introduction.htm

the slippery and always ambivalent transition from 'multiculturalism' to 'nationalism'. How nationalism can coexist 'peacefully' with multiculturalism is something that we have already discussed in the previous section about the Aegean and the neoliberal era of tolerance in AKP's Turkey. Moreover, with the homogenization of Greece and Turkey as two separate national territorial states we encounter 'an apparently neurotic fascination with how the local and immediate political loyalties owed by citizens compare to the different obligations due from prisoners, transients, aliens, settlers and dissents' (Gilroy, 2005:19).

We observed a similar distinction, in the way that the arriving migrants are being perceived by the locals on the Greek border islands; a homogenous entity coming from the East, that is, Islam on the island. In other words, EU migration policies do not only stop an emerging alternative cosmopolitanism they also construct the image of a homogenous threatening entity of migrants entering 'Europe'. Indeed, as Gilroy points out, 'the vexed relationship between cultural differences and the ordering principles of national states has become a huge political and juridical issue since the September 2001 attacks of the United States. The Bush administration's 'war on terror' might be thought of as having brought the slumbering civilizations giants of Christendom and the Orient back to life (ibid.). Taking a look at today's Europe's migration policies on the Aegean (as we have done in the previous chapters) we realize that 'the possibility of any loyalty more cosmopolitan than national deference has once more been thrown into ferment' (ibid.).

Along the lines of this discussion, what I am suggesting is to distance ourselves from an interpretation of the 'open-border' policy that addresses the Turkish tourists and the recent 'militarization/securitization' of the Aegean with EU's border policies, as two separate processes moving towards the opposite direction or worse as two conflicting visa regimes. On the contrary, what my above discussion/analysis shows us, I argue, is that the pilot visa is part of a series of policies and practices, with which the Aegean has been increasingly militarized and progressively transformed into a frontier area that extends far beyond the legal perimeter of the EU. Firstly, we should not underestimate the negative connotations and memories that the frontier has for the islanders on Lesvos and the ways in which the increased arrival of the Turkish tourists on Lesvos haunts their inhabitants, due to their colonial history under the Ottoman rule. Despite its celebratory fame as a political and social space of religious and ethnic tolerance (in other words multiculturalism), above all, the Ottoman Empire, like every

empire, entails at its very core the political system/institute of the frontier and the imperial project, that is, the idea and practice of colonizing other territories and expanding beyond its territorial borders.

Concerning our present times, it is once more a frontier that is reinforcing protecting and securitizing, at the same time, national and European borders. How the politics of the frontier work in practice, can be understood by the very fact, that the Greek authorities had to convince the representatives/officials of the Schengen visa regime that the 'pilot visa' would not facilitate the entry of undesired non-EU citizens into the Greek islands and simultaneously 'Europe, in order to receive the official ok (permission) from the EU to apply it for the islands. Moreover, the pilot visa is about a restricted mobility (no more than fifteen days), that expects even from the privileged Turkish citizens not to overstay their visa permit but to return after a couple of days to Turkey, in other words, to perform the role of the obedient non-EU citizen.

Indeed, as we have seen, this 'open-border' with the pilot visa is not for all Turkish citizens; rather, for those who have the economic capital/opportunity, the border is easier to cross as the other side becomes more accessible for economic, social and cultural expropriation and exploitation. When the border becomes 'softer' for certain populations who are economically well off but nevertheless are experiencing a hardness of political restrictions in their own country, the islands that used to be 'over there' and 'distant' become the necessary and immediately closest spaces and resorts, where, as one Turkish retired military official who was a tourist on Lesvos put it, 'we can be ourselves'. From this already we understand what multiculturalism is and has been about on the Aegean (in the past and present); a space in which the more powerful (politically and economically) within each historical period claim their right not only to perform but also to extend their 'selves' through and on the waters by excluding others different from 'ourselves'. In this sense, the facilitation of the Turkish mobility on the Aegean with the pilot visa and opening of the border is, indeed, closer to the meanings of the frontier, an expansion of one's power and self (albeit a securitized one) into an open space, unlike the border which is more about a strict line representing/defending a closed space (and closer to what the migrants experience). On the Aegean, therefore, 'open' borders are about neoliberal practices that tend to expand already existing nationalisms.

3.4.2. The ‘rubber’ boat: A mobile cosmopolitanism

In this section I argue that, contrary, to the type of multiculturalism that is being attributed to the Aegean past, when Greeks and Turks lived side by side and which is now being promoted as part of the Greek-Turkish re-approachment on the Aegean, with nationals of both sides emphasizing their similarities, what is taking place at the shelter at Pikpa is closer to what Gilroy calls ‘conviviality’, as the result of a more ‘planetary cosmopolitanism’. According to Foucault’s analytical framework of heterotopia, the ‘ship’ consists of an ‘other’ space, that is, a small world in itself, a microcosm. This resonates with Gilroy’s (2004) description of the ship as a ‘micro-cultural, micro-political symbol in motion’ of what takes place at the sea, or more specific, at the ‘middle passage’, at the crossroads of different civilizations, cultures, and ideas. Thus, when talking about the distinct reality of the sea (that was demonstrated in various occasions by different people during my stay on Lesvos), we should conceptualize also the ‘ship’ as part of this unique reality, as it contains a reality/world of its own. Hence, I argue that Gilroy’s descriptions of the ship as a ‘micro-cultural’ and ‘micro-political’ symbol in motion is particularly relevant for describing the ‘ship’ with which the migrants cross the ‘liquid’ border on the Aegean.

As I have already mentioned the migrants that travel on these overcrowded boats come from diverse geographical regions, countries, languages, cultures and sometimes even religions. They can share different beliefs, ideas, political aspirations and values. Additionally, each one of them has her/his own story to tell, own past, desires and dreams. Even the objects that they bring with them from their home-towns are various and unique in themselves, as they reveal the different lives that they left behind: photographs, mobile-phones, and children’ toys, books, cans of food, bottles of water, blankets, extra clothes, suitcases... Multiple memories and multiple identities are attached to the different objects, as one can discern from the variety of objects that are often dropped or thrown by the coastguards into the sea, especially passports and mobile phones. Hence, these people suddenly find themselves in a common space, in a ‘floating-entity’ of a common journey on the Aegean, as they share the same space of the rubber boat and the condition of the migrant heading towards the borders/gates of ‘Europe’. In this way, we can indeed, speak of the migrants’ boat as a ‘micro-cultural’

symbol, that represents an internationalism of cultures, languages, and ethnicities, in which, even if, just for a few hours (although many times the situation of the 'common' journey continues), the migrants are forced to put up with difference and learn how to manage and even appreciate it.

Consequently, as they find themselves between the waters of Turkey and Greece, the migrants have to somehow communicate and search for a 'common language' in order to survive and make it through the 'liquid' journey, the majority of which speak Farsi, Somali, Arabic…This 'common language' can take the form of gestures and facial expression and/or even long silences, that are, nevertheless full of meaning. At the same time, the 'common language' can be Turkish (for the reasons that I mentioned in the previous section). Indeed, during my fieldwork at the Pikpa shelter in Mytilini, in many occasions, I also turned to Turkish, since, even if in a broken Turkish (far from being perfect), due to the fact that Turkish for neither of us was our mother tongue, appeared to be the language that united us (our common language of communication), that is, the language of the way, the road, the language one learns while making the journey.

In the same way, we can think about the music as a common language, how music connects people who may not share the same language, however, they share the common experiences and memories of the journey on the Aegean, for example, the crossing of the 'liquid' border, waves, sea, darkness, rocks, coastguards and the island. Indeed, during one of the protests outside the detention center in Moria, the 'Traces back' campaign's participants, along with the music rap band Renovatio, whose members are from Albania and who migrated to Greece in the 90s, organized a concert in which they played and danced to this group's songs. What took place outside the detention center, I contend, summarized the migratory experience as a whole (with its distinct spatial events): the up-rootedness/relocation, the journey, the arrival, the detention and the deportation that often follows. Indeed, on both sides of the fence people were dancing, those in front of the fence, the participants of the 'Traces back' campaign who had already been through the asylum application process and those behind the fence who were waiting to go through the screening process in order to be released and continue their journey. At the same time, the two members of the rap band were missing their third member who had been arrested and held in detention while he was about to be deported to Albania. With their music and the CDs that they were selling, the band was also trying to gather money for his release. In other words,

this event at Moria, apart from the common experiences also brings into the same space and time (connects spatially and the present with the past) the first wave of migration to Greece, during the 90s, mainly from Albania and the more recent one from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, Eritrea, Sudan… under the common slogan of 'azadi' (freedom), that could be heard during the protest that took place after the concert.

Thus, as the migrants transcend the 'liquid' border, the boat becomes a common point on the Aegean where different struggles, confrontations, exchanges and solidarity gestures take place on the waters. In this way, on the migrants' journey by boat, the story of the colonial 'ship' is repeating itself; what is taking place, is a repetition of the story of the first colonial boats, in which three continents encounter onboard/on the ship at sea (Africa, Europe and Asia) with its passengers struggling to survive the harsh conditions at sea (transatlantic trade-route) and thus, learn to develop a language unique to the journey at sea. In a nutshell, this 'once-againess- of the first encounter (Taylor 2003) reveals another dimension of the 'liquid' border, that is, that waters don't only separate but also connect: the present and the past (different times) and different places, that is, people from different geographical regions. The 'liquid' borderline is a border that entails in its very essence the possibility to be transcended, as different spaces and times encounter one another in not an always linear order.

The tension between roots and routes is analyzed as one of the most important aspects characterizing the experiences of the black slaves who made the colonial transatlantic journey, across the waters of what Gilroy names the 'Black Atlantic'. As Gilroy points out in *Black Atlantic*, what is particular about the colonial journey at sea, or more specific, at the 'middle passage', at the crossroads of different civilizations, cultures, and ideas, is that (slaves' and would be migrants') identities are not so much about roots but rather routes (what defines the migrant's identity are not their roots but rather the routes through which they travel). Indeed, if geography is fate (and for certain groups of people a tragic one) then (their) movement (and the routes that they delineate) is the foundation of geography. In the same book, Gilroy appreciates Du Bois's concern with the value of movement, relocation, and displacement, a theme that is underscored, according to Gilroy by the emergence of the train, the Jim Crow car, and the Pullman porter as key tropes (1995:138). In the case of the Aegean we can add to the key tropes the ferry-boat, on which the migrants travel. Thus, for Gilroy the work of Du Bois and Johnson points towards more fruitful ways of understanding the

tension between roots and routes. In Gilroy's words 'their work can be used to identify the folly of assigning uncoerced or recreational travel experiences only to whites while viewing black people's experiences of displacement and relocation exclusively through the very different types of travelling undergone by refugees, migrants, and slaves (ibid. p. 133).

And as we shall see in the conclusion of this thesis, these different types of travelling, undergone by the undocumented migrants on the Aegean Sea, for example, are about demands for the very right to a movement; a movement of struggles on the waters, of the peoples whose journeys are more 'liquid', since they have been denied the right to move, but, who nevertheless insist on making the Aegean story, their story, that is a story of the much larger nexus of lived spatial connections between "Europe" and the many places beyond its borders from which migrants come, as well as the connections linking Athens, the islands, and various places in Turkey from which migrants transit (e.g. Istanbul). This brings us to Walters (see Walters 2011, 2012 in Trimikliniotis, Parsanoglou and Tsianos) who uses the concept of "viapolitics," which is "derived from via, the way, or the road, but also a reference to being en route, or in the middle"(2015:10). In this context, Walters (2012) alludes to "a contentious viapolitics," specific vehicles assume great symbolic meaning and significance, "where the ship, the highway or the train become sites and symbols connected to demands for a right to movement."

Hence, I argue that, contrary, to the type of multiculturalism that is being attributed to the Aegean past, when Greeks and Turks lived side by side and which is now being promoted as part of the Greek-Turkish re-approachment on the Aegean, with nationals of both sides emphasizing their similarities, what is taking place at the shelter at Pikpa is closer to what Gilroy calls 'conviviality', as the result of a more 'planetary cosmopolitanism'. At Pikpa, the open welcome center on Lesvos, in other words, peoples from different geographical regions learn to live together without claiming to be the same or denying their differences, whether, they are cultural, religious, political, or even legal (for example, some categories of migrants are more 'privileged' due to EU regulations/laws, such as the Syrians who are given a six month permission to leave the country, contrary to the migrants coming from countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, and Sudan who have only thirty days, or the six month card given to victims of shipwrecks.). During my visits to Pikpa many of the migrants spoke of a certain kind of solidarity developing in this space, between migrants from

different backgrounds, legal situations, 'European' citizens, first arrivals and later ones, and locals. Indeed, I sensed this kind of international solidarity myself where I got to know various activists groups from Germany and other 'European' countries whose members are migrants whose first point of entry in 'Europe' was Lesvos. I will talk about the meaning of such migrants' struggles in the Conclusion, here I just want to say that these migrants-activists along with official German citizens-activists arrive at Pikpa to 'trace back the border at Lesvos', to organize activities and summer camps (with aim of informing the locals at Lesvos of their struggles) but mainly to provide help and advice to the newly arrived migrants on their journey to 'Europe'. Moreover, while the residents of Pikpa share the condition of the migrant, this common identity is also challenged, by taking this migratory 'commonness-similarity' and solidarity a step further; Simos, an unemployed local 'Greek' citizen, for the last two years, has been living in Pikpa alongside the undocumented migrants and refers to this place as his home.

This reality of internationalism and creative cosmopolitanism, however, is being rejected not only by the islanders due to the fears and prejudices that are attached to the arrival of the migrants on the island, as I have already discussed, but, also at the macro-level of European migration and integration policies. In other words, I argue that, with the migrants' journey at sea, already a kind of cosmopolitanism even if a tactical one (that is produced out of necessity) and what I would like to name a more 'liquid' cosmopolitanism (particular to our post-modern era of struggles/social movements), is taking place on the Aegean; one, which however, the EU with Frontex agency is trying to combat (by turning against it). That is to say, whereas, the Turkish and Greek reapprochment political turn within the EU accession policies of Turkey are encouraging a certain multiculturalism on the Aegean (for Greek and Turkish nationals) by promoting a multicultural discourse and brand, an already existing cosmopolitanism on the Aegean takes place with the migrants' movements at sea and their 'liquid' connections, as they bring into one site the much larger nexus of lived spatial connections between "Europe" and the many places beyond its borders from which migrants come, as well as the connections linking Athens, the islands, and various places in Turkey from which migrants transit, such as Istanbul, and other transit cities. And it is exactly these connections that are uncontrollable and impossible to incorporate under the multicultural brand attributed to the broader area by "branding

actors," such as EU and new established Greek and Turkish 'friendships' on the Aegean.

This type of cosmopolitanism, as much as it is 'Eurocentric', since the focus (aim) of the migrants themselves is always 'Europe', while, at the same time, they contribute towards the making of the European space, moves away from the official line of the EU discourse/agenda and policy of multiculturalism, and, hence, it is being defined as 'illegal' and inappropriate to flourish on the Aegean, by the EU border apparatus that simultaneously is being endorsed by the Greek and Turkish states. Movements and solidarity networks such as the 'Welcome to Europe' and 'Youth without Borders' networks, while presenting analogies with different programs promoted and funded by the EU, like the Erasmus Mundi program that brings young people together in a common space, are not receiving any support. Indeed, the 'Youth without borders' team is advocating exactly what the EU is supposedly promoting as its main cultural agenda; no borders in order for the youth of this world to connect. This policy which is purportedly being defined as cultural by EU officials is in fact political when we realize which groups of people are being excluded from such 'cultural' projects. Indeed, projects such as 'Erasmus Mundi' in actual fact do not address all the youth of this world, non-EU 'third world' lower class citizens are not considered eligible citizens of this 'Mundi'.

Hence, the political of these EU projects is the very racial discriminations that they entail, an institutional racism that is inherent at the very core of the construction of the EU itself. In a similar manner, the concept of free movement that the EU is promoting as part of its official policies (that forms a substantial part of its political agenda) has already existed as a practice by the Roma people and nomads who travel freely from one European country (nation-state member) to another, long before the European Schengen mobility region was established;[103] however, their lifestyle (way of living) and mobility is being persecuted and deemed suspicious (inappropriate) by EU officials and Member-States' governments. As De Genova points out, 'the enduring racial subjugation of the Roma increasingly merges both this 'internal' European dynamic with the problematic of transnational mobility and migration as such' (forthcoming).

[103] For a further discussion on this, see Shore 2000, *Building Europe: The Cultural Politics of European Integration*. New York and London: Routledge)

Hence, from the above discussion, in relation to the boat as a micro-cultural symbol, we can also speak of the migrants' boat as a 'micro-political' symbol in motion, with the migrants transferring the border upon them on their boat, as it challenges the spatial boundaries of the political and what it means to be political as such. From the past until now the ship can involve the movement of prisoners from one jurisdiction to another or even into special locations where there is no jurisdiction as such. Gilroy explains us, that 'having surrendered himself to the authorities, George William Gordon, an important political opponent of the colony's governor, Edward Eye, was actually transferred by boat from an area under civil law to a different location where martial rules operated' (2005:21). This is holds true also for the migrants' case on the Aegean, where, as we have seen are purposely pushed back from 'Greek' waters to 'Turkish' ones, in a Turkey whose immigration laws do not follow EU standards and even more importantly does not have an adequate asylum system/procedure (in other words, is not a safe country for the migrants and hence we can talk about violation of the non-refoulment law). According to Tazzioli

> a focus on humanitarian government at sea allows an unsettling of the fixed and bounded space of the camp – shifting to mechanisms of migration governmentality that produce and are grounded on spaces on the move, namely temporary spaces that flexibly change in their function as spaces of protection or containment.) In fact, in order to understand the functioning of the desultory politics over migrants' mobility it is necessary to draw attention to temporary spaces of governmentality – where people are rescued, channelled through or let die – formed also by moving transports, like military navies.[104]

In addition, apart from the fact that in some occasions migrants make their asylum applications on the ship, or the exact opposite, that is, their political claims for asylum, their very right to apply to asylum is denied, as they are being detained on the coastguards' ships, which is also a political act (absence or abuse of the law also belongs to the realm of the political), migrants on the boat start to develop their own tactics by taking the fate of the ship into their own hands. Indeed, many migrants put their own life at risk due to a common practice of sinking their inflatable boat at the moment of encountering the patrol boat of the coast guard. In this way, they force the

[104] Tazzioli, M. (2013). *Arab Uprisings and practices of migration across the Mediterranean* (Doctoral dissertation).

Hellenic Coastguard to start a rescue operation (in line with the International Law of Sea). In other words, this is a tactic with which the migrants, literary at that very moment, put their lives to risk on the Aegean, connecting once more life and death on these waters, while, hoping that instead of death life will prevail, the rule of law at sea, which, ends up depending, however, on the good will/intention (or not) of the coastguards.

We can think of this purposely sinking of the boat and other watery/choppy mechanisms that the migrants use in order to enter 'Europe' by sea (such as equipping themselves with satellite phones in order 'to be found'), as a 'tactic', a way of survival in the sense that De Certeau understands 'tactics' to be, that is, against the hegemonic strategies of, for example, EU's immigration policies, by appropriating these very same strategies and spaces that they are excluded from, even if, in this particular case, these tactics entail the very possibility of failure and death within them. But isn't the case, as Mbembe (2003) puts it, that under conditions of necropower, the lines between resistance and suicide, sacrifice and redemption, martyrdom and freedom are blurred? Indeed, what takes place on the boat is a kind of rebellion, a civil disobedience against the authorities of the border. In fact, their actual movement across the Aegean border can be thought of as an action of disobedience against the order of things, similarly to the rebellions that took place on the colonial ship when different subjects aboard could not endure the harsh conditions on the ship imposed by the colonial order. Tazzioli (2014) discusses the migrants journey across the Mediterranean Sea from Libya, 'as the unavoidable condition of those who do not have a Visa for entering Europe: that is, it seems that the fact of putting ones' own life in danger by risking death at sea cannot be prevented other than by not migrating; otherwise, deaths can be eschewed only as far as a military equipped system intervene'. Indeed, in the Aegean case, lately, the migrants are targeting different islands than the norm (much smaller islands that never had experienced the arrivals of migrants before, such as Oinouses, Kastelorizo, Agios Kirikas), in order to escape apprehension at the usually patrolled points of the Aegean and, hence, putting their lives at risk. Additionally, we can approach the islands themselves through anti-colonial lenses, that is, as spaces of anti-colonial insurgency (Linebaugh and Rediker, 2000). While Comarroff (1997) argues that the island can become a place of insurrection, this has also been the case in Lesvos with the notorious detention center of Pagani. Indeed, the migrants along with some of the local people and activists from

Europe protested against the existence of the center (in a way this is an anti-colonial revolt), and as a result of this ongoing criticism and protest, the Greek Ministry of Civil Protection closed down the center in 2009.

According to Tazzioli, 'what ultimately characterizes migrants' struggles is the surplus beyond the ordinary rules and norms for crossing a border'. Thus, she argues 'the migrant is not who enacts a practice that is out of the norm, or whose conduct is in itself deviant; rather, the migrant is out of place and exceeds the norm to the extent that he/she acts precisely as the others who are entitled to freely move' (2014:18). The migrants, in other words, narrate the border story by producing its different texts while at the same time challenging its very (nationalist) ontology. Based on Tazzioli's conceptualization of the migrant, the spatial practices of the migrants on the Aegean, I argue, challenge the very function of the pilot visa which normalizes/facilitates the movements of a certain type of non EU citizens, by acting precisely as the Turkish tourists who are entitled to cross over to the other side (albeit, they are allowed to stay only for a few days) and by this act reveal the utopianism of every attempt to organize movements into certain categories and legitimate certain journeys over others on the Aegean. Hence, in the conclusion of this thesis, I would like to discuss the migrants' journey at sea not so much/exclusively as migrants' struggles per se, but rather along the lines of the authors of the *Keywords* (2015) as a 'migration of struggles' that provide us with an 'autonomy of migration' on a planetary scale, since in order for the migrants to move, they have to break down the obviousness of the national state as a principle of political culture (Gilroy, 2005:5).

CHAPTER IV
A ‘MIGRATION OF STRUGGLES’

In this final section I want to conclude my thesis by reflecting on what exactly the different stories, declarations and texts that we saw in the previous chapters, producing partially discordant ‘narratives’ and that, consequently, delineate multiple spaces of movement – different images some reemerging from the past and others from the present but also different lived spaces and practices of crossing the Aegean space, tell us about what is known as the ‘migratory problem’ or in softer words the ‘migratory issue’. This too highlights the relationship between nationalism (what I have been discussing so far) and transnational political solidarity that I will be touching upon in this final section. While this thesis has been focusing on the Aegean sea, it is important to understand how the local racism which deforms the experience of the migrants, at the same time provokes reactions and movements against racial injustices as part of a larger global conflict stretching from Asia, Africa, the Aegean islands, and deeper into ‘Europe’.

Without suggesting that the Aegean story touches upon every aspect of the recent migratory movements (their whole story) and explains to us all that it is about, starting from the geographical regions of departure (countries of origin) to the countries of transit (which in the case of the Aegean is Turkey), the Greek border islands and the final destination in ‘Europe’, it does, however, offer us, a way to approach these movements undertaken by people who are being denied the very right to move, as part of what the authors of the *Keywords* conceptualize as a ‘migration of struggles’. ‘Such a migration of struggles’, the authors argue, ‘would force us to think both about the ways in which struggles migrate beyond the established borders of the political and about the ways in which they challenge established forms and practices of political struggle which in turn require a radical rethinking of political concepts and

keywords' (2015:29). Indeed, the authors prefer to approach and conceptualize/theorize the migrants' movements as a 'migration of struggles', meaning a continuation of already existing political and spatial struggles, rather than as migrant struggles per se, that is, border struggles that are defined by the crossing of one or another national border.

A 'migration of struggles' also links to the effectual meanings of what I discovered during my fieldwork to be the 'liquid' materiality of the actual journeys that take place on the Aegean, that is the political context that surrounds them and the more imaginary one revealed in the narratives of the islanders on Lesvos. I suggest, therefore, using the concept of a 'migration of struggles' as an adequate way of exploring theoretically and ethnographically a more planetary cosmopolitanism that we saw, in the previous chapter, emerging on the Aegean. What I am hoping to have shown, in other words, is that the story of the peoples from diverse geographies who use the Aegean (border) route cannot be thought separately from the story of the Aegean, a 'liquid' border that follows the migrants even after they have entered the interior of the nation state (de Genova, 2015) and has started before their arrival at the border. By scrutinizing this 'liquid' puzzle of the Aegean simultaneously trough historical and political lenses along with some of the theoretical tools provided to us by the discipline of cultural studies (particularly Gilroy's conceptual framework of the ship as a micro-political and micro-cultural symbol in motion), I tried to deconstruct its puzzle as a space of tensions between roots and routes and whose different pieces are narrated by the various actors that construct it, whether the migrants, the Turkish tourists, the fishers, the Greek coastguards/authorities, Frontex (EU authorities) and the locals on the island (at the micro-level of ethnography).

As I mentioned in the introduction, like every puzzle, the Aegean' s patterns are also always and already in connection; indeed, each chapter of my thesis, while focusing separately on every piece (although by no means expanding them all), I tried to show how each piece of the Aegean puzzle entails its own materiality (as a spatial entity) and symbolic meaning(s) that affect profoundly the journey of the border crossers at sea (both types of journeys, the Turkish tourists' and the undocumented migrants' journey). According to the different affectual bordering spaces and their heterogeneous temporalities – the boat, the shipwreck, the island, the moment of the arrival, the identification procedure, we encounter 'liquid identities', with each one of these spaces affecting and, hence, attributing certain types and categories of identities

that travel through its waters. In other words, if the spatial entity of each piece of the Aegean puzzle is relatively 'solid' then the whole puzzle, meaning the one that I examined throughout the chapters of this thesis, loses its solidness and, ultimately, appears to be more 'liquid'. A 'liquidity' that immediately captures what I sense to be the meaning of a 'migration of struggles': a migration of the obviousness of the political in the very movements (mobility) of the migrants who are crossing the Aegean which simultaneously brings a migration of the very concept (that constructs the idea) of the 'migrant' as such. What a migration of concepts refers to, particularly, in the case of the Aegean, I suggest, is the actual 'liquidity' of the migrant identity as such, the impossibility of placing and analyzing the 'migrant' as a subject within any fixed category, whether racial, ethnic, gender or class (see also Tazzioli, 2014), since the story of the Aegean is in itself a story of migrations, exchanges, mappings and re-mappings.

Tying now the above argument with the previous section's discussion, the boat on which the undocumented migrants travel, Gilroy's (1994) 'micro-cultural' and 'micro-political' symbol in motion, I want to examine the theoretical/conceptual and practical implications of relating Gilroy' image of the ship to what the authors of the *Keywords* call a 'migration of struggles'. This kind of reading, I contend, provides us with the necessary connections to understand the difference between a multiculturalism as the effect of what Gilroy characterizes as 'the overriding appeal of 'ethnic' sameness which has become an obstacle to live with difference' (2005:144) and a migration of cultures and meanings as the result of a 'migration of struggles'. This thesis, therefore, can be read, along the lines of Gilroy's *Post Melancholia,* as an attempt to escape not just from 'Turkey' or 'Greece' and/or even 'Europe' but from 'the closed codes of any constricting of absolutists understanding of ethnicity' (ibid. p. 138) and for that matter, any form of fixed identity. Moreover, with his critical cultural approach, 'multiculturalism' is tied to what Gilroy sees as a 'mistaken choice involved in centering work on migration introducing a risk of collusion with the cheap consensus that ties immigration and social policy to the nebulous discussions of diversity, multiculturalism and political correctness', that I have also found to exist within the discourses on the celebratory Greek and Turkish coexistence (multiculturalism) on the Aegean, under the claim 'past is past', which lately one can hear more and often on both sides of the Aegean, particularly from the Turkish tourists visiting the islands.

Following Gilroy's argument, contrary to the neoliberal Turkish/Greek commercialized oriented cosmopolitanism for tourists, in the previous section I showed how a more authentic, spontaneous and 'planetary cosmopolitanism' starts to emerge on the Aegean, with the figure of the 'migrant'. One that also challenges the fixed borders of the national state and, thus, the discourses around the kinds of absolute identities, belonging, and recognition that they reproduce, such as (that of) the 'Turk' and the 'Greek' that, while, being so 'similar' claim to be the ultimate 'brothers' and legitimate natives/heirs of the Aegean region. This idea contingent as it is to the historical mappings of the Aegean whether with the exchange of populations, the legal delineation/ organization of the sea (Law of the Sea) and the more recent European mappings, reveals to us the building up of a space which, as I have argued before, exactly because the migrant forms part of Europe's colonial history, has brought nationalisms and racisms together in ways that affect differently (up to different degrees),every one of us attempting to cross the Aegean.

The above approach brings us to one of the main questions of this thesis, 'who is a problem at this particular moment on the Aegean, the 'Turk' or the 'migrant'? If at this specific moment it is the migrant who is causing trouble, as Panos who made his military service on Lesvos argued, then we should also keep in mind the military operations and surveillance and monitoring techniques that have already been staged and activated in the Mediterranean (Tazzioli 2014). In this sense, for the Aegean case/site, we can only talk of a space already occupied. After all, De Genova warns us that 'these acts of postcolonial contemplation are never separable from palpably *practical* deliberations and decisions over questions of policy and policing that intractably take the nativist form: 'What should *we* do with *them*?' (2005:56-94), where in the case of the Aegean, the 'them', whether the 'Turks', the 'Greeks' or the 'migrants', the question remains the same, it is still there, still permanent and insistently there, as the various military camps some of which have been turned into detention centers show us. Indeed, the lines between nationalism and racism are particularly 'liquid' on the Aegean (border).

In this way, we arrive at what Gilroy sees as racism and not diversity which made the migrants' arrival into a problem (exactly as the Aegean was occupied by nationalism, Europe due to the imperial conditions and mentalities, whether political, cultural and economic institutions/ensembles was already occupied by racism before the migrants started to arrive there) and for this he prefers racism to migrancy, that is,

‘if there has to be one single concept, a solitary unifying idea around which the history of post-colonial settlement should resolve, that place of glory should be given not to migrancy but to racism’ (Gilroy, 2005:150). What are left for me to narrate briefly, therefore, in order to conclude with the Aegean’s story of mobility, are some concrete examples/instances of what I would like to see (given the above analysis) as spontaneous anti-racism movements and cartographies on the Aegean. Indeed, if up until now (in the previous chapters) what we have seen are conflicting/contrasting claims over liquid spaces by different actors, whether Turkish tourists, Greek coastguards, Frontex Agency, Greek and Turkish state, now I will focus on migrants’ claims on the Aegean and those who support them (their advocates). The first is an example of what takes place precisely on the Aegean waters within a counter-mapping and counter-surveillance movement, the second as an in-between movement/mapping, that is, by tracing the border back to Lesvos, it creates a link between the Aegean Sea and the island of Lesvos and the last one an example of an anti-racist campaign taking place on Lesvos, in what the participants/activists call a ‘paper boat’ of different encounters and exchanges.

4.1 ‘Watch the Med’ team

If we are to take the different nationalist and what I see as essentially racist practices at sea just as seriously with those that take place within the territorial state, if not more due to the very fact that it was at sea when the first racist mappings and spatial hierarchies/ and borders were first established during the colonial times (as we saw in Part I), then one should also place at the focus of attention the different resistances, counter-surveillances and counter-mappings, as clearly anti-racist movements (despite their occasional limitations and dependencies to the already existing power configurations, mechanisms and techniques). By focusing entirely on the struggles that take place within territorial regions/states, we are simultaneously reproducing the idea of the nation state as the exclusive model and option of political and social organization, a historical evaluation that presupposes and predefines certain events as revolutionary, while, others are being if not completely erased then ignored as irrelevant by placing them at the margins of our conceptual understanding of what

is revolutionary-the meaning of revolution and the political as such. When in different uprisings pioneered by formal citizens there is a struggle against the sovereignty of the (nation) state and the political system that is being produced within it, we should also keep in mind the existence of certain ambiguous spaces, such as oceanic and sea spaces, that are not being so easily controlled, that, in any case, have escaped the direct control of the nation state. These spaces on and through which people travel for diverse purposes, with their movement are already resisting national boundaries, something that can be dismissed when acting but also thinking exclusively within certain frameworks, all of which derive from national territories and having, therefore, the nation state as their ultimate point of reference.

Steinberg and Peters 'argue that the ocean is an ideal spatial foundation for addressing these challenges since it is indisputably voluminous, stubbornly material, and unmistakably undergoing continual reformation, and that a 'wet ontology' can reinvigorate, redirect, and reshape debates that are all too often restricted by terrestrial limits' (2015:247). By *wet ontology* they propose 'not merely to endorse the perspective of a world of flows, connections, liquidities, and becomings, but also to propose a means by which the sea's material and phenomenological distinctiveness can facilitate the reimagining and reenlivening of a world ever on the move'(ibid. p. 248). An ocean based perspective, I argue, helps us to conceive the spatial but also political connections of the different struggles that are taking place on a planetary scale, which are characterized by the very fact of their mobility, whether as the cause or the effect of these uprisings, and their potential to provoke not only spatial migrations but also conceptual ones in our very understanding and depiction of the political and mobility as such. By this I am not claiming that the various global uprisings that took place, for example, in Istanbul, Brazil, Cairo are unimportant or minor events, (nor that Facebook and Twitter and social media are not important vehicles-tools for these territorial specific uprisings to adopt a global significance, in becoming global) on the contrary; what I am trying to say is that we should think of them along with the sea-space, as geographical spaces that are impacting one another, if, we are claiming, indeed, to be thinking globally.

I consider this to be a very crucial point that ought to be emphasized in our present times that are characterized by the recent revolts, uprisings and oppositional movements that take place all over the world. When we refer to all over the world, indeed, we should be thinking of all over the world, while, at the same time, insisting

on conceptualizing not only how different struggles migrate, or in other words, are mobilized but how they have always being doing so (they have never done otherwise), that is, have always been about other places, all over the world, about relations, exchanges and interconnections; unequal ones, of course but still relations. As Gilroy points out for Socialism and Feminism, for example, 'they came into conflict with a merely national focus because they understood political solidarity to require translocal connections. In order for those movements to *move,* they had to break down the obviousness of the national state as a principal of political culture' (2005:5). By ignoring and even erasing the struggles of the migrants at sea (for example the tactics of the migrants, cutting a hole in their boats, their confrontations with the coast guards, the relations they might establish with the locals at sea, for example with the fishermen, and small symbolical memorials, or a No-Border movement-journey at sea), doesn't the sea in this way become one of the 'not to be place' when in actual fact it is the 'place to be' by groups of people who have substantial historical ties to Europe, due primarily to pre-colonial boat journeys, as the image of Foucault's boat suggests us? Exactly because this is where the struggles in 'Europe' are first being articulated, that is, in the waters of the Mediterranean.

Watch the Mediterranean Sea is an online mapping platform to monitor the deaths and violations of migrants' rights at the maritime borders of the EU. The team also has regional teams in Greece/Turkey and recently (October 2014) has also launched the Alarm Phone that is active also in the Aegean Sea. It is a really important project, a kind of counter-surveillance of the border security processes and a counter-mapping of the different mappings implemented and constructed by the EU, as we saw in the previous chapters. Similarly to the 'left to die boat case' explored by the Forensic Architecture project at Goldsmiths, the WTM project opens up how the infringements on rights and rights to movement could be monitored, countered or resisted. This online mapping platform which was launched in 2012 as a collaboration among activist groups, NGOs and researchers from the Mediterranean region and beyond is 'designed to map with precision violations of migrants' rights at sea and to determine which authorities have responsibility for them'. According to the authors of the *New Keywords,* using/exploiting the existing surveillance mechanisms back on themselves, it 'creates a "disobedient gaze" that refuses to disclose what the border regime attempts to unveil - the patterns of "illegalized" migration –while focusing its attention on what the border regime attempts to hide; the systemic violence that has

caused the deaths of many at the maritime borders of Europe' (2015:11). Moreover, according to the team's own account of their work published on their homepage (according to the team's homepage):

> The online map allows to spatialise incidents across the complex legal and political geography of the Mediterranean Sea. Through the accounts of survivors and witnesses, but also the analysis of ocean currents, winds, mobile phone data and satellite imagery, it is possible to determine in which Search and Rescue zone, jurisdictions and operational areas an incident occurred – as well as showing other boats who were in the vicinity of those in distress. Spatialising such information is essential to determine responsibility for violations at sea. Apart from reconstructing past events, the participatory nature of the platform allows many different actors to to indicate ongoing situations of distress.[105]

In other words, with their gaze the WTM team engages in a 'migration of struggles' as it (re) appropriates and (re)uses the space of the sea's geographical space on the Mediterranean. This particular space is transformed into a 'stage' where the atrocities of different actors at sea, coastguards, commercial ships, vessels, fishers, members states national rescue authorities and EU' Frontex (border policies) are being exposed, the past (previous) ones ('apart from reconstructing past events') but also the ones that are taking place this very moment ('the participatory nature of the platform allows many different actors to to indicate ongoing situations of distress'). That is to say, if in the previous chapters, we saw how the sea has been transformed into a frontier along the mappings of an expanding EU border and rights at sea cartography/governmentality, then the map is the core of the WTM platform, as it 'aims to provide the basis for an understanding of the complex maritime environment with which migrants crossing the sea interact' (Watch the Med).[106] We read in their homepage:

> The sources for the layers are referenced in the layer metatdata which can be viewed in the "layer" window on the home map. Information allowing to draw the layers has been sourced from official documents, technical reports and interviews. They are drawn to the best of our knowledge, which however remains incomplete due to lack of transparency on border control operations and surveillance means. The layers will be continuously

[105] http://watchthemed.net/index.php/page/index/3
[106] http://watchthemed.net/index.php/page/index/3

> updated as new information is accessed to provide the most complete possible picture of the maritime environment.[107]

What we can speak of then is the production of a new sea-space based however on the techniques of the previous (constructed) one. In addition, the very alarm call that the migrants make when they find themselves in a dangerous and risky situation at sea and their presence indicates the continuation of the past in the present. From the very fact that certain groups of people are still putting themselves in such perilous conditions, reveals the unwillingness of the EU to acknowledge what is their right by definition of being human (birth right), that is, freedom of movement-the right to move. Consequently, the discrimination against certain individuals over what is considered to be normal for some citizens while being depicted as problematic for others continues to prevail, despite the various rescue operations that claim to be humanitarian and their aim being to save the lives of the migrants.

Here I would like to suggest that the appropriation of the map by the WTM along with the different technologies that the border agencies are normally using can be considered, once more, as tactics in the sense that De Certeau understands them to be. If the EU, the military and the member states appropriate them strategically in order to intercept and eliminate the 'enemies' of the state, then the WTM are using them in a similar manner, this time to expose the criminal character of the very nation-state and EU system. By creating a map of struggles the WTM team transforms the migrants' movements at sea into archives, preserving and displaying the images that had been targeted for erasure; in other words, the 'silences' and gaps in the grand narrative of nationalism and Europeanization as another form of nationalism that is expanding on the Aegean. As Taylor points out for another kind of performance-protest for the disappeared of Argentina ' instead of the body in the archive associated with surveillance and police strategies, they staged the archive in-on the body, affirming the embodied performance could make visible that which had been purged from the archive'(2003:171). And here if we exchange/substitute the word 'body' for mobility/movement then, indeed, we can think and analyze the collaboration among activist groups, NGOs and researchers from the Mediterranean region and beyond as a 'migration of struggles' (moving across borders) while generating a series of anti-racist cartographies.

[107] Ibid.

Following this discussion and returning once more to Gilroy's *Post melancolia*, I want to suggest that by exposing the otherwise 'silences' of the Aegean sea (space) 'silences' that pertain in the story of the Aegean as a story about the interrelation (and 'liquid' connections) between nationalism and capitalism, what appears at the surface is a complete racialization of the Aegean. In other words, as I have already argued at the beginning of this section, what seems to constitute the core of the problematic of the Aegean, or what I have been calling the Aegean puzzle is racism, rather than what is usually referred to as the 'migratory problem'. Indeed, as De Genova (2013) has emphasized if there were no borders there would be no migration just mobility; similarly/likewise according to Gilroy (2005) it was not the migrants' movements and arrivals in 'Europe' that provoked racism (that were followed by racism) but the already existing cultural, economic, political, in other words, institutional racism that made migration into a problem/issues. Such a perspective, I argue, suggests that the activisms of such campaigns, projects, and teams, as the WTM on the Aegean, are anti-racist movements' per-excellence, as they struggle to reconstruct an Aegean space (and the Mediterranean as a whole), from a space that has been and continues to be delineated along national culminating in racial lines into a space in which everybody can at least move without risking their lives. In their own words:

> While the EU's maritime frontier extends far beyond the reach of the public's gaze, WatchTheMed aims to enable actors defending the rights of migrants at sea to exercise a "right to look" at sea and hold states accountable for the deaths of migrants and the violation of their rights.[108]

This (socio-political) reality of the Mediterranean that is happening right in front of our very eyes can be changed by spatially rearranging/re-organizing the Aegean space. The WTM team similarly to the very movements of the migrants at sea, challenge the different layers of nationalism on the Aegean, and, hence, 'provide the starting point for creating modes of solidarity that are trans-local, activist, and dissident, as they bring neglected democratic traditions into focus' (Butler, 1994, from praise for *Postcolonial Melancholia*). Indeed, a communication of and on the Aegean already starts to formulate between the Alarm phone (Watch the Med) and the migrants on the boat; connections, activisms and interactions develop thanks to the

[108] http://watchthemed.net/index.php/page/index/1

boats and sea, with the 'ship' being the ultimate conceptual but also practical/empirical symbol of communication.

Additionally, it is interesting to notice that when referring to the Mediterranean (and consequently also to the Aegean) the WTM team is using the term 'frontier' rather than border in order to emphasize the series of policies and practices, with which 'the Mediterranean has been increasingly militarised and progressively transformed into a frontier area that extends far beyond the legal perimeter of the EU'.[109] In other words, this description of the Aegean as frontier, as I have argued elsewhere, depicts the 'colonial present' on the Aegean (Mediterranean) in which, once again, some groups/types of peoples are rendered entitled/privileged to cross the border while others not, not at all coincidental, the racial subjects (imperial debris) coming from the colonized lands of 'Europe'. Hence, what we encounter once again is the continuous separation of human beings along racial lines, that is, among those who count as subjects and those who do not. In this way, teams, projects and actions, as those of the WTM team, turn against this erasure of history, its silences and the dead and unmourned bodies that it leaves by scrutinizing on the one hand all the liquid traces which provide evidence of accountability for the deaths of the migrants at sea and, on the other, force the different actors to act upon those subjects and rescue them when they are at risk/in danger at sea; even if this means, of course, having to 'collaborate' with the authorities and national coastguards who after all by rescuing the migrants at sea, simultaneously are 'intercepting' and detaining them on the land.

Thus, one can question whether this kind of activism at sea really challenges the actual political system that rules the Aegean, that is, a common European visa policy and the concurrent denial of legal access to non-European migrants that this visa-regime implies/enforces (that is the visa-regime itself) (see also Tazzioli 2014). As the WTM itself acknowledges, 'they are drawn to the best of our knowledge, which however remains incomplete due to lack of transparency on border control operations and surveillance means'.[110]. Nevertheless, we should not dismiss, I argue, the different activists' meetings, camps and campaigns as counterproductive and as re-enforcing the status-quo of the border order, for this risks us complying with a certain not only methodological nationalism but also geographical nationalism that conceptualizes certain places to be and others not to be (Stierl 2012) and certain movements/struggles

[109] http://lesvos.w2eu.net/files/2015/02/Doku-Lesvos-2014_web.pdf
[110] http://watchthemed.net/index.php/page/index/1

political and others not (Tazzioli 2014). I suggest, in other words, that if the sea is a place not to be for certain categories of people (not be) in the ways that we have seen until now (in the previous chapters), then the very journey of these peoples and their struggles at sea should be taking seriously into account when challenging the idea of the political, by asking questions such as what it means to be political, who is political and where is the political of a certain action.

What follows, therefore, is a brief discussion on a particular journey whose participants by returning to the border on Lesvos are consciously reproducing another type of journey that traces the border back to Lesvos, and, thus, referred to itself as 'Traces back'. By making this journey that the EU visa regime normally excludes them from, they also present to us, by simply acting, an anti-racist movement of 'how things could have been different', as it brings to the fore, follows up and fosters the unsettling "insistences in space" (Sossi 2012) enacted anyway by migrants and activists on the Aegean, as we have seen. In this sense, I suggest, in the 'Traces back' to Lesvos, the distinctions between anti-racist activism and migrant struggles explode, as the first only re-enforces what has already been taken place before the crossing of the Aegean, during the crossing and afterwards, that is, to go against what Fanon sees as "the first thing the colonial learns is to remain in his place and not overstep its limits" (Fanon, 1963: 15). If movement is the foundation of geography (Steinberg 2009), in the way that I have shown above, then non-movement is the foundation of all the geographies and places 'not to be'. As the participants from the 'Youth without borders' and 'Welcome to Europe' who organized the 'Traces back' campaign mention in their published Layout on their journey back to Lesvos 'on creating networks of solidarity and struggle for freedom of movement, 'what we share is our campaign against racism and deportations'.[111] Indeed, as they mention in the introduction of their brochure:

> This year we were a very mixed group: they were young people who have already received a right to stay in Germany and Sweden and who came back to meet those who didn't yet find a way out of Greece. From Athens a whole group came who currently live in the 'Welcome Island' and some who are friends who we knew from our camping last year in Lesvos or from the tours in Greece and Turkey. The trip again was organized by the

[111] http://lesvos.w2eu.net/files/2015/02/Doku-Lesvos-2014_web.pdf

> ‘Youth without Borders’ and the ‘Welcome to Europe’ together with many local friends.[112]

Germany, Sweden, ‘Europe’, islands, Greece and Turkey appear connected through these networks of solidarity created, indeed, by a ‘migration of struggles’, with the Aegean border itself adopting new spatial meanings and potentials.

The people who were participating in this camp-movement were different activists from Europe (mainly Germany) and the ‘Youth without Borders’ network, a group of migrants whose first stop in Europe was the island of Lesvos and were returning to the island as an act of reunion, contemplation and to provide help (advice, hospitality, friendship) to the newly arriving migrants on Lesvos. Moreover, they were there to protest against the recent opening of a newly detention center (although officially referred to as ‘reception’ center) a few kilometers outside the main port and capital of the island. The people participating in the movement referred to this event as a ‘journey back to the border at Lesvos’ or in a shorter version ‘Traces back’, with the aim, as is announced on their brochure, ‘to create an alternative journey on the Aegean’.[113]

4.2 ‘Traces back’ camp

It was a summer evening in early August. In a hurry, I was walking with my sister along the promenade of Mytilini harbor towards the municipal theater at the beginning of the main street of the town of Mytilini. Starting from this point and moving along the harbor a chain was beginning formulate, a chain of solidarity for the Palestinians who were losing their lives and homes because of the bombings and massacres launched by the Israeli state in the Gaza strip between 8th July 2014 and 26th of August 2014 and cost the lives of over 2.200 people (according only to official statements of course), the majority of which were Gazans. It was towards this chain that my sister and I were running with the aim and wish to also join it. We had firstly heard about it not from the various posters announcing it and that were put up in

[112] İbid.
[113] İbid.

several main parts of the harbor (on shops windows, cafes, bookstores and of course on announcement boards) but from the participants of the 'Traces back' camp who among other activities had also included this one in their weekly program of what they called 'traces back to the border of Lesvos program'. And it was the familiar faces of the participants of this camp that were beginning to create the chain now. After a few minutes of greeting one another, without wasting any more time, at seven o clock as programmed we all held and joined hands and crossed the main road to the promenade and as we continued to be connected, we slowly walked, while the first slogans could be heard from the refugees who were leading the chain.

> 'Freedom for Palestine' 'freedom for Palestine' 'Freedom for Palestine' 'Freedom of movement for everyone!'. Freedom for Palestine, stop the war in Palestine, freedom of movement for Palestine, freedom of movement for everyone, freedom of movement for Palestine!'

One slogan would overlap into the other; the freedom for Palestine would become freedom of movement for everyone and then again freedom of movement for Palestine. At first it seemed that the participant/migrants of the chain were confusing and mixing up the slogans. Or were they doing it on purpose? In any case what appeared as an accident at the beginning, continued by all of us (including my sister and me) as something entirely natural and logical. In fact it sounded the most legitimate and normal thing to claim and protest for. Indeed, I thought, this very last slogan (freedom of movement for everyone, even though we had initially all gathered for Palestine) is also urgent and relevant since it depicts the immediate aftermath (and even present of the Palestinian bombings/war), that is, the flight of all the people who lost their homes, family, and friends, and which, in order not to lose whatever they had left (including their own life) would become migrants on the road, some of them also towards 'Europe' via the Aegean. Therefore, it made all the sense in the world to protest also for freedom of movement for everyone not as something separate and equal nor as something as important as the end of the bombing/war and freedom of Palestine but as something inextricably interlinked and connected to it. A girl from Eritrea, as if reading my thought, turned round to me and whispered:

> This is not about being selfish it is what also concerns Palestine this very moment. This is why we need to show solidarity to the Palestinians, this is why the war in Palestine needs to stop so that people from there will not

> have to come to this border and find themselves in the Aegean sea like we did, it is for them also that we returned to this border!

And with a certainty that cannot be described in any words (with words) she held my hand (squeezed) as tight as ever.

That the migrants were demonstrating right here at the Aegean border was particular significant in challenging and deconstructing the relationship between strangeness, borders and migration. In fact, by their very presence at this spot of the Aegean border they were simultaneously claiming their right to be here, that is, their claims to a certain space and the right to protest for their rights and for the rights of other suffering human beings again in this very space, meaning that, by protesting for the rights of the Palestinians it was directly a claim to their (the Palestinians) future right over this space and, thus, a No-Border action per excellence. Hence, we are eliminating something from the whole picture if we are analyzing these struggles (their struggles) at the border space of Lesvos exclusively as border struggles or migrant struggles, rather, than what I felt to be what the authors of the *Keywords* call a 'migration of struggles'.

The islanders, however, did not seem to consider the migrants' presence in this manner (along these lines). On the contrary, they found it awkward that migrants/refugees were protesting for Palestine on the island. In fact their first idea was that the migrants were demonstrating for no-borders, their right to stay, against the border, in other words, for their rights (something that did not involve the Palestinians and the purpose of this gathering which was announced as being a protest chain against the suffering of/atrocities committed in/for Palestine) and, hence, not a concern for them. They walked/passed annoyed, muttering sentences such as 'ah, these people are taken over the entire harbor again and we cannot pass!' 'What are they saying what are they saying, what is their problem?' 'They are shouting for Palestine, for the freedom of Palestine' my sister answered back, what we are also shouting for. 'Ah for Palestine, bravo that is good, of course for Palestine, freedom for Palestine' they shouted as they also joined the slogans, without, however, joining the actual chain and holding hand with the migrants/rest of us'. In other words, the locals of Lesvos did not very much appreciate the fact that the migrants of the No-border camp were protesting against the atrocities committed in Gaza-Palestine last August (solidarity movement), even though the locals themselves were also for the Palestinians. Passer byes seemed to be confused and were asking my sister and me 'what are they

demonstrating for', what is the meaning of the slogans (because they were in English) that they are shouting? When we told them that they were protesting for Palestine they seemed to be more receptive-approving and some of them even joined with slogans. It was interesting, however, that this explanation had to be made in the first place and that these 'darker skinned' people were perceived to be out of place by the islanders, that is, in 'a place not to be' by groups of 'people not to be there'. In other words, it was obvious that if the migrants were protesting for their rights (and in fact they were), like freedom of movement or the right to stay, the 'locals' would not be appreciating this. The ironic and same time fascinating thing was that among the slogans for freedom of Palestine, the migrants were also adding the slogan: 'Freedom of movement'. In other words, we are indeed speaking of total heterotopias in the Foucauldian sense! The locals were joining in a protest for the freedom of movement without even being aware of it; but are this not what a 'migration of struggles' is about, followed by and leading to a 'migration of concepts'?

How are we to interpret this discrimination towards the migrants protesting? Why was it legitimate and fine for the migrants to protest for the freedom of Palestine but not for their and freedom of moment in general? The migrants started to shout slogans like freedom for movement, no one is illegal, and freedom of movement is everybody's right among the slogans for Palestine. In other words, they were defending their right to protest, their right to move by moving and protesting against the general injustices taking part in different parts of the world. And indeed, if they weren't here now they would not be able to join this particular protest for Palestine, in this sense the border is not just about a national border restricting the migrants to enter the territory of the nation state or a European one that forbids certain groups of people to enter 'Europe' but much more than this; it tries to impede the development of different connections that movement itself creates, struggles to control and keep people into different spatial categories in order for them not to move, mobilize and unite, it is connections whether historical ones, like the ones between Europe's present and its colonial past and present ones such as the fact that people have many more things to unite them than to separate them and for this mobility and free movement of people will continue, it is the inevitable of social relations and such kind of processes that the construction of borders within the nation-state and capitalist system try to deny. To give up is not an option and the solidarities of the way, the journey and the street proves exactly this. Not allowing, therefore, people to demonstrate for their

rights on the street and in public spaces culminates in the construction of national and European borders that don't allow some people to move freely; thus, freedom to demonstrate cannot be thought independently from freedom of movement in general (the broader notion and practice of freedom of movement for everyone).

As one of the participants of the 'Traces back' campaign argue: 'I have the feeling that our group is growing that there is something new with a good basis and this is why we can speak of a migration of hope, connections and struggles that create new friendships…our story will continue'. Indeed, from Palestine people would also become migrants fleeing the war. They would also encounter deadly 'liquid' borders and leave their traces on the Aegean, while, at the same those making the journey will establish new friendships and connections on the way. The locals in Mytilini were also aware of this; in one of the kafenia in a village of Lesvos, which I used to visit often and drink my coffee, one afternoon when the news on the TV were showing images of the bombs falling in Gaza, the people in the kafenio were mumbling words/sentences such as 'you will see soon or later they will start arriving from there also (…) to end up where? Many of them drowned in the sea. Terrible from bombs to the sea (...)' Indeed, from bombs to the sea is what a migrant story is often about. And the migrants protesting for Palestine at the harbor were manifesting exactly this connection, with their migrations of connections. 'You see, at this very moment, in this very space, we are not protesting just for the freedom of movement for the current refugees but for the future refugees who in the next few days will start to flee Palestine and migrate to Europe for asylum and to find what? An Inhuman border and cruel coastguards', was what Selim, a migrant from Somalia told me while holding hands in the chain.

Mobility is the result of war; however, with Selim' statement we grasp another connection; one between protest and mobility, or in other words, the very 'liquid' (thin) lines between protest for the freedom of movement and movement/mobility as a form of protest by itself. Indeed, I suggest, here at this demonstration the distinction between the right to move and the right to protest are taken to their extreme, are exploded and end up signifying what they truly are, that is, the very same thing/process. Taking into account the previous discussion on the WTM team's actions on the Mediterranean, we can reconsider our discomfort and/or questioning of whether their re-mapping and counter-surveillance is, indeed, a re-constructing of the Aegean space by following the 'Traces back' campaign back to the 'periphery' of 'Europe', with the migrants participating in the 'Youth without Border' camp, redefining the

border and reconstructing what it means to belong to the periphery-margins along with the dichotomies of 'periphery' and 'center' by putting the center of their struggles at the border of Lesvos. By questioning what has been defined as the periphery, what it means to arrive at the periphery, by going back, by making this journey to Lesvos the No-Borders movement shows us what I believe Foucault was pointing out with his concept of heterotopias; that it is important not only to ask the question, how the world seems 'strange' from the margin but also to contemplate: how does this perspective of 'strangeness' acts on the world?

This perspective of 'strangeness', as we have seen, acts upon Lesvos in different ways (adopts different effectual meanings on the island of Lesvos). I was asked many times about where I was from and how I had arrived on Lesvos (how I came to Lesvos). When I told them that I normally live in Istanbul most of the migrants would become excited since they were familiar with this city and would start referring to the various places, specialities, foods, and neighborhoods, words and images they remembered from Istanbul. But their excitement and nostalgia would fade away when I told them that I had come to Lesvos with the ferry boat from Ayvalik, a not more than one hour journey and which cost me no more than 25 euros. Immediately, they contrasted my experience of the border crossing with theirs. The following comments are indicative:

> 'If we could just buy ticket for the ferry and cross like you and so many Turkish tourists from one side to the other all these deaths would not happen, we wouldn't lose our lives like this at the border. and there would be no need for us to return to the border but until we are also giving the right and are able to board/take that very ferry that you took, until, in other words, this border becomes history, like the Berlin wall has become history, only then we will stop returning every year to the border, until this happens, though, we will keep returning! (Conversation with Ali at Pikpa campsite, Lesvos August 2015).

4. 3 From 'Paper Boat' to 'Welcome to Europe' platform

And, indeed, the Aegean border has not yet become history and, thus, the members of the 'Youth without borders' and the 'Welcome to Europe' networks continue to return every summer to the border on Lesvos. Exactly because of the

border they do not board the 'Jale' or 'Turyol' ferry but they did manage to create another ferry another 'ship', thanks to this very same border. Once more, with what the migrants and activists named the 'paper boat', we experience the effects of a border that does not only separate but also connect. The 'paper boat' was the name that was given by the activists-participants of the No-border movement/camp that took place in the summer of 2009 in Lesvos, to the table-stand in the central square of the port where the participants along with other NGO members and activists and of course migrants who were already living on the island, youngsters staying at the Agiasos center for unaccompanied migrants and new arrivals that were just passing by or others ready to catch the ferry for Athens, were holding daily meetings; providing help and supporting the new arrivals, exchanging information, establishing connections, networks and planning actions and protests against border policies, Frontex and the detention center. 'It is because of its liquidity/waters that we were able to create this alternative boat journey in which different encounters, exchanges, ideas, connections and networks are established', is what one of the participants of the No-border camp of 2009 on Lesvos and who is now living in Istanbul, told me. In fact, the 'Welcome to Europe' platform/network was such a network that was created by the meetings that took place on the 'paper boat' in the summer of 2009 by the No-border action/camp (2009 on the island of Lesvos). Similarly to the exposed bodies in the Aegean waters that the activists team WTM try to expose and the continuing deadly affects of the 'liquid' border, the 'Paper boat' platform gives witness to the existing connections and life that this very same border creates and the immediate changes that it can produce, even if the core of the visa-system remains intact.

Indeed, we should remember that it was during the No-border campaign in 2009 and the protests organized by activists groups, migrants and NGOs participating in the No-border camp that the notorious detention center Pagani was finally closed down in 2009 and that the migrants who had been imprisoned there managed to continue their journey and move on to 'Europe'. And since then due to the established connections they keep returning to the border, the previous summer, for example, to protest against the new detention center in Moria. Hence, the undocumented migrants, unlike the Turkish tourists might not be able to travel on the ferry and benefit from an EU supporting 'multiculturalism', however, with their struggles on the Aegean they have created another boat, what I see as a boat of connectedness and platforms, a connectedness that, as I have argued before, differs from other forms of

multiculturalism based on an overemphasized, albeit, constructed 'similarity' between two fixed identities ('Greek' and 'Turkish') on the Aegean.

Moreover, the 'paper boat's journey resulted in the 'Welcome to Europe', a rather 'solid' platform that, as we have seen, along with the 'Youth without Borders' was the main organizer group of the 'Traces back' campaign. Indeed, the 'Welcome to Europe' based on the initiative of the 'Paper boat' is an activist group that provides a platform on Lesvos where newly arriving migrants on the island can seek advice on the next steps of their journey, about where to stay in Athens, meet up with other refugees who have already arrived on Lesvos, spend a night or two in the open camp-site of Pikpa, and learn about the 'Welcome Island', a grassroots housing project with two flats in Athens (funded by private donations) that emerged as an idea out of the daily solidarity work and the contacts of 'Welcome to Europe' as well as from the immediate needs of refugees for a secure place to stay.[114] The 'Welcome Island' has welcomed over these past three years refugees from Afghanistan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Mauretania, Sudan and Syria. Indeed, we are able to notice here more clearly and directly some of differences between these kinds of spontaneous and grassroots connections and the more controlled, organized and planned (commercial oriented) initiatives created by the 'pilot visa'.

In relation to our discussion, it is useful here to remember once more Gilroy's conceptualization of the boat. I am quoting at length:

> The chapter also proposes some new chronotopes that might fit with a theory that was less intimidated by and respectful of the boundaries and integrity of modern nation states that either English or African-American cultural studies have so far been. I have settled on the image of ships in motion across the spaces between Europe, America, Africa, and the Caribbean as central organizing symbol for this enterprise and as my starting point. The image of the ship-a living, micro-cultural, micro-political symbol in motion- is especially important for historical and theoretical reasons. Ships immediately focus attention on the middle passage, on the various projects for redemptive return to an African homeland, on the circulation of ideas and activists as well as the movement of key cultural and political artefacts: tracts, books, gramophone records, and choirs (1994: 4).

While referring, therefore, to a 'migration of struggles' at sea, in today's and (the colonial's) context, we shouldn't underestimate the role-significance of the boat.

[114] HTTP://INFOMOBILE.W2EU.NET/ABOUT/WELCOME-ISLAND

And the migrants who participated in the 'Traces back' movement, also travelled to Lesvos with the ferry boat from the port of Athens (Piraeus). And again they continue their journey to Athens by boat. Indeed, exactly because there is an increased securitization of the border for certain groups of peoples, the boat is becoming more and more the central means of transport for the majority of people of this world who have been deemed 'illegal' to move to and stay in 'Europe'. By paying particular attention to the boat, by placing it, that is, at the center of our analysis when contemplating social movements, the waters that surround the island of Lesvos and the other border islands, become connecting spaces where different meeting points, connections, exchanges, interactions, activisms, solidarity movements with the migrants, but also confrontations, disputes, restrictions and struggles that are taking place on the Aegean. In this way, we are emphasizing their global nature and importance, similarly to how we evaluate the global networks-connections that are developing through an increasing social media that connects various geographical regions.

Based on the above discussion we should use the boat as a theoretical/conceptual tool and the 'paper boat' in particular to honor and commemorate certain spaces and 'strangers' that have always, since the 'first encounter', constituted significant places in connection to 'Europe' and the struggles that have characterized 'Europe's' historical past. Struggles that exist because throughout 'Europe's colonial past they have been people who were defined as 'strangers' and because they experienced (and are experiencing dystopias-ultimate social ruinations and destructions) they struggled to create utopias, places where they would finally-one day be free. Thus, we can even argue that 'Europe' owns the concept, image and imaginary of 'utopias' to the very 'strangers' and their struggles for freedom from places that Europe conquered. Indeed, the utopias that exist within 'Europe's imagination ('European' imaginary) are ultimately linked to the 'exotic' lands of the 'strangers', their colonized lands , that most of the times where in actual fact islands, as the first spaces that witnessed a European colonial-imperial rule and hence, the first places where the first anti-colonial revolts developed. Political actors, Steinberg (2012) argues, have long drawn on utopian imaginaries of colonizing marine and island spaces as models for idealized libertarian commonwealths. Moreover, Roman Africa and the Near East were imaginary sites within which ideas about identity, hybridity, and sociality were performed and contested (Bhambra 2011). We should always critically question,

therefore, every attempt of utopia as being purely 'European' (or purely 'other') when we talk about the idea of an utopia in 'Europe'. For, indeed, it was these colonized 'other' spaces that constituted the European imaginary of utopia and hence the answer to the questions ''where is Europe', 'who is a European' and 'what indeed is 'Europe'' (de Genova, 2014:293) are multiple and 'liquid'.

Ultimately, taking into account this section's discussion on the anti-racist activisms taking place on the Aegean and their relation to the fundamental right of movement, I argue that in this very space of the Aegean there is a struggle over the right to life over death, with death and life ultimately linked to one another in the same space, as Mbembe (2003) also pointed out for the colonial situation in the colonies-camps. This is not only because, similar to water, without movement there would be no life, with water itself always flowing/moving, but, also because if the migrants had drowned in the Aegean, like so many have, they would not have been able to be on Lesvos, protesting for the rights of the Palestinians, as I discussed above. Thus, the border is not just about death but it is also about victory of life over death or about the relation/connection between death and life (as they coincide in space and time), when for some people the option of risking one's own life and the lives of their loved ones is the only option and not the worst in order to deal with unbearable in their everyday lives. Moreover, because the border is still there and continues to function as a deadly liquid border; the migrants return to the island to protest against it and hence generate life, as we have already seen in the example of the 'Traces back' camp.

The link between life and death through movement can be seen clearly in the following example: One of the events of the 'Traces back' program was a memorial ceremony at Thermi, a small fishing village, for the dead who had drowned there. The organizers and participants of this memorial were the members of the Thermi fishing club who has saved some of the migrants while out at sea, the 'Welcome back to Europe' network and the 'Youth without borders' team. In addition, a migrant from Afghanistan who just a few days before had come to Lesvos from Paris, in order to search for his missing brother, about whom the last information was that he was to cross the Aegean, only to find out when he arrived on Lesvos with the help of the 'Welcome to Europe' network that his brother had drowned in one of the 'shipwrecks' on the Aegean. The disappearance and death of his brother brought this young person to the border on Lesvos where, though, apart from receiving the tragic news of death of his loved one, he also encountered people willing to help and support him, people

ready to share their experiences with him, in other words, new friendships and connections. During the memorial, all participants agreed to return every year to the border and pay their respect to the drowned of the Aegean by offering them some dignity that 'Europe' refused them; their statement at the memorial ' we will always remember'.

It is worth quoting at length from the speech that was given during the memorial in Thermi on the 12th of October 2015, and which had been posted by the 'Traces Back' camp in the 'Birds of Immigrants' blog, a platform for unaccompanied young refugees on the way to Europe.

> We came together today. Here in the harbour of Thermi we gathered for remembering the dead of the European border regime. In the last years about 20.000 people have been killed by these murderous borders – here in the Aegean, at the street of Gibraltar and many have been lost in the Mediterranean between Lybia and Italy. The numbers of deaths at the European borders have increased tremendously (…)10 months ago, in December 2012, 27 people have been found dead here in Thermi. On the 14th in the afternoon a 16-year-old unaccompanied minor from Afghanistan was rescued by Frontex in the sea near Lesvos. He had been on a boat with more than 30 others and their dinghy got in distress in the night of the 14th/15th. The next day three dead people were found in Thermi and only after that the Greek coast guard started a search and rescue operation to look for further survivors. During the next days more and more dead people were found at the beaches of Thermi – in total 27 bodies. Some remained missing. Their names we don't know, but many of them are buried in the cemetery in Mitilini. We will go there tomorrow. In March 2013 another tragic incident happened at the coast of Lesvos. The father of a one of the drowned is today here with us… All of these deaths have a face, a name. All of them leave behind relatives and friends. Besides the bodies also their hopes and dreams are lost… Here and today, at this place of failure and loss, we want to stop for a moment and create a space for all those who lost their lives. Remembering here means to save the stories of the uncounted who died at the borders of Europe. They had been on the way to change their lives on their own. Their death is the death in search for freedom. And that concerns all of us. There would be many more names and many more stories. We will never forget the others but in this moment we will remind those who died in March 2013.[115]

[115] http://birdsofimmigrants.jogspace.net/

4.4 Final remarks: From nationalism to racism and beyond

Returning to the child from Turkey that was travelling with its mother on the 'Jale' ferry from Ayvalik to Lesvos, one of the last things, I heard him ask his mother was 'will the fishes let us cross the sea?' His mother surprised turned to him and in a surprising tone replied: Why shouldn't' they? 'Because' said the child in a very assuring tone, 'the sea belongs to the fish!'

As a final remark (ending remark of this thesis), I would like to pose and dwell on the highly contested question; to whom (then) does the Aegean belong? The child's statement, however 'childish' does reflect the absurdness of trying to define a border, whether a national or a European one, on something as natural as water. Indeed, this beautiful statement of the Aegean belonging to the fish has been used many times as a slogan by different anti-militarist groups, who have been campaigning against the obligatory military service and nationalist sentiments in both Turkey and Greece. The Aegean is a space in and by itself and to think otherwise, by trying to turn into a national territory or/and European one, can at best attract tourists and at worst cause the deaths of many people without documents trying to cross it.

I chose the Aegean space as my study-case for all the reasons discussed above; that the core of it's very story entails the absurdity and paradox of borders, particular 'liquid' ones that try and restrict one of the most natural elements in a our world, without which no life could exist, water. Moreover, to pose the above question in relation exclusively to the 'Turks' and 'Greeks' as the inhabitants of the two sides of the Aegean or even by arguing that the Aegean does not belong to neither of them, or to both of them, is just reproducing a nationalist discourse since it excludes the intense and vivid presence of peoples from other geographical regions on its waters, which as we have seen, contribute essentially to the making and/or remaking of the Aegean space. Even in the past, however, this has been the case, when the Aegean and the Mediterranean, in general, was a space in which different cultures met on the waters to exchange goods, ideas and values.

At the same time, we should turn our analytical gaze to the actual movements that already exist on the Aegean and which present us with alternative ways of moving, interacting, enjoying and living with difference. Apart from the examples of activisms, movements and resistances that I mentioned above, there is a more direct

collaboration between the two sides of the Aegean in relation to the crossing of the undocumented migrants: Kayki is a group of academics, human rights activists and artists mainly from Turkey and Greece but also from Austria and Germany who in 2008 held a series of meetings in the Greek island of Chios and Dikeli. The group later named itself 'Kayki'. 'The main theme of these meetings were to seek for ways to enhance the living conditions of the refugees who are trying to reach Greece via the Aegean Sea almost every day and to raise the voice against the deaths occurring during their "journey for hope"'.[116] As a result of these meetings, The Kayiki Group took some concrete decisions such as to increase the interaction of both countries' NGOs, to better keep track of the refugees and violations against these in order to take necessary precautions and to raise a campaign to increase awareness.[117] 'Kayki' which in both Greek and Turkish means 'small boat' shows us a different kind of collaboration between the two sides on the Aegean; not a 'collaboration' between the Turkish and Greek authorities against the undocumented migrants (along with 'push-backs') but a collaboration for the protection, rights, defense of the lives of the refugees and migrants crossing the Aegean sea. In one of their posts released in June 2014 we read the following:

'We, the inhabitants of both sides of Aegean Sea, express our anger and our shock about the thousands of deaths of refugees and migrants in their effort to cross Europe'.[118]

This alternative and spontaneous collaboration between the two sides at the micro/local level comes into contrast with what we have seen taking place on the macro-level between the two sides of the Aegean. Thus, the appropriation of the Aegean route by the peoples seeking to enter 'Europe' without the appropriate documents has and continues to affect the relationship between Turkey and Greece on the macro and local level, as I have discussed throughout the chapters of this thesis. However, even such collaborations and activities initiated and organized by groups like the 'Kayki' shouldn't mislead us to think, analyze and imagine the Aegean space as a space belonging exclusively to the Turks and the Greeks and the migrants as subjects who happen to be passing on and through the Aegean waters, and, thus, in

[116] http://www.kayiki.org/p/about-us.html
[117] Ibid.
[118] http://www.kayiki.org/

need of protection. In other words, while defending the rights and the well being of the migrants in both sides of the Aegean, groups such as the 'Kayki' should be careful of not reproducing the same nationalist discourse of multiculturalism and belonging on the Aegean, that is, of the 'poor' migrants who are in need of the protection and help of the Greeks and the Turks because they have entered the 'common' Turkish-Greek space of the Aegean.

On the contrary, the argument that I put forward in this thesis is that the Aegean does not belong exclusively to the Turks nor to the Greeks, and it is time that we start recognizing the development of nationalism and racism as the direct effects of this absurd mapping of its waters. Indeed, above all, the presence of the migrants on the Aegean reveals the absurdity and utopian stupidity of flags, the utopian stupidity of every nationalism that culminates in fascism has we have seen happening in the case both of Greece and Turkey, the utopian fantasy that nation-states have had all along as they construct borders and the more recent European one (De Genova, 2013); the migrants are here to reveal the utopian idea of every border, likewise the Aegean one. 'The Aegean belongs to the fish!' is the statement that many citizens of both sides of the Aegean use as the slogan in their protests against the existence and function of the national military service (like an anti-militarist camp that took place in Izmir in the summer of 2013). It is important, however, that this beautiful slogan does not leave us with the impression that the fish themselves can be exclusively only Greek and Turkish excluding all other possibilities.

CONCLUSION

In the above thesis I proposed to 'think along with water' and the connections that they produce (bring with them) in order to illustrate concretely the materiality (economic, political, social, cultural and ideological) that is attached to specific meanings and experiences of the Aegean Turkish-Greek border, in relation to the two most recent patterns of mobility that have developed simultaneously on its waters; the Turkish tourism and migratory movements. I started with the proposition that if one is to explore the Eastern Aegean's particular materiality (economic, political, social, ideological and cultural context) which cannot be separated from either the experience of the Aegean border or the meanings that we attach to the border's experiences, the 'ship' that travels on the Aegean is an ideal space (in movement) from where to start such a study. Indeed, as we discovered throughout the chapters of this thesis, attached to the ship's movement are particular discordant meanings and experiences, as they link to the Turkish tourists' and the undocumented migrants' journeys on and through its waters. Along these lines, I used the terms 'liquid' and 'liquidity' to capture the degrees of strangeness attached to the Aegean border, as the result of the different flows of privileges and vulnerability, and which I named the degrees of liquidity on the Aegean.

My conceptual approach that brought together historical, ethnographic, para-ethnography, and theoretical tools provided to us from the cultural studies discipline, also concludes that the idea of the ferry as a solution to the deaths at sea, is not unrealistic but a crucial step for reflection on the already existing connections, exchanges, interactions, activisms and solidarity movements with the migrants that take place on the Aegean. My theoretical contributions, therefore, are found in how I use Foucault's conceptual frame of the 'heterotopic' ship as a theoretical tool to capture the role of these particular journeys around Lesvos in the development of new methods of studying theoretically and empirically some practices of the border in specific localities and in my case, the Aegean border between Ayvalik and Lesvos (the

Aegean region). Thus, I offered a twist to Foucault's frame by focusing specifically on the ferry as an empirical tool for the development of an alternative way of interacting with difference on the Aegean. This thesis, therefore, provides us with innovative conceptual links between Foucault's 'heterotopic' ship and Gilroy's *Black Atlantic* that focuses on the colonial journey at sea, or more specifically, on the 'middle passage', at the crossroads of different civilizations, cultures, and ideas.

Following Gilroy's argument, contrary to the neoliberal Turkish/Greek commercially orientated cosmopolitanism for tourists, a more spontaneous and 'planetary cosmopolitanism' starts to emerge on the Aegean, with the mobility of people who lack the necessary documents to be there. One that also challenges the fixed borders of the national state and, thus, the discourses around the kinds of absolute identities, belonging, and recognition that they reproduce, such as (that of) the 'Turk' and the 'Greek' who, being so 'similar', claim to be the ultimate 'brothers' and legitimate natives and heirs of the Aegean region. This idea, contingent as it is to the historical mappings of the Aegean whether with the exchange of populations, the legal delineation of the sea (Law of the Sea) and the more recent European mappings, reveals to us the building up of a space which has brought nationalism and racism together in ways that affect differently (to different degrees), every one of us attempting to cross the Aegean.

In consensus with the AlarmPhone's claim 'Ferries not Frontex!' to end the deaths of migrants at sea, published in openDemocracy on 4th June 2015, in the last two Chapters, I focused on the politics of the ferry on the Aegean, as it entails a legitimate way of travelling for certain categories of people crossing the border but not for others, who are denied the right to the ferry but whose mobility, nevertheless, is already a reality of the Aegean space, a space of ships, people on the move and connecting waters. In other words, this thesis highlights some of the main characteristics of the unsteady border regime as they appear on the Aegean and the urgency of developing our struggles against this situation by making use of the employment of the ferry as one immediate, albeit partial solution. At the same time, this manuscript challenges an understanding of the Turkish-Greek border and its related tensions that presents the visa facilitation for the Turkish tourists and the recent securitization of the Aegean, as the effects of two conflicting (and in tension with one another) visa regimes, that is, an open border and a more solid/closed one. Implementing the institution of the ferry for everyone who wishes and needs to cross the Aegean, in particular, and the

Mediterranean, in general, is, indeed, a first step towards an overcoming of such misconceptions and a deeper understanding of what already exists and forms part of the Aegean space and the route deeper into ‘Europe’.

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