GAMES, PUSH-BACKS AND THE EVERYDAY VIOLENCE AT THE BOSNIAN-CROATIAN BORDER.

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Abstract

This thesis explores violence against migrants at the Croatian-Bosnian border, with the focus on migrants' everyday sites and practices. Whilst the rich literature discusses structural violence against migrants at the EU's borders, it omits to consider direct and concrete daily acts of violence. We also know little about violence against migrant men and violence at the latest transit spot at the Croatian-Bosnian border.

This thesis addresses this research lacunae while drawing upon eight months of participant observations in makeshift camps in Velika Kladuša (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and 68 interviews with migrants. It questions diverse forms of violence against migrants and seeks to what degree and in which ways this violence impacts their everyday practices. In addition, it asks whether and how the dominant assumptions about race and gender impact migrant men's experiences of violence and how this violence is circumscribed by the historico-political context of the Bosnian-Croatian border.

The findings suggest that direct border violence against migrants – border attacks, takes place alongside more structural violence - border administrations and withdrawal of aid in makeshift camps. Yet border violence is also at work in migrants' everyday practices where violence is least expected; in private sites, where violence is routinised and leaves no visible marks, but has power to harm or kill. This thesis also argues that Arab Muslim men, in this context at least, are most commonly subjected to border violence due to the dominant racialized and gendered assumptions about (migrant) men of colour as dangerous and in need of violent interventions. Yet violence against migrants is also enforced and concealed by the Western dominant imagination of the Croatian-Bosnian border as a line between peaceful Europe and the violent Balkans. However, migrants challenge such assumptions by their own meaning makings of this geographical location upon their experiences of solidarities and violence here.

This thesis nuances knowledge on border violence as a complex phenomenon that functions as an ongoing daily process across months or years rather than singular episodes that come and pass. By doing so, it demonstrates the importance of bringing direct but also taken-for-granted practices in research analysis of violence to develop an understanding of how violence is experienced and made meaning of by diverse people exposed to it.

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List of Abbreviations

Bosnia: Bosnia and Herzegovina

EU: European Union

EURODAC: European Asylum Dactyloscopy Database

EUROSUR: European Border Surveillance System

Kladuša: Velika Kladuša

MSF: Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders)

IOM: International Organisation for Migration

SEE: South-Eastern Europe

UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund

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1. Introducing border violence in everyday life at the border.

1.2: Dangerous routine in the games, push-backs and makeshift camps.

'Please, tell me, what I should do? It would be better if I died in Afghanistan than everyday dying here inside', Azim told me, an Afghani man in his late forties, and remarked that 'physical pain at the border does not matter too much. But being at the border everyday matters.' While talking to me, Azim was sitting in a corner of a former slaughterhouse, where me and other volunteers were providing a few provisional showers to all living in the Trnovi camp. This makeshift camp was made of wooden structures and tarpaulins that were all called *heima* (tent in Arabic) by its inhabitants, whom most were Arab Muslim men. Its location was in a small border town Velika Kladuša (Kladuša) lying in the north-west of Bosnian border with Croatia (see Figure 1), surveyed by helicopters, drones and border patrols.

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Figure 1   The map indicating the location of Velika Kladuša. It also shows the places of migrants' departure for games and the push-back points (Augustová & Sapoch, 2020).

Here, hundreds of migrants were daily attempting to walk across the EU's doorstep when playing games, as they generally call unauthorised border crossings. However, they were mostly pushed back to Bosnia by the EU's border patrols, like Azim. Migrants returned tired, with blisters on their feet after a days or weeks long walk, some with black eyes and footlong bruises from police baton strikes, broken bones and bleeding wounds. When walking around Kladuša, one can immediately notice the hallmarks

of such violence, when meeting predominantly injured young men who go on with their daily life at the border; eating together around a fire in the camp, showering, praying, laughing, waiting for rumours about new game returnees, getting ready for another game, or sitting overdosed by tramadol in a town-park. Violence seemed to be hidden in all these routines and daily interactions, which became taken-for-granted at the borders but would not pass what normal was considered elsewhere.

As this fieldwork diary excerpt indicates, this thesis is about border violence against migrants at the Bosnian-Croatian border. Here, I have conducted an eight-months long research, drawing upon ethnographic methods, employed in my role as a volunteer in the Trnovi camp. I used daily participant observations of migrants' life in makeshift camps and border sites and conducted 68 semi-structured interviews with migrants within an activist-led border violence monitoring project. By doing so, I questioned diverse forms of violence and how they made meaning of it in their day-to-day life at the border.

I found that migrants talked about countless manifestations of violence that were direct, concrete and systematically present, while trying to play the games and being pushed back from Croatia to Bosnia. The game and push-back were the key definitions of border violence from migrants' own understandings and for this reason, they are used in this thesis as vectors to the detailed strategies and experiences of direct violence (Galtung, 1969). Yet this violence continued through more structural forms (Galtung, 1969) in informal camps, where the migrants struggled to heal their injuries due to the withdrawal of medical and material aid, poor hygiene and pollution.

However, the more deeply involved I became in the life at the border, I was coming to an essential, yet often academically side-lined understanding that border violence was not taking place as singular episodes that came and passed. Instead, this violence was omnipresent and an ongoing process in the everyday life, one that was under constant transformation. As Azim like many others pointed out, 'being at the border everyday matters' in understanding of violence rather than dramatic expressions of violence and somatic pain alone. In line with this, this thesis explores the everyday practices and social relations in which direct and structural violence takes place in the background and seek how the day-to-day events matter in understanding this violence.

To analyse violence as everyday phenomenon, I follow feminist scholars (Acuto, 2014; Enloe, 2011; Fernández et al., 2017) and explore violence at work where it is least apparent, in migrants' private sites and concrete routine practices and relations. By doing so, I problematise how these taken-for-granted practices turn violence into an intimate process that organises each minute of the day. This makes violence an everyday phenomenon that harms people equally or even in greater power than direct attacks and structural forms of violence (Mishra, 2018; Scheper-Hughes, 1992) yet is often

unnoticeable, as this thesis will show. This approach allows me to nuance knowledge on violence in more comprehensive and subjective ways across extensive time when many migrants daily live in border violence for months or years, which constitutes the thesis' major contribution.

Whilst learning about violence at the border, I was also trying to be aware of the local context where this violence took place and to whom it targeted. This is vital given that the Bosnian-Croatian border is commonly represented within the EU's political narratives as the border where the violent Balkan and Islam end and the peaceful Europe and Christianity begin (Razsa & Lindstrom, 2004). For this reason, I additionally explore in this research whether and how the local context of the Bosnian-Croatian border organises migrant's experiences of violence. Finally, those migrating through this border are also deeply racialized and gendered due to the pre-existing hierarchies in this location. I noticed that those most commonly subjected to crude forms of violence were particularly migrant Arab Muslim men. This made me question if the dominant assumptions about gender and race as migrants' visible differences impacted their experiences of border violence.

I consider the above research objectives fundamental yet note how they go unasked in the existing literature or are examined only partially. Research seeking complex forms of violence and how these are experienced by different groups of migrants in their everyday life at the border is still puzzling, upon which I identify the thesis' research questions in the following section.

1.2. Identifying the thesis' research puzzle and questions.

This thesis understands violence as a complex phenomenon that involves more actors than only state(s), but particularly migrants' who are subjected to this violence and whose experiences must be brought to the debate on violence. This approach differs from a rich academic literature that explores violence against migrants from state perspectives, questioning diplomatic and humanitarian negotiations, administrative procedures (Andersson & Keen, 2019; Norman, 2020) or sci-tech smart borders (Bigo, 2014). Instead, I place migrants' everyday practices at the centre of this study to highlight the consequences of these punitive migration and border measures on the migrants' life at the border.

Whilst scholars (Davies et al., 2017; Squire, 2017; Vaughan-Williams, 2015) show ample evidence that migrants are pushed to take unauthorised border crossings and are exposed to dangerous situations as the result of EU border controls, they mostly restrict conceptualisation of this violence as structural. This approach omits considering direct and concrete encounters of infliction of harms on migrants in their daily life. This is a problematic gap that needs to be filled given that we know that direct violence daily takes place at land borders along the 'Balkan Route' (Augustová & Sapoch, 2020; Isakjee et al., 2020), but we know only little about this form of violence in academic literature. To address this

research lacuna and contribute towards more comprehensive understandings of border violence at EU border, I pose the following research question: What are the forms of violence against migrants along the EU's external border with Bosnia?

To answer this research question, this thesis shifts attention from sea to land borders of the so called 'Balkan Route', particularly the border between Croatia and Bosnia, which marks migrants' entry point to the EU from the latest transit spot in the region. By doing so, this thesis firstly aims to broaden our knowledge on border violence beyond geographical location of sea routes, that prevails in academic papers (Iliadou, 2019; Squire, 2017; Vaughan-Williams, 2015). Secondly, this point of entry into the research rejects understanding of violence from state-centred and institutionalised (humanitarian, diplomatic, technological) perspectives and thus avoids limiting a definition of violence against migrants exclusively to structural and passive forms. Instead, this thesis suggests considering both direct and structural forms of violence, which both take place at EU external land borders but are overlooked.

This is a theoretical approach to the analysis of violence proposed by Johan Galtung (1969), who argues that direct and structural violence function in causal relationship to one another, and thus are worth pursue in such a relationship in a research. Galtung's thoughts on violence often came to my mind at the Bosnian-Croatian border, where I observed direct attacks to step in when more structural forms of violence, such as closed legal border channels, crumbled or when the withdrawal of aid in the camps by state authorities disabled the migrants' to heal their injuries from the attacks. To this end, Galtung's (1969) theory is a useful analytical approach to grasp both fast and dramatic occurrences inflicted with brutality and further track how the border violence functions beyond a hit by police baton but continues in the life makeshift camps.

However, Galtung (1990) further argues that outbreaks of direct and structural violence are enabled by the assumptions that justify violence in certain places, such as the 'Balkan Route', where I have conducted my research. Numerous scholars (Bird et al., 2020; Razsa & Lindstrom, 2004; Rexhepi, 2018; Todorova, 2009; van Houtum & Bueno Lacy, 2020) who deconstruct the 'Balkans' in literature, popular culture, politics, and most recently, migration policy suggest that the term Balkans has been stranded in the highly problematic and discriminatory cultural dichotomy between West and East, Christianity and Islam, and peace and violence. The dichotomy enforces and legimises diverse precarities of people living in the former Yugoslavia and outside of it. It would be strange if this context did not have an impact on violence against migrants at the Bosnian-Croatian border today, yet, such analysis is missing. For this reason, I suggest taking into an account how the context of the Bosnian-Croatian borders impacts diverse forms of violence against migrants – also the direct and the everyday encounters of

violence, which are generally understudied. In line with this, I pose the further research question: To what extent does the local context of the Bosnian-Croatian border organise migrant's experiences of violence?

As pointed out previously, this violence does not only happen in specific location but also targets specific groups of migrants, who were mainly Arab Muslim men. But why are men prioritised in this research when women are portrayed in the existing literature as the main victims of gendered violence (Crenshaw, 1991; Shepherd, 2007)? I know that migrant women also experience border violence. Whilst the women's subjection to violence is also tragic and needs attention, I found through observation this violence to appear more randomly in contrast to dozens of men daily reporting extensive abuses at the border, which were used against them in more systematic and brutal patterns, as I show in Chapter 7. These encounters made me to think about how the dominant assumptions at this border about masculinity and race galvanised the everyday life in violence.

While intersections of race and gender were questioned in the existing research on violence against migrants along the 'Balkan Route' (Milivojević, 2018), this has not yet been documented and contextualised with the focus on migrant men and their everyday encounters of violence. This is even more fundamental to explore given that this migration literature (Milivojević, 2018), like most studies on violence in diverse contexts (Crenshaw, 1991; Shepherd, 2007), consider racialized women as most affected by border violence. Drawing upon this, why are not migrant women more subjected to violence in the context of Bosnian-Croatian border? Why men? To address this and contribute to an emerging literature on male migration (Griffiths, 2015; Turner, 2019b; Suerbaum, 2018) and its intersections with racialized violence in the EU (Isakjee et al., 2020), I pose the following research question: Do race and gender organise experience of border violence, and if yes, how? To analyse this question and unwrap how identities, such as Arab Muslim migrant men, organise one's experiences of border violence, this thesis draws upon literature (Butler, 2004a; Carr & Haynes, 2015; Crenshaw, 1991; Harris, 2000; Isakjee et al., 2020; Razack, 2004) on racialized and gendered violence.

After exploring diverse forms of border violence, where it takes place and whom it targets, the crucial questions about subjective and intimate dimensions of violence remain: How do migrants act on their experiences of violence and make meaning about them in their everyday life at the border? How is their everyday – daily decisions, practices, and relations - permeated by this violence? And, how do these everyday events further our understanding of border violence? Whilst migrants' own narratives of border violence have been the locus of various academic publications, violence in its diverse forms and its impact on the everyday is still puzzling (Vogt, 2018), especially in European context. Although many scholars discuss migrants' journeys and experiences of violence, still, only a few ethnographic

encounters of human everyday suffering in its myriad manifestations is evident from these in the way migrants (culturally) construct it at EU border (Iliadou, 2019). This is a critical research lacuna given that the extensive non-migration research shows that the everyday matters in understanding violence as it sheds light on how violence is part of people's social life, which gives violence its meaning and power (Nordstrom & Robben, 1996; Scheper-Hughes, 1992). This ethnographic approach to violence offers a different recognition and conceptualisation of border violence, which has not yet been documented and analysed at EU land borders of the so called 'Balkan Route'. To contribute to an emerging literature on everyday violence in migration, I pose the last and most essential research question in this thesis: To what degree and in which ways does the border violence impact on migrants' everyday practices and social relations?

1.3. Thesis outline.

In Chapter 2, I firstly outline a conceptual framework to situate my research within the existing knowledge on violence. I focus on the three theoretical concepts that allow me to unwrap the main points outlined in this introduction and guide the data analysis. Firstly, I will discuss Galtung's (1969) thinking on 'direct and structural violence' (Galtung, 1969), which were identified as the most occurring forms of violence within the data. Following that, the chapter will shed light on feminist literature highlighting the role of gender and race with other social categories in violence (Butler, 2004a; Crenshaw, 1991; Harris, 2000). Then, looking into social dimensions of diverse forms of violence against specific groups of migrants, the chapter moves to an anthropological stance on violence through the theoretical lens of everyday violence by Scheper-Hughes (1992). The conclusions will then provide a rationale for how these theories provide a solid foundation to build upon in analysing everyday border violence against the migrants at the Bosnian-Croatian border.

The thesis will then proceed with Chapter 3, which explores violence against migrants along the European Union's borders. It will begin with the literature that approaches violence against migrants from the top - using state(s) and their technologies as the starting point. Following that, the chapter will move to the scholarly work examining border violence from the bottom, via migrants' own experiences of this violence, while moving across sea and land to the EU. Narrowing the focus into even more detailed encounters of this violence, I will then shed light on an emerging literature on 'everyday violence' in migration, which is however scarce in European context. In order not to omit migrants' individual differences, I will further review the literature discussing how the dominant assumptions about gender and race matter in border violence. In the final part of this chapter, I will draw conclusions from this literature and situate my research in the existing canon.

Chapter 4 contextualises the research by placing the contemporary border violence against migrants in a historical and political context of the 'Balkans' and its existence within the EU's foreign policy. The chapter will pay attention to the literature deconstructing the term Balkans in diverse fields, including violence and migration policy field. It will also outline the most recent developments of migration across SEE, leading to the latest transit point in Bosnia.

In Chapter 5, the thesis will detail the methodology and ethics that guided the data collection process for this study. It will firstly explain the rationale behind using ethnographic research tools and militant research employed in my role as a volunteer in Bosnian makeshift camps. The chapter will then move onto the discussion of specific research choices that are presented in chronological order, when entering, living in and leaving the fieldwork, detailing the process of participant observations and interview data collection. To discuss methodological opportunities and challenges of these methods, I will in greater detail reflect on my research site and access, possibilities of collaboration with participants and reciprocity among us, and how I navigated our diverse positionalities. Whilst ethical issues are presented throughout the chapter, I will discuss them more closely in the final part.

In Chapter 6 I move from the theoretical to the empirical. In this first data chapter, I examine migrants' narratives and my participant observations upon my arrival and life in Kladuša, while trying to answer the research question: To what extent does the local context of the Bosnian-Croatian border organises migrant's experiences of violence? To answer, I firstly focus on the migrants' arrivals to the Bosnian-Croatian border and shed light on how they narrate and make meanings of their new passage here through their experiences of violence. I will then seek how these narratives fit within the Euro-centred imagination of Bosnia as 'violent other-Europe' (Bird et al., 2020; Rexhepi, 2018), in contrast to Croatia as 'liberal-EU state' (Isakjee et al., 2020) to discuss how these organise migrants' experiences of violence in Kladuša. Moving from here, I will question how the past war conflict in Kladuša influences solidarities among the local residents and the migrants that stand against violence coming from the other side of the border – Croatia. Finally, I will discuss the major transformations from solidarities to violence against migrants across time, as driven by macro political pressures on Bosnia for the EU integration.

Chapter 7 moves the focus from the places of violence to the subjects crossing these places and subjected to various border measures: the migrant Arab Muslim men. It will thus explore the research question: Do race and gender organise experience of border violence, and if yes, how? To answer, I will discuss how so-called single men are constructed in migration as 'fake refugees' and a 'threat', in contrast to brown-skinned women and children. I will then shed light on the outcomes of these

frequent assumptions, demonstrated on the men's subjection to direct violence. By doing so, I seek how gender and race, as migrants' visible differences, shape their experience of border violence.

The following two chapters then address the research question: What are the forms of violence against migrants along the EU's external border with Bosnia? Firstly, Chapter 8 examines direct violence through the migrants' testimonies to shed light on their experiences of direct and crude attacks, mostly by police in Croatia; its patterns and transformation across the four seasons of the year. Chapter 9, the focus is the more subtle and structural forms of violence. Here, I will discuss the administrative procedures within push-backs as well as the life in makeshift camps, where the withdrawal of state organised aid take place by the site of solidarities and rich social life. While doing so, I will detail this structural violence and question how it functions in a causal relation with direct and brutal attacks, which all permeate migrants' everyday lives at the border.

This leads us to the last empirical chapter, which addresses the degree and ways in which the border violence impact on migrants' everyday practices and social relations. To answer, I will discuss the migrants' meaning making of violence across extensive time spent at the border and question how they see themselves, as dependent upon their daily choices, practices and intimate relations impacted by violence. By doing so, I wish to show how violence takes place in these ordinary things and practices, which are harmful yet leaves no visible traces. I will also outline how the violence in everyday life gives rise to new harms, when migrants often turn to alcohol and drug abuse, self-harm and inter-communal fights.

Finally, Chapter 11 will outline the major conclusions that can be drawn from the five empirical chapters, while trying to answer what they tell us about diverse forms of border violence, people – Arab Muslim single men - subjected to these, and their everyday life at the border. I will question what these aspects explored in this thesis mean for our knowledge on border violence in Europe and beyond, as a more inclusive phenomenon that is daily lived and given meanings through the migrants' social dimensions.

Chapter 2: Conceptualising violence in everyday life at the border.

2.1: Introduction.

Whereas violence is obvious to all (Arendt, 1970) and everyone knows it exists (Farmer, 2009), it is a deceptively difficult concept to pin down (Davies, 2019). Over one hundred years ago, Georges Sorel pointed out: 'The problems of violence still remain most obscure' (1906 in Arendt, 1969, p 11). Since the Second World War, some of the most prominent thinkers (Arendt, 1970; Benjamin, 1996; Derrida, 1967; Fanon, 1961; Foucault, 1975) have started scrutinising the knowledge of violence in depth, when investigating its meanings, origins, legitimacy, means, efficiency, and ends across various socio-political contexts. However, the definition of what violence is and how it is experienced remains complex and impossible to grasp with a single universal theory. Whereas numerous theoretical and philosophical concepts shed light on certain aspects of violence, Keane (2004, p 30) argues that relying exclusively upon one of these theories is dangerous: 'Theories and typologies of violence can be fatal for the imagination, in that they lull their users into a false sense of certainty about the world.' Thus, what is rather useful than using a singular typology of violence, as Galtung (1969) notes, is to indicate theoretically significant dimensions of violence that can lead to thinking, research and, potentially, action, towards the most important problems.

In line with Galtung (1969), the thesis conceptualises the empirical data using a framework that acknowledges diverse types of violence that I observed as the most significant at the Bosnian-Croatian borders and then, considers their impact on people's everyday lives. To do so, it was inspired by the literature on Galtung's (1969, 1990) 'vicious violent triangle', literature highlighting the role of gender and race with other social categories in violence (Butler, 2004a; Crenshaw, 1991; Harris, 2000), and scholars viewing violence through the lens of everyday (Scheper-Hughes, 1992; Scheper-Hughes & Bourgois, 2004). In this chapter, I am going to discuss these three relevant theoretical approaches to situate my research within the existing knowledge in the field.

By bringing together the three theoretical approaches from this literature, this thesis firstly seeks to understand how violence operates along European borders, in its major forms identified within the thesis' data: *direct* attacks and s*tructural* border rules (Galtung, 1969), which I elucidate in the first section of this chapter. Nevertheless, this violence is racialized and gendered, when targeting specific groups of migrants, as I observed on violence against Arab Muslim men along the Bosnian-Croatian border. While Galtung (1990) considers how race and gender as social constructs predict violence, other scholars (Butler, 2004a; Carr & Haynes, 2015; Crenshaw, 1991; Harris, 2000; Razack, 2004; Touquet & Schulz, 2020) discus in greater detail how the pre-existing racial and gendered cultural

hierarchies impact on one's subjection to violence. This thesis takes inspiration from this literature on race and gender in violence but uses insights from this work to nuance our understanding of border violence against Arab Muslim migrant men, which remains underexamined at the EU's borders. It is thus the conceptualisation of violence as direct force and structural inequality that are legitimised against 'other' (racialized and gendered) humans, which the following section will shed light on.

Moving the discussion further, the chapter then outlines how the concept of the *everyday* (Scheper-Hughes, 1992), which opens up for more inclusive understanding of different forms of violence in daily actions, but remains underexamined in migration along European borders. It explains how the everyday is used in this thesis, allowing us to underscore mundane and concrete practices and the subjective values and ideas undrelying these, and how these matter in understanding of violence. In line with this, this thesis pays focal attention to migrants' daily choices, rituals, routines and social relations to border violence that embed border violence as a complex phenomenon.

At the end, I will discuss how the everyday concept of violence together with Galtung's and academic works on gender and race in violence provide a solid foundation to build upon in analysing border in this thesis.

2.2: Conceptualising violence: structural inequality, direct force, and cultural legitimisation.

Firstly, this thesis draws on the work of a Norwegian sociologist Johan Galtung, whose thinking was chosen to navigate the complexities of violence across its direct as well as structural forms, which both take place in migration along European borders, yet their intersections have been neglected in academic analysis. While a great number of migration studies utilised Galtung's structural violence (Davies & Isakjee, 2015; Davies et al., 2017; Igonin, 2016; Martínez et al., 2014; Menjívar & Abrego, 2012; Milivojević, 2018; Schneider et al., 2017), almost none paid attention to Galtung's concept of violence as a whole, proposing three super-types of violence: structural, direct and cultural violence. As this section will argue, the diverse forms of violence function in symbiosis and consequently impact on ones' everyday life, which Galtung's thinking highlights, which I also observed at the Bosnian-Croatian borders.

Thus, putting migration studies and Galtung's conceptual framework into a more fruitful dialogue with each other allows for more comprehensive insights on how migration and violence inter-sect (Bank et al., 2017). In line with this, I argue that Galtung's concept of violence offers the most adequate starting point to analyse diverse dimensions of violent border measures that proper daily social processes at

the Croatian-Bosnian borders. What follows is the clarification of Galtung's definitions of violence and the discussion of differences and similarities in diverse forms of violence.

2.2.1: Structural violence.

Galtung (1969) firstly focuses on structural violence, when resources in a society are unequally distributed, and the power to decide over the distribution is also unequally distributed. Galtung suggests that structural violence requires a group of people to intentionally monopolise their resources in the way that violence becomes present in the system. Albeit, in his later work with Höivik (1971), Galtung admits the inability to see all actors involved in structural violence as it functions through long and highly ramified causal chains, in which actors remain anonymous. Consequently, no perpetrators are identified, leading to their impunity. From the abstract and mysterious 'structure', therefore, stems the power of structural violence. I will return to the issue of the meaning of 'structures' later on when discussing direct violence[1], which is symbiotic with structural orders enforced directly by concrete individuals on the ground. Importantly, Galtung (1969) further discusses the result of structural violence, when human beings are reduced in their biological capability instead of being directly killed. This means that people on the bottom of society may be so disadvantaged and exploited that they starve or waste away from disease or are left in a permanent state of misery (Galtung, 1990).

When illuminating structural violence, one cannot omit the notion of power, which resonates broader discussions on violence, including in migration studies. As Brambilla and Jones (2020) argue, border making represents the first and most important means by which the state exercises power over people, often including the use of violence. Yet power is troublesomely controversial (Lukes, 2004). It can be positive and liberating as well as negative and restrictive (Diken, 2004, 97). Moreover, in some languages, one expression combines semantically violence and power, such as the German word *Gewalt* (Ghasssem-Fachandi, 2009). This raises questions of the theoretical distinction between power and violence, and more importantly, whether the concept of power matters in the understanding of violence in this thesis.

Arendt (1970, p 35) suggests that while the previous political theorists perceived that 'violence is nothing more than the most flagrant manifestation of (legitimate) power', the distinction between power and violence needed to be drawn to grasp meanings of diverse specific phenomena. Arendt (1970, p 52) wishes to show with these theoretical distinctions that violence was an instrument that could be justifiable but not legitimate for the power of the state. Wolff (1969) points out that power is the ability to make and enforce decisions, while violence is the illegitimate or unauthorized use of

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[1] Ibid, Chapter 2.2.2, p 12.

force to effect decisions against the will or desire of others. Thus, violence distinguishes itself from power by its instrumental character (Lukes, 2004).

Following such theoretical distinctions, this thesis seeks to understand how border violence against migrants is used in diverse instrumental forms (direct/structural/everyday) and how this violence is experienced and understood by migrants. For this reason, this thesis follows the concept of violence rather than power to avoid an understanding of violence through decision making and shift the attention to state perspectives rather than migrants who are at the centre of this thesis. Yet the concept of power echo in the discussions about the unequal power relations classifying racialised and gendered groups of migrants as less worthy or unworthy (Bourgois, 2004; Butler, 2004b; Crenshaw's (1991), the power embedded in the humanitarian and surveillance industry in refugee camps (Maestri, 2017; Rozakou, 2019), and in the notion of structural violence when it denominates the power to decide over unequal distributions of resources in a society (Galtung, 1969).

Migration scholars, such as Bank et al. (2017), also follow the concepts of Galtung's broad understanding of border security in understanding violence, rather than power, and argue that can be useful as it requires us to consider the various levels and actors involved in violent processes in migration. Igonin (2016) elaborates on this and suggests that the concept of structural violence allows us to encompass migration politics as a source of structural deprivation in European modern society, which turns to apathy and withdrawal of resources for migrants. Such a structural violence approach has been omnipresent in migration to Europe since 2015, when violence shifted from humanitarian care and control (Foucault, 2000) towards an emphasis on containment through violence and the withholding of such care (Andersson & Keen, 2019). For this reason, structural violence needs to be highlighted in the contemporary border violence analysis.

Numerous scholars found insightful patterns of structural violence in migration: in laws closing legal border crossing options (Schneider et al., 2017), or disruption of unauthorised border crossing routes at sea, when the state(s) let people drown (Squire, 2017; Vaughan-Williams, 2015). The existing research also encompassed the same structural violence patterns in migrants' informal camps, where migrants are denied aid (Umek et al., 2018). As the result of this ignorance, migrants are kept without sufficient provision and in poor living conditions, leading to their hunger, illness, and extensive bodily harms (Davies et al., 2019). Some authors argue even further that the state keeps migrants alive but in a state of injury, death worlds and intense cruelty, eventually inflicting death, manifesting 'necropower' (Davies et al., 2017; Mayblin et al., 2020; Mladenova, 2019), which construe structural violence at borders.

However, borders and camps are not only spaces of the living dead and control, but also of social life (Rygiel, 2011; Sigona, 2014), which I observed along Bosnian-Croatian borders, where closed legal border crossings and limited aid in camps were omnipresent in migrants' everyday lives, besides other forms of violence. For this reason, the analysis of structural violence proves useful in this thesis' research context. In support of this argument, other studies conducted beyond the European and migration context argue that Galtung's concept of structural violence allows us to draw the lines between one's physical illness, poor health, and death with social, economic and political fault lines (Fassin, 2011; Farmer, 2003; Martínez et al., 2014; Scheper-Hughes, 2004; Vogt, 2018), which I also found present in the refugee camps. For this reason, Galtung's understanding of structural violence is useful here to comprehend how harms of migrants are intentionally inflicted and hidden through various layers of state's neglect at the Bosnian-Croatian border.

For Galtung (1969), structural violence was the crucial concept to analyse when developing his theory, triggering a shift of scholarly focus from more obvious and brutal forms of violence, which is however problematic in migration research today. Galtung (1969) wished to revolutionise thinking about violence by pointing to structural silent and slow harms, which occur undramatically in contrast to direct and visible forms of violence, which traditional conflict research had predominantly focused upon at that time. However, the contemporary migration research seems to make the opposite mistake to traditional conflict studies. A great many migration scholars drew upon Galtung and conducted fascinating research on structural violence but omitted to highlight direct violence that many migrants navigate around EU borders. I find this problematic given that I daily encountered direct police attacks against migrants, which together with other forms of harms construed the everyday social fabric at the border. In line with this, this thesis will follow further Galtung's thinking on direct violence. By doing so, it aims to show that these two dimensions of violence – structural and direct - are deeply intertwined. To this end, I argue that structural violence and direct violence, require mutual analysis, as I discuss in greater detail in the following section.

2.2.2: Direct violence.

Galtung (1969, p 169) discusses direct violence, which is according to him present when 'means of realisations are not withheld as in the case of structural violence, but directly destroyed by an actor'. The direct violence is physical when one actor of a group intentionally hurts a human being(s) somatically, to the point of killing, driven by the aim to lock out a person from a territory. Galtung (1990) further argues that direct violence is also the destruction of one's things and environment as the consequence of these destructions may be harm to a person. In line with this, personal violence can be either focused on one's anatomy, directly and quickly damaging her/his body, using various

tools from a physical body to all kinds of arms. It can be also focused on one's physiology, such as denial of air, water, food, medical attention or movement through detention (Galtung, 1969). The direct violence can be therefore an event that is registered immediately and changes quickly (Galtung 1969) or it may be a process resulting in slow intentional harms and killing (Galtung, 1990). To this end, violence does not always need physical contact with one's body to cause harm. As Galtung argues, threat of physical violence is also violence as it conveys intentional human action to harm and causes psychological distress (Galtung, 1969).

Migration research (Davies & Isakjee, 2015; Igonin, 2016; Martínez et al., 2014; Menjívar & Abrego, 2012; Milivojević, 2018; Schneider et al., 2017) often analyses violence as structural violence - separated out from direct violence. However, Galtung (1969) problematises the distinction between direct and structural violence, which are deeply interconnected and require symbiotic analysis. Both forms of violence concentrate direct and personal actions of human beings, although they use different means; Galtung (1969) argues that structural violence has indirect means as there is no direct subject-object relation. Similarly, Farmer (2009) suggests that behind structures are human decisions and at the end of the chain of structures are also humans directly enforcing such decisions. In line with this, Galtung (1969) admits that there is a causal relationship between the two types of violence and rises theoretical concerns as to whether there is any real distinction between the two. One could not exist without the other as both stem from production relations, as Galtung (1969) argues. For instance, military and police welfare along borders use personal and direct inflictions of harms against migrants as produced by societal structures. However, personal norms can project into the police and military's violent actions or, in contrast they can shake the structure with non-cooperation, which I also observed along Bosnian-Croatian borders, as showed in empirical chapters. Looking from the top down, there are concrete people, who mobilise individuals to use violence, albeit it is almost impossible to track them in a long and complex chain of structures (Galtung, 1969).

This causal relationship between both forms of violence is fundamental as Jones (2019) argues that considering structural violence as mere anonymous chain – without direct actions and personal harms involved, is problematic as it elides responsibility for the action. This remains problematic at European borders, where inflicting injuries or killing migrants takes place with impunity (Border Violence Monitoring Network, 2020), as also the empirical chapters will shed light on. Hence, both direct and structural violence ought to be highlighted and considered within specific and temporal contexts to bring to light who carries out the violence, how it is perpetrated, and why (Jones, 2019). One type of violence is always ready to step in when another type crumbles: direct violence is called into an action to reinforce structural violence and vice versa (Galtung, 1969), and this often repeats in a vicious cycle, as migrants' narratives will show.

To this end, this thesis derives from the assumption that structural violence functions in symbiosis with direct violence and ought to be analysed in such symbiosis, including migration-violence nexus research, which mostly discern structural violence as a separated out theoretical concept. By suggesting this theoretical grounding, this thesis advocates for the need to examine violence against migrants that ranges from hits by police batons and deprivation of food and shelter to administrations that hinder migrants' movement to safety, which all take place at the border. As this thesis will argue, these all practices create the everyday life in violence at the border and ought to be conceptually and empirically grasped.

Yet fundamental questions remain against whom this violence is used as I found border violence targeting particularly against Arab and Muslim migrant men. This moves the theoretical grounding of this thesis further when focusing on how border violence is racialized and gendered – and thus legitimised against those whom are at the EU's borders socially constructed as 'others'.

2.2.3: Violence against 'others'.

Twenty years later, Galtung (1990) brought into the debate what he calls 'cultural violence', when religion and ideology, art and language, or science are used to legitimise violence in its direct or structural forms. Cultural violence makes direct and structural violence look, even feel, right or invisible (Galtung, 1990). Similarly, the concept of symbolic violence by Bourdieu (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 2004) suggests that violence is embedded in the internalised schemata of habitus and legitimisations of hierarchies. Bourdieu and Wacquant (2004) use the example of gender domination, where male order is so deeply grounded it needs no justification: it imposes itself as self-evident and universal. Galtung (1990) uses racism as exemplary to show legitimisation of violence. He argues that the disparity between white people and people of colour can be sanitised in the language of religion, such as Christianity over Islam or West over East (Galtung, 1972, 1990). Indeed, violence is not only legitimised by gender and socially constructed race, but also geopolitical locations, when some states and nations are considered as more violent than others (Taussig, 2004), such as countries in the Middle East and Africa (Kaya, 2016), where migrants come from, and the 'Balkans' (Razsa & Lindstrom, 2004), where they are migrating through to the EU.

Cultural violence has been imminent particularly in how Europe has constructed the Orient as cultural and political fact (Said, 1978), particularly (migrants') Arab and Muslim worlds. Said's (1978) notion of Orientalism is useful to illuminate how intellectual (science), political (colonial and imperial establishment), and cultural (tastes, texts, values) representations of Orient as Europe's deepest and most recurring images of the Other have serious consequences. According to Said (1978), the European representation of the Muslim or Arab was always a way of controlling the redoubtable Orient, often

used in policy jargon. To this end, Said (1978) agrees with Galtung that culture is not politically or historically innocent, when he uses colonisation as the most prominent example of how the Orient was rendered as exotic and dangerous Other through violence.

These encounters on how the assumptions about race and religion legitimise violence against 'others' shed light on racialization, which is an ideological process utilized to justify or explain social stratification, inclusion or exclusion, based on biological and cultural characteristic, such as phenotype, ethnicity and/or religious identity (Carr & Haynes, 2015). Racialization enables us to see 'how colonial context as one where a variety of processes were at work, and that they were processes which resulted in material practices' (Mills, 1996, p 126). This echoes Fanon's (1961) earlier writings about the legitimisation of violence against Africans, Arabs, Muslims in capitalist societies (i.e. France) through an atmosphere of submission and of inhibition, entangled in education and policing systems. It also has a basis in Foucault's (1975, 2000) suggestions that the state power of 'make live or let die' through the systems of 'care and control' is directed to 'man' at the level of species; to those who are classified as 'them', criminals, an enemy race. Today, this is observable on restricted and violent policies against Arab Muslim migrants in Europe who are to be feared and opposed as a homogenous 'migrant enemy' and 'terrorist' within the 'war on terror' (Bhui, 2016, 2018; Isakjee et al., 2020). This shows that thinking about race allows us to trace legitimisation of border violence against Others - specific groups of migrants - and trace how racialization have material impact on migrants' day-to-day life at EU borders.

However, different facets of the racialized being are refracted through gender (Carr & Haynes, 2015) when violence against 'others' is also articulated through racism to those associated with male/female gender (Anthias & Yuval-Davis, 1996; Bhui, 2016). Galtung (1990) argues that the narratives of racialized cultures are further gendered when Arab (migrant) men are reinforced in art portraying oriental men as sexual and violent subjects. Also Said (1978) asserts that Arab men are portrayed as sexual predators, and those men associated with Islam are further rendered as undeveloped within the hegemonic European Christian world. This allows us to consider how border mechanisms in Europe makes citizen observers or even feel right broader inequalities, in which specific groups of migrants live or not to see the direct violence against them at borders at all (Bank et al., 2017; Igonin, 2016; Isakjee at al., 2020). The above listed thinkers thus emphasise social categories to illuminate how gender power relations and racism against those constructed as Others (Arabs, Muslims) are at play in violence, which I argue need scrutiny also in border violence against migrants.

Prior assumptions about gender and race also shape one's experiences of violence in migration (Pande, 2017). As many scholars (Basham & Vaughan-Williams, 2013; Bhui, 2016; Bosworth et al.,

2018; Isakjee et al., 2020; Milivojević, 2018) suggest, migration policies are highly racialized and influenced by gender as demonstrated on stereotypical notions of suspicion, criminality, and inferiority assigned to specific groups of migrants and calling for violent order responses at borders. Yet there is need to develop analytical bridge between migration studies and knowledge on how social constructions of gender and race impact on violence. For this reason, I wish to draw upon scholarly work conceptualising race and gender in tandem as cornerstone of violence, upon which I develop my analysis of how gender and race impact on border violence against migrants along the Bosnian-Croatian borders, as I encountered from the migrants' narratives.

Those analysing individuals' categories in violence in greater detail when questioning the state of culture, imbued by power relations, and its symbolic positioning of specific populations in violence have been particularly feminist scholars. Butler (2004b) suggests that culture carries with it implicit norms of racial purity and gender domination when considering some lives as less lives, which is implicit in the questions of migration in Europe. Butler (2004b, p 25) argues that violence against those who are already not quite lives leaves a mark that is no mark. For this reason, Butler (2004a) points out elsewhere, that acts of violence against some racialized and gendered groups of populations, such as intra-group of migrants, are 'nongrievalble'; they leave no empathy or pity. In migration context, this can be illustrated on gendered and racialized categorisations such as 'violent and dangerous' Arab Muslim masculinities, 'victimised and imperilled' Arab Muslim femininities framed in 'modern' civilised western subjectivities, which provides a rationale to survey and discipline Arab Muslim migrant men (Razack, 2004). Deriving upon this, we can analyse how border violence is legitimised and leaves no marks on some migrants' bodies (Butler, 2004a), which I intend to show in this thesis.

Other feminist scholars (Anthias & Yuval-Davis, 1996; Crenshaw, 1991; Harris, 2000; Mills, 1996; Razack, 2004; Stubbs, 2015; Yuval-Davis, 2006) agree with Butler that gender and race are two of the primary sites leading to various experiences and legitimisation of violence. Crenshaw (1991) shows that gender and race intersect with other identity categories that are most often treated in mainstream liberal discourse as vestiges of bias or domination, upon which violence is used against those who are different (Crenshaw, 1991). This means that being oppressed as a person of colour is always constructed and intermeshed in other social divisions - gender, nationality, migration status – when these identities are constructed within the terms of specific political projects (Yuval-Davis, 2006). This helps us to understand how 'others' are racialized from different social categories (migrant, Arab, Muslim, men) within the EU's border protections, upon which they are subjected to violence. Gender and race and other social categories are thus fundamental to explore in tandem in border violence to rethink the social dimension at play in everyday experiences of violence (Vogt, 2018) and move forward Galtung's thinking how structural and direct violence is legitimised and concealed.

Whilst Crenshaw's (1991) argues that the matter of individuals' differences raises critical issues of power that go beyond violence against women of colour, only some (Carr & Haynes, 2015; Connell, 2000; Harris, 2000; Touquet & Schulz, 2020) extended such analysis to men's experiences of violence. For instance, Harris (2000) argues that gender and racialized violence does not produce only female victims as most victims of violent crimes are men, as shaped by cultural fantasies of race, nation, and gender. According to Harris (2000), cultural structures of masculinity in the West divide men along lines of race, as well as class, leading to gender and racial violence among men. Harris (2000) illustrates this on police security work in liberal democracies where white male cops use violence to overcome non-white male evil in the name of protection of citizens.

I find this this theoretical thinking on race and gender in violence also useful in European migration context as it helps us to illuminate how border violence is used and legitimised in broader terms than violence against migrants as an undifferentiated human mass or archetypal refugee women and children (Malkki, 1996). Instead, it brings to light the powerful currents of European border police violence against Arab Muslim men – as gendered and racialized group, which I found to be imminent in the everyday at the Bosnian-Croatian border, despite their tremendous cultural, ethnic and national diversity (Carr & Haynes, 2015). For this reason, racialized and gendered pre-existing hierarchies in the context of the Bosnian-Croatian borders are included into the analysis here to articulate who is subjected to border violence and how racism and patriarchy shapes multiple dimensions of this violence.

Yet Laurie & Shaw (2018) argue that repeated exposure and representation of violence against racialized and gendered people render such violence as banal and everyday, which makes harms and deaths against certain populations in certain places barely even marked. This leads us to the focal question of this thesis, trying to understand what diverse types of violence against Arab Muslim migrant men means in the everyday life at the borders and how the notion of everyday matters in understanding of this border violence.

2.3: Meanings of violence in everyday life.

How do we conceptualise the everyday? And why does the everyday matter in a research analysis? Since the late twentieth century, feminist analysts stated that 'the personal is political' (Enloe, 2011, p 447) and suggested to analyse politics at work where it is at least apparent - in private sites and concrete and local practices (Fernández et al., 2017). This means that scholars ought to problematise taken-for-granted dichotomies in Western binary thinking, such as war/peace, international/domestic, war front/home front, perpetrator/victim, strong/weak, security/insecurity (Acuto, 2014). By doing so, feminist scholars called to go beyond methodological elitism (Enloe, 2011) and understand ordinary

and the everyday in which political and international are embodied, performed, and domesticated (Acuto, 2014).

But what does make some practices everyday? Crane-seeber (2011) argues that everyday sites and practices are marked by the extent to which they are unremarkable, taken-for-granted, or ostensibly natural. Ginty (2014) adds that this also implies for the situations in violence-affected sites where what passed as 'normal' would be abnormal elsewhere. It is in the sites of the day-to-day life that people can see visible and concrete violence at micro level and their place of life becomes the object and site of political contestation (Fernández et al., 2017). Scholars have used the notion of everyday to understand both violence and militarisation (Mishra, 2018) as well as revolt against violence and peace (Ginty, 2014), demonstrating that we need to question the quotidian to understand violence. This shows that the notion of everyday allows us to seek how mundane rhythms and spaces can be reconfigured as sites where violence is produced and reproduced as well as question values and ideas underlying experiences of border violence (Stanley & Jackson, 2016).

In the same lines, an American anthropologist Nancy Scheper-Hughes (1992; 2004) introduced the concept of 'everyday violence', calling for exploration of a more phenomenological level of violence in its individual lived experiences. Similar to Galtung (1996, 1990), Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois (2004) rejects a focus exclusively on the physical and dramatic aspects of violence that submerges the structural causes under lurid details of blood. However, Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois (2004, p 1) add another layer to their analysis of violence, when viewing violence as a social process in everyday life, and argue:

> Violence also includes assaults on the personhood, dignity, sense of worth or value of the victim. The social and cultural dimensions of violence are what gives violence its power and meaning.

Indeed, we are social creatures and our cultures, social structures, ideas, and ideologies fuel violence, both its expressions and repressions (Scheper-Hughes & Bourgois, 2004). The concept of everyday discerns how direct and structural violence interface and permeate social processes, in which violence is experienced, routinised, and expected as normal part of the everyday (Bourgois, 2001). This proves useful to think though the relationship between broader insecurity – which direct and structural violence against male migrants represent - and social actions at borders.

Hence, the notion of Galtung's understanding of direct and structural violence is implicit in the concept of everyday violence, but Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois (2004) move the analysis further and interrogate how the vicious cycle of violence shapes people's everyday choices, actions, and social

relations. This moves attention from visible wars and diverse broader struggles, which are inevitably present in the lives of many migrants, to what Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois (2004) consider as violence happening in between war and peace; a new form of terror that operates in rumours, wild imaginings, and daily enactments of various public rituals, and routines.

Importantly, what the everyday focus reveals is that violent acts are not necessarily freak occurrences, but they are parts of normative fabric of social life, taking place in the shadow of brutal direct attacks or/and structural inequalities (Ferrándiz, 2004a). For instance, Scheper-Hughes (1992) in her work in North-east Brazil documented and analysed everyday violence as condoned and celebrated mortality of infant 'angel babies', slow starvation, disease, and other controlling processes that assault individual collective survival. Using the concept of everyday violence therefore enables scholars to clarify the chain of causality that links direct and structural violence 'in the production of an everyday violence that buttresses unequal power relations and distorts efforts at resistance' (Bourgois, 2004, p 433).

However, what do scholars specifically seek when analysing violence in everyday? The everyday places the emphasis on one's emotional and inter-subjective experiences in regard to her/his place in a community and the world. When observing people's daily events in aftermaths of brutal direct attacks, we encounter how the direct force inverts and destroys the given, taken for granted experience of embodiment, casting doubt to one's existence: 'Am I real? Is it really happening to me?' (Strejilevich, 1977 in Scheper-Hughes & Bourgois, 2004). Through daily events, people express how violence does not only cause pain, but mainly destroys their world as they know and value it, making an end of the bonds that constitute the community, in which their values are grounded (Lazreg, 2008; Nieminen, 2019). The day-to-day experiences of violence make victims to adopt a new truth about themselves (Nieminen, 2019). Also, Fanon (1961, p 34) affirms that violence destroys one's social values, beauty and normality driven by the aim to replace a certain 'species' of men by another 'species' of men. The everyday violence therefore offers possibility to understand how physical force and loss of bodily certitude correlate with terrible bouts of existential doubts (Scheper-Hughes, 2004), when the life stranded in border violence along Croatian-Bosnian borders is specific example of that.

Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois (2004) offers a powerful, yet surprising, argument; that such everyday social processes have power to destroy humans with even greater frequency than painfully graphic and transparent state repressions. Also, Morar-Vulcu (2015) suggests that situations that are perceived as ordinary common events in a given context result in extensive bodily harms or death. The diverse forms of violence inform, transform, and minimize each other across social space to 'nothing special' and become trivialised as the product of social processes in daily life (Henriksen & Bengtsson, 2018). It is the routinisation of violence and saturation of daily worlds that fuels the power of violence (Das

et al., 2000; Green, 1994; Vigh, 2011). Everyday life is built on frail foundations that constantly reveal glimpses of their capacity for violent disruption (Vigh, 2011). The routinisation of life in inequalities and physical attacks result in the taken-for-granted quality, which render them invisible and often misrecognised. However, the layer of everyday ought to be analysed to grasp the whole picture of what violence is as lived experience:

> Everyday forms of violence hidden in the minutiae of normal social practices – architecture of homes, gender relations, in communal work, in the exchange of gifts and etc. – forces us to rethink broader meanings and status of violence, especially the links between the violence of everyday life and explicit political terror and state repression (Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois, 2004, p 20).

Importantly, the vector of the everyday enables to encounter that lives in violence are not only filled with victimisation, hunger, pain, and exposure to physical elements, but also hope for change, love, and social and family responsibilities (Quesada, 2004). Closely observing violence as everyday therefore uncovers how deeply ambiguous social experiences of harms at borders are (Ferrándiz, 2004a).

2.4: Conclusion: Drawing lines between violence against Others and everyday in border violence analysis.

The conceptualisation of this thesis therefore draws on Peace and Conflict Studies concept of a vicious violent triangle (Galtung, 1969, 1990), which highlights how the direct and structural forms of violence intersect and need mutual analysis. Additionally, I also bring the scholarly work on race and gender in violence (Butler, 2004a; Carr & Haynes, 2015; Crenshaw, 1991; Harris, 2000; Razack, 2004; Touquet & Schulz, 2020) and the everyday violence (Scheper-Hughes & Bourgois, 2004) into the analysis here. Such theoretical approach has been omitted in migration and violence research in European context, yet it allows for the examination of how diverse forms of violence against specific groups of migrants intersect and reinforce each other in concrete daily practices. I believe that this theoretical framework opens up new directions of understanding border violence as a complex, gendered and racialized phenomenon, consequently shaping individual's social being at European borders. This final section aims to discuss how these concepts play out in the migration context along Croatian-Bosnian borders, where I have conducted my research.

Firstly, Galtung's taxonomy of violence gives insights into the ways in which violence operates, from its cultural and structural aspects, down to the visible and raw direct attacks and tortures (Isakjee et al., 2020). For this reason, Galtung's understanding offers a useful analytical starting point to examine

both broader inequalities (closed border crossings and the withdrawal of state-aid in camps) and direct police attacks against migrants, which all take place along the Croatian-Bosnians borders. Using Galtung's analysis also allows us to problematise a tight line between structural and direct violence, which are deeply intertwined. This is of a crucial importance given that most scholarly work on migration and violence focuses on structural violence and omit to highlight how the daily life in violence construes also direct actions.

Galtung's concept further provides a tool to question the logic, upon which the violence against specific groups of migrants is legitimised. This is of a great importance when analysing violence against Arab and Muslim migrant men in European context, when Said (1978) reminds us that this specific group of population have been historically and politically racialized as Oriental and Other to be controlled, which echoes in violent policies at EU borders today (Isakjee et al., 2020). Yet to further elaborate this analysis, this thesis also borrows from feminist work on gendered and racialized violence to establish and explore the pre-existing systems of domination, which impact contemporary acts of violence – their understanding and concealment within a dominant society. Importantly, paying attention to socially constructed negative meanings and consequences of categories, such as migrant, men, Muslim, Arab, invites us to interrogate critically the dominant discourses when seeking fuller range and analysis of participants' narratives of violence.

To this end, Galtung's thoughts on violence together with the literature on gendered and racialized provide a solid starting point for analysing violent measures practiced along EU external borders, before seeking how violence impacts on migrants' everyday practices and relations. As Galtung (1990, p 295) points out, being stranded in between the cycle of violence may lead to collective trauma, feeling of hopelessness, deprivation and frustration that shows up on the inside as self-directed aggression and on the outside as apathy and withdrawal (Galtung, 1990, p 295). The vicious cycle of diverse forms of violence significantly shapes the everyday life. Yet only little migration research has drawn theoretical connections between Galtung's violent triangle and the everyday life, which this thesis aims to address.

By bringing the concept of everyday violence to the theoretical framework, this thesis aims to approach violence from the migrants' private sites, in which structural inequalities and direct brutal force at borders intercept and are attributed social meanings by migrants. Ordinary in this thesis concerns migrants' daily choices, routines, and relations that they experience on the daily basis at borders, which are influenced by broader and more visible forms of violence; whether in camp, centre of the town, or games, or while socialising, rebuilding shelters, showering, eating, praying, and being bored; or while living in communal unity or navigating interpersonal conflicts. I will question how these daily events,

entangled in the macro border conflict, assume a taken-for-granted quality and create new destructive and generative forces in the social fabric at borders.

I argue that using the analytical vector of the everyday addresses the weakness of Galtung's concept, which has been criticised as too broad when using the words 'systems' and 'structures' and neglecting concrete events and actors involved in violence. Instead, the thesis questions both direct and structural violence targeting migrants, which intersect and reinforce each other in concrete daily practices and relations at the Bosnian-Croatian border. By questioning everyday life, I will therefore elucidate social meanings of diverse forms of violence for migrants, in their own meanings. I consider the analytical vector of the everyday, in combination with peace and conflict studies and feminist work on violence, as much to offer when analysing violence, which is also at work in routine and unnoticeable practices and things. The analysis of violence from micro perspective and across extensive periods of time is commonly neglected in the literature on violence in migration and border studies, which predominantly elucidate macro and structural level of violence across short periods of time, as the following literature review will show.

Chapter 3: Literature on violence against migrants along the European Union's borders.

3.1: Introduction.

Moving from the theoretical dimensions of violence, this chapter narrows the focus on violence against migrants at European Union (EU) external borders. The objective here is to critically review the existing studies in the field by discussing the topic from the top-down perspective, beginning with the state and its tools of border controls through to the migrants' experiences of violence in the everyday at the border. In doing so, I will locate my research within the work of scholars who approach violence through an ethnographic lens of the everyday, which I will argue remains side-lined in the European context.

This chapter begins by reviewing the literature on the nexus of violence and migration across the EU's external borders from a vertical perspective, firstly the border externalisation and internalisation and then, smart borders. Here, I will question what scholarly studies, starting with the state and its assumption about violence, say about violent border measures and importantly, about its impact on migrants' journeys across the EU's external borders.

Moving from a horizontal to a vertical perspective, the chapter then turns its attention to migrants' experiences of these state(s)' measures. The branch of studies interrogating this violence encompasses particularly disruption of migrants' border crossing journeys to the EU and their subjection to the strategic denial of aid in (makeshift) camps, to which end migrants are exposed to harm or death. Here, I will focus on two major routes to the EU – sea and land. I will compare research on these two major transit points and question how they approach and conceptualise violence against migrants compared to the dominant focus on the sea.

Moving the discussion into more detailed and intimate perspectives, I will then discuss an emerging and fundamental body of literature drawing upon ethnographic methods that questions the impact of violence on migrants' daily routines and social relations. I will explore how this body of scholarly work enriches studies on border violence through its understanding of violence as concrete and daily encounters, considering diverse forms of violence as a process in everyday life. In doing so, I intend to show here the relevance of the theoretical framework of everyday violence (Scheper-Hughes, 1992) while pointing to gaps in the existing research. I will further suggest how to address this when

examining violence through its direct and structural forms and how these permeate the everyday life at the border.

The chapter finishes by examining the existing research considers social constructions of race and gender and how these impact on the experiences of specific group of migrants. It is indeed useful to explore who is subjected to violence while migrating, and how this is dependent upon the pre-existing racialized and gendered cultural hierarchies and colonial and post-colonial European presence. I will specifically show how most studies focus on brown-skinned women and children as genuine 'real' refugees and victims yet omit violence against racialized migrant men.

Finally, I will conclude by focusing on what we know about violence against migrants at the EU's external borders from this body of literature and how diverse scholars conceptualise this violence. By doing so, I will track the academic blind spots and situate this study in this body of scholarly work.

3.2: The politics of border externalisation and internalisation.

The first pivotal approach identified by scholars in understanding border violence from macro - state-centred perspectives, is the politics of border externalisation and internalisation. This mechanism stems from diplomatic and humanitarian negotiations of the EU with its wider neighbourhood to re-delegate border responsibilities for migration in geostrategically important EU and non-EU states (Norman, 2020), such as the Mediterranean, Turkey, Libya and Niger (Andersson & Keen, 2019). South-Eastern Europe (SEE) are mostly overlooked in the existing research. Yet numerous authors (Isakjee et al., 2020; Milivojević, 2018; Mitrović & Vilenica, 2019; Obradović-Wochnik & Bird, 2020; Stanivuković & Neuman, 2019; Umek et al., 2018) argue that SEE is part of extensive European border regimes and is expected to play an active role in establishing the EU's external control migration apparatuses. The EU is directly involved in state-building with both military and/or civilian missions with the aim to turn non-EU countries like Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Kosovo and Macedonia into 'Europe's policemen', under the promise of 'eventual EU membership' (Geiger, 2016; Rexhepi, 2018).

What border studies further show is that the EU's border process is multiple and plural as it also fortifies part of its internal borders when turning some of its member and Schengen states into buffers (Panico & Prestt, 2019). This means that the neighbouring EU countries, such as Croatia neighbouring Bosnia, are expected to mark the crucial position for EU's border controls. However, this border region remains under-researched, particularly Bosnia, which became the latest hub of migration and a new buffer zone. It is therefore likely that the politics of externalisation and internalisation, when deploying violence, will take place along the Bosnian-Croatian borders and so provides a rich site for fieldwork.

The crucial question is how the border externalisation and internalisation functions, which highlights the violent impact of this mechanism on migrants, through their off-shoring out of the EU to the so called 'buffer zones'. Andersson and Keen (2019) argue that the so-called game of external bordering is commonly characterised by asymmetrical relationship, wherein the powerful partner increases the incentives to solve a conflict instead of participating in meaningful deliberation. This means that EU member states have been bargaining with wider neighbourhood readmission agreements (i.e. visa liberalisation, financial, technological and political support, future EU membership) (İşleyen, 2018). The aim is to off-shore their border controls to other states (Panico & Prestt, 2019).

As the result of this off-shoring borders out of the EU, migrants are confined in areas in Africa and the Middle East, where they remain close to armed conflicts; or in marginal parts of Europe, where they are stranded in a vicious abuses between authorities who get political legitimacy, financial support and impunity for abusive behaviour (Andersson & Keen, 2019). This border process creates legal lacuna making EU members states not to be considered responsible for human rights violations of third-country border security (Vaughan-Williams, 2015). In SEE, the existing research deriving particularly from interviews with state authorities and migrants (Ahmetašević & Mlinarević, 2018; Iliadou, 2019; Mitrović & Vilenica, 2019; Obradović-Wochnik & Bird, 2020; Zaragoza-Cristiani, 2017; Zavratnik & Krilić, 2018) argues that the EU's policy deals and financial support for border militarisation has resulted in the confinement of migrants in camps across Greece and Serbia. However, the question remains how this process of border externalisation impacts upon migration in the latest hub along the border with Bosnia. We also know little about how these macro political processes impact migrants' everyday life at borders.

3.3: Smart borders and liberal technology.

The second state-centred dimensions of borders and violence discussed by scholars are 'smart' borders, which emerged after the September 2001 terrorist attack in the United States (Amoore, 2006). Squire (2011) argues that this move towards smart borders involves soft and distant border controls prior to travel through digital checks and visas. The aim is to reduce the time needed to identify suspect travellers, while also hindering the movement of unwanted migrants and criminals (Bigo, 2014). On the ground, smart borders mean the development of biometric identifiers, the storage of personal data in huge databases, technologies of surveillance, and the exchange of these data at the transnational level. These developments are not limited to Europe and are common across borders in Australia, US-Mexico, US-Canada borders and Schengen borders (Bigo, 2014).

For some scholars (Amoore, 2006; Hess & Kasparek, 2017; Squire, 2011), 'smart borders' construe 'symbolic' or 'virtual' violence and the indirect blockage of movement, and are predicted upon the racial, gendered and religious profiling of individuals, as discussed previously (Galtung, 1990). In contrast, Menjívar and Abrego (2012) argue that these borders amount to 'legal violence' as technologies surrounding the law determine who is eligible to obtain travelling permission or protection is intertwined with criminal law. These studies thus suggest that smart borders use stigmatisation and legal rules to inflict more subtle and structural violence.

However, Jones and Johnson (2016) assert that smart borders also inflict direct and physical violence that has the power to kill when using border militarisation - unmanned aerial vehicles, surveillance systems, military hardware, and military strategies and combat veterans. This military package, when threat to direct violence is embedded in a techno-scientific border approach (Kraska, 2007), is intrinsic to smart borders. Thus, smart border security ranges from subtle to direct use of violence, when its spatial extension stretches from one's place of departure to borders of final destination, which is in line with the externalisation and internalisation politics discussed in the previous section.

Importantly for this study, it is important to highlight how the smart border function in the SEE region, which few studies have examined. Across Croatia, Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Slovenia, borders are controlled by smart militarised projects, such as of EUROSUR[2] (European Commission, 2013) and EURODAC[3] (European Commission, 2020b). In the language of the European Commission (2013), these surveillance programmes are a tool to save migrants' lives at sea and combat cross-border crimes. However, particularly ethnographic studies (Iliadou, 2019; Isakjee et al., 2020; Vogt, 2018) show the limits to this approach and how migrants attempt to avoid this surveillance system via clandestine border crossings, which again are deeply intertwined with various forms of violence, as the following section will show in greater detail.

Also, Bosnia integrated smart border management that enabled the country to be subject to closer EU observation, in exchange for its citizens being granted e-passports and visa-free travel to the Schengen Area (Geiger, 2016). Additionally, Bosnian northern borders lie next to the European member state of Croatia, which is part of the EUROSUR and the EURODAC programmes. Geiger (2016) closely interrogates the integration of smart borders in Bosnia and argues that it involves intensified 'filtering' at the borders and more rigorous checks and surveillance as well as the exchanges of information with Interpol. Smart border transition was fundamental to 'EU-ropeanisation' as the country did not have its own border guard force until 2001 (Geiger, 2016). Thus, the studies show that smart borders filter

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[2] European Border Surveillance System.
[3] European Asylum Dactyloscopy Database.

out unwanted passengers and push migrants to attempt clandestine journeys, where militarised smart technologies once again operate to violently deter movement. We also know that smart borders operate along Bosnian-Croatian borders, however, almost no research connects these two points or examines the impact of these measures on migrants' experiences of violence in this specific location.

To summarise, from research discussing the two major state-focused dimensions of border enforcement - border externalisation and smart borders – it is clear that border controls are multi-layered, and involve increasing numbers of states, border agents, and technologies. There is no singular state, institution, or structure involved in border violence as it stretches across EU/non-EU, liberal/authoritarian, free/controlled, and virtual/real spaces. Hence, it is impossible to identify a homogenous border violence approach. Rather, what is required is the re-articulation and expansion of sovereign authority in border security (Jones & Johnson, 2016), and therefore new perspectives into border violence against migrants that explores their more concrete and daily encounters. Indeed, the above research neglects diverse experiences of migrants moving across and living at borders, which will shed light on the impact of border externalisation and smart technologies. What is required is the consideration of everyday cross-border journeys and experiences of concrete actors present at the border, to which end, the following section aims to encompass the existing literature that examines such narratives.

3.4: Disruption of border crossing routes: violent (in)actions.

Research that moved its locus from a vertical to a horizontal perspective, that is from states to the experiences of migrants, shows that the border mechanisms discussed so far do not solve or prevent migration, but only make it unauthorised and dangerous (Andersson & Keen, 2019). Migration no longer takes place across traditional urban crossing points but rather across less heavily policed seas, deserts, and mountains to avoid detection by state authorities (Cornelius, 2001; Coutin, 2005; Reece Jones, 2019; Martínez et al., 2014). These journeys to the EU most commonly take place in overcrowded rubber dinghies across the Aegean and Mediterranean seas (Albahari, 2015) or walking across the 'Balkan Route' while being chased by patrols and dogs (Augustová, 2020), often with support of people smugglers (Maher, 2018; Tinti & Reitano, 2018). Whilst moving without authorisation or hiring a people smuggler, migrants are subjected to law and border enforcements, towards which they have limited protection (Coutin, 2005). The existing literature gives a rich insight into border enforcements and violence, which aims to disrupt, stop or slow down migrants' movement particularly across sea routes, as the following section will explore. Nevertheless, land routes across SEE remain under-researched, yet as we shall see they involve even more crude forms of border deterrence.

The majority of studies examining cross-border journeys focus on landscapes that have the most obvious harmful potential, which are in Europe the Mediterranean and the Aegean seas. The lack of access to food and drinking water on a boat, the danger of strong winds, tides, and currents, and the generally inhospitable nature of drifting at sea have been examined by numerous scholars, who argue that state authorities and border agencies use this hostile environment to disrupt migrants' arrivals in European shores (Amoore, 2006; Andersson & Keen, 2019; Cuttitta, 2018; Garelli & Tazzioli, 2018; Schindel, 2019; Vaughan-Williams, 2015; Weber & Pickering, 2011). To this end, some (Stierl, 2018; Weber & Pickering, 2011) argue that migrants' most common form of death in Europe, which happens when hundreds of thousands are drowned at sea, are not accidents nor unforeseen causalities. Some authors (Squire, 2017; Vaughan-Williams, 2015) argue further that death became a norm through which migration has been governed at sea, as similarly suggested by those exploring violence at the U.S.-Mexico borders (Doty, 2011; Martínez et al., 2014; Squire, 2017).

Whilst some frame this violence as perpetrated by humans, another way of examining this violence is through space. For Schindel (2019, p 4), the harms in dangerous landscapes construe 'slow spatialised violence'; border enforcement is outsourced and displaced to environmental and topographic 'non-human' agents. In contrast, other literature suggests that violence is possible at sea as a consequence of human agency in these types of border securitisations and humanitarianism, like when pushing boats with migrants back to places of their departure (Andersson, 2014; De Genova, 2017; Garelli & Tazzioli, 2018; Stierl, 2018), banning rescue missions (Cuttitta 2018), or the criminalisation of rescue operations at sea (Andersson & Keen, 2019; Squire 2017).

The naval push-back missions and banning of rescue operations intertwine military and humanitarian rationales (Garelli & Tazzioli, 2018; Stier, 2018). Whilst deaths and harms at sea serve as a deterrent, they also give an opportunity to argue that preventing migration to Europe is humanitarian because it reduces the frequency of drownings (Andersson, 2014) and to combat human smuggling (Jones, 2019). These are indeed the rationale of broader externalisation politics and smart borders approaches, under which sea operations belong. Visible harms and deaths are then blamed on the hostility of the environment, which provides policy makers a moral alibi when declaring the deaths as 'natural causes' (Doty, 2011, p 607) or portray them as self-afflicted (Isakjee et al., 2020).

This violence and the deaths at sea have been predominantly conceptualised as structural violence, indirect violence and violent abandonment (Cuttitta, 2018; Murray, 2006; Squire, 2017; Stierl, 2018), when border authorities let migrants die (Foucault, 1975). However, Vaughan-Williams (2015, p 65) criticises this and argues that understanding violence as 'indirect' force is insufficient as it implies

passivity that belies the active nature of attempts to abandon migrants. While border agencies (e.g Frontex) facilitate the abandonment of migrants, as Vaughan-Williams (2015) argues, drownings are the result of various acts by EU border security authorities, which had primarily stripped migrants from protections and thus placed them at greater risk of death. In support of his argument, recent studies encounter the rich efforts of NGOs and activist-led initiatives trying to save migrants from drowning (Stier, 2018). This goes against assumption that the state has the power to manage migrants' lives and death through abandonment at sea. Therefore, it is these various actions and processes on the ground, perpetrated through either direct or indirect means, by individuals or institutions constitute a border crossing environment, that constitute violence directed towards migrants (Schindel, 2019).

3.4.2: Land routes.

In contrast to migratory routes across the sea, research examining violence experienced by migrants crossing land routes to the EU is limited. These are SEE countries that serve as the second major transit route to the EU, and as pointed to previously, they function as a fundamental geostrategical location of the border of the EU's externalisation politics and smart borders. Since these natural landscapes have less power to kill in contrast to seas and deserts, violence against migrants here functions in more direct and crude forms (Isakjee et al., 2020). The disruption of movement across land is enacted through the establishment of restricted legal border transit (Hess & Kasparek, 2017; Umek et al., 2018), building razor-wire fences, smart border surveillance technology, and military border patrols (Nedoh, 2017). However, Jones (2019) argues that when border walls and laws fail, physical violence is often the only means left to prevent undesired movement. In support of Jones, recent studies show how land routes became characterised by highly repressive and direct violent border practices within chain push-backs[4] (Arsenijević et al., 2018; Isakjee et al., 2020; Mitrović & Vilenica, 2019), yet this is marginal to recent research. Also, the existing literature does not examine the detail of direct attacks and their transformation as well as the impact on migrants.

However, recent activist-led border monitoring (Augustová & Sapoch, 2020; Border Violence Monitoring Network, 2020; Forensic Architecture, 2019; No Name Kitchen, 2020) and non-governmental organisations research (Amnesty International, 2019; Medecins Sans Frontieres, 2017; UNHCR, 2019b) show that the involuntary nature of push-backs is demonstrated by the use of direct violence against migrants by state authorities, which ranges from damage of personal items to physical attacks. Encounters of violent push-backs were also reported by activist groups along the land borders between Greece and Turkey (Forensic Architecture, 2019), and along the Turkish-Syrian border (Panico

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[4] The definition of push-back is in more detail discussed in Chapter 4, Ibid, p 49.

& Prestt, 2019). Whilst there have been encounters of push-backs along the sea routes from Spain to Morocco (De Genova, 2017) and from Italy and Malta to Libya (Panico & Prestt, 2019; Vaughan-Williams, 2015), the research does not indicate the common use of direct violence along these sea borders. This can be explained by the natural environment of the sea, which itself is dangerous and results in harms and deaths (Squire, 2017; Vaughan-Williams, 2015), and hence, substitutes for direct attacks by border guards.

Thus, the non-academic research sheds light on the different forms of violence taking place along land borders in contrast to the sea. It shows that land borders are marked by restricted (externalised) polices, biometrics, and high-tech surveillance, which are closely interconnected with the direct violence against migrants. This is the case particularly across the EU's borders with Serbia and Bosnia, and external 'buffer' zones in the EU's wider neighbourhood. In line with this, the use of direct force needs to be closely interrogated as it is a fundamental part of the disruption of migration land routes. Yet only little academic research has examined direct violent push-back strategies across South-East Europe.

For instance, using visual participatory research along the Serbian borders with Croatia, I have argued elsewhere that border spaces across South-Eastern Europe convey multiple forms of violence, including the direct attacks, which need to be grasped from migrants' own viewpoints to understand their journeys (Augustová, 2020). Also, our previous research with Isakjee et al. (2020) considers both crude direct attacks along the Croatian-Bosnian border and abandonment of migrants in the Calais camp, and highlights how violence across the EU has multiple manifestations. Similarly, El-Shaarawi and Razsa (2019) take into account direct violence in Serbia and Slovenia while examining the dynamics between activists and migrants who together claimed free movement and shape the infrastructure of the Balkan Route. However, these studies did not question how this violence is inflicted through detailed police strategies and how migrants experience and respond to these. Only a small number of health-oriented studies (Arsenijević et al., 2017, 2018) closely examined direct violence against migrants across land routes to the EU and these highlight the health costs of this violence rather than its meanings for migrants.

In line with this, I argue that the extensive interrogation of direct violence (its strategies, patterns, experiences, transitions across time) against migrants and its impact on everyday life have not been examined, which this thesis seeks to address. Also, Brambilla and Jones (2020) point out that the relations between borders, violence, and conflict remains particularly salient but understudied, lacking attention to the multiple tensional processes that converge at the border (which direct violence is part of). In contrast, some scholars even argue that direct violence is not fundamental to scrutinise as these

capture mere dramatic occurrences (Jeandesboz, 2014; Žižek, 2009). However, activists and researchers both identify the need to examine direct violence as increasingly used along the EU's external land borders. As Vogt (2018) argues, through injury and trauma migrants embody the histories that propel and circumscribe their movements and signify that these are not random, anomalous, or an unintended consequence of militarisation, which I argue below is also the case for European borders.

This academic spot is the more remarkable given that the instances of direct violence in migratory transit have been examined in spaces where direct violence is conventionally assumed to belong. Scholars investigated the direct attacks on refugees in Angola and Tunisia (Cuéllar, 2005) Tanzania, Guinea and Rwanda (Malkki, 1996), Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (Onoma, 2013), Kenya (Newhouse, 2015), Libya (Andersson & Keen, 2019), Bangladesh (Akhter & Kusakabe, 2014), Thailand and Cambodia (Cuéllar, 2005), Lebanon (Khalili, 2008; Shahid, 2002), and Mexico (Vogt, 2018). This extensive migration research in non-European contexts recognises that violence includes discreet acts of physical force against the person, which become articulated with the policing of spaces of borders. Drawing upon this, I argue that migration studies along the EU's borders also must acknowledge such a multiple dynamic of violence and their everyday impacts, in order to correct the concealment of direct violence in western liberal territories, where violence is conventionally assumed not to belong (Isakjee et al., 2020).

3.5: Violence in camps: from care and control to abandonment and interventions.

As the result of the disruption of migratory routes, migrants move across the territories of EU and non-EU states, and from camp to camp, which are vital spaces of contemporary migration and violence (Davies et al., 2019). This section aims to review the literature examining transit camps along migratory routes to the EU in its both formal and informal settings. It further aims to question how the existing studies analyse and understand violence against migrants here and how attention to the camps will nuance our understanding of border violence.

Social scientists commonly conceptualise camps for migrants as state-run institutions[5], where the state controls people under the auspices of their care and welfare (Foucault, 1975). Numerous scholars (Agier, 2011; Beznec et al., 2016; Jones & Johnson, 2016; Malkki, 1996; Newhouse, 2015; Peteet, 2005; Rygiel, 2011; Verstrate, 2001) argue that violence is perpetrated against migrants in the camps through technologies of humanitarianism and its correlation with military and political powers. The camps manage and contain cross-border migrations of needy people (Darling, 2009; Diken, 2004; Newhouse,

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[5] i.e. detention centres, transit camps, reception centres, one stop centres.

2015) through what Jeandesboz (2014, p 2) also calls 'capture'. These institutions are commonly established in abandoned locations (Verstrate, 2001) and in strategic points of buffer zones (Umek et al., 2018). Such spatial segregation limit and control migrants' agency (Johnson, 2015) and prevent their movement onwards (Umek et al., 2018). Martin et al. (2019) further point out that many refugee camps in Europe were transformed from former Nazi concentration camps, military barracks and prisons. The presence of barbed-wire, police and military remains, for instance in refugee camps in Greece and Serbia, which adds to the spatiality that keeps every aspect of refugees' lives in custody (Iliadou, 2019; Umek et al., 2018).

Agamben discusses the worst possibility of the camp as an exceptional space which produces bare life or *homo sacer*; the rightless and speechless individual, who can be killed at any time. Notwithstanding the influence of Agamben's work, his work fails to acknowledge the complex interplay between the social, the spatial and the political in the camp (Sigona, 2015). Indeed, there are multiple and interacting actors governing the camp, including state, NGOs and human rights groups (Maestri, 2017). The camps thus do not only produce violence but also solidarity and political co-existence (Maestri & Hughes, 2017).

This critique of Agamben became crucial particularly within the recent studies of camps across Europe, which consider that the camps are not only state-run institutions and migrants are not mere rightless and speechless victims. Instead, scholars (Davies & Isakjee, 2015; Koptyaeva, 2017; Mudu & Chattopadhyay, 2017) argue that migrants on their journeys commonly avoid state-run camps and establish their own makeshift camps, where they seek to create an autonomous and socially included life.

Large makeshift camps emerged in Calais (France) popularly known as 'the Jungle' (Rygiel, 2011); Madrid (Spain), the squat 'Palacete Opado' (Martínez López, 2017); and Rome and Trieste (Italy) (Roberta Altin, 2017). Since SEE is a fundamental passage to the EU and buffer zone (Stojić-Mitrović & Vilenica, 2019; Obradović-Wochnik, 2018), makeshift camps have been on the rise across cities, border-zones and strategic transit hubs there (Jordan & Moser, 2020). Dozens of squats emerged in Athens, such as the 'City Plaza' and the 'SquatBo' (Greece) (Koptyaeva, 2017), in an old railways station warehouse 'Barracks' in Belgrade (Serbia) (Obradović-Wochnik, 2018), and the 'Idomeni' makeshift camp along the Greek-Macedonian border (Martin et al., 2019), and numerous smaller 'jungles' at the border crossings from Serbia to Croatia and Hungary (Umek et al., 2018). Makeshift camps also appeared in Bosnia, but due to their recent emergence, did not attract so much academic attention (except Hromadžić, 2019; Isakjee et al., 2020).

Whilst migrants escape from biometrics and surveillance techniques in makeshift camps, in fact, many have no other option than to reside here due to the limited capacity of state-run camps (Umek et al., 2018). To this end, Davies et al. (2019) suggest that makeshift camps commonly emerge via the state's inaction. For this reason, Martin et al. (2019) argue that makeshift camps are co-existent, complementary and symbiotic with state-run camps. This symbiosis is also demonstrated by makeshift camps being established inside/around state-run camps, such as in Moria (Greece) (Iliadou, 2019). Taking into account the state withdrawal of aid as one of the main source of harm for migrants, violence in camps is conceptualised as violent inactions (Davies et al., 2017; Schneider et al., 2017) and violent abandonment (Davies & Isakjee, 2015), which in Galtung (1969) refers to as structural violence.

However, the existing research further shows that makeshift camps are in constant interplay between the state's abandonment as well as intervention (Martin et al., 2019). This means that state authorities tend to enforce the camp's temporary status by abandoning their populations with the provision of minimal or no services, but also control migrants through incarceration, deportation, and police harassment (Martin et al., 2019; Rygiel, 2011). These actions are often justified by state authorities as stopping migrants from invading public spaces (Altin & Minca, 2017). Migrants are then (forcibly) relocated to state-run camps, the only 'proper' spaces for finger-printed asylum seekers (Bird et al., 2020), or are expected to leave for elsewhere (Martin et al., 2019). The aim of what scholars call violence actions and inactions in camps therefore aims to contain mobility and relocate (EU) borders further away from migrants (Altin & Minca, 2017), which is consistent with externalisation and smart border logics discussed previously.

The research therefore shows that makeshift camps need to be understood as part of the matrix of how violence functions within border enforcements, together with disruption of border crossings. This is particularly fundamental at EU external borders, where makeshift camps are increasingly emerging by the side of other violent border measures, where both direct and structural harms occur. However, the literature mostly interrogates structural violence as separated-out phenomenon from direct violence. Such analysis fails to consider how diverse forms of harm function in the mutual relationship (Galtung, 1969) and effects migrants' everyday life (Scheper-Hughes, 1992). Furthermore, despite extensive analysis of camps, it appears that most of the camps in Bosnia have been overlooked. To address these gaps, this thesis places migrants' makeshift camps in northern Bosnia at the centre of the study and questions how these camps construe vital points of contemporary migration and violence. It specifically explores how direct and structural forms of violence intersect in the everyday life in the camps and how this adds to the knowledge of violence involved when crossing borders from Bosnia to the EU.

Moving from here, it is the concept of everyday that offers complex insight into how violence operates in diverse forms in migrants' camps by the side and solidarities, as recognised by scholars, drawing particularly on participatory and ethnographic methods (Mould, 2017; Ilcan & Rygiel, 2015; Rygiel, 2011). This complex understanding, that the focus on the everyday confrontations at the border is significant yet generally side-lined in the analysis of violence against migrants in Europe. The following section sheds light on the little migration research that looks at violence as a process in everyday life.

3.6: Movement between camps and border crossings: violence as everyday.

The research discussed so far indicates that diverse forms of direct violence as well as structural violence characterise the complex experiences of what border violence is, as governed by border externalisation and smart technologies. Although these spatial, political, and social connections make the complex experience of border violence, social science studies mostly interrogate these independently. However, as argued in the extensive non-migration conflict research, various forms of violence are interconnected: they can come together, accumulate, and become part of the everyday life (Farmer, 2009; Laurie & Shaw, 2018; Mayblin et al., 2020; Nordstrom & Robben, 1996; Scheper-Hughes, 1992). This raises the following questions: How are the everyday practices and social relations at borders permeated by diverse forms of violence? And how does the everyday matter in understanding border violence? This section aims to explore these questions.

Little research exists, particularly ethnographically informed work, that questions the accumulation of diverse violent experiences and their impact on the everyday at the EU's external borders. For instance, de Vries and Guild (2019, p 2163) suggest that moving between transit camps and border crossings around Europe (Greece, France) results in being 'completely exhausted', when fracturing and exhaustion became meaningful concepts in the context of spaces of transit. Also, the recent study by Iliadou (2019) focuses on the everyday and examines how violence manifests through practices and processes of everyday humiliation in refugee camps in Greece, which according to her are embodied in 'waiting'. With the same focus on the everyday, Obradović-Wochnik and Bird (2020) found that borders and violence were imagined and represented through banal, everyday objects (posters, flyers, maps) used to communicate to migrant populations across the migratory pathways in Serbia and Greece.

The above demonstrates an emerging research focus that traces how border violence functions in the everyday life at EU borders. It enriches the extensive body of literature that understands violence predominantly through structures discussed in the previous sections. The research of the everyday, methodologically approaches migrants as subject rather than objects and take seriously both their struggles for mobility and the detrimental effects of migration management (de Vries & Guild, 2019).

However, there is a research lacuna of systematic examination of how diverse forms of violence impact migrants' routines and social worlds, in their own understanding and experiences across time. This is particularly important in transit spaces that are generally excluded from migration (violence) research, such as the most recent transit point to the EU (Croatia) from Bosnia, where various forms of violence take place. This is where this thesis makes a central contribution to the migration and violence research, by exploring migrants' daily choices, routines and relations at violent borders.

The call for research into the violence in everyday life at borders in Europe also highlights social science studies that question the distinction between what is commonly regarded as the routine and remarked violence in the non-European context. For instance, the recent ethnographic work by Vogt (2019) examines strategic social relations and forms of intimacy and care that migrants develop along the Central American migrant route in Mexico, while navigating diverse forms of violence by state and criminal organisations. Also, Latif (2012) in her research in Palestinian camps (Lebanon) explored how the multi-layered violence impacted on refugee's habits and relationships, such as shattering familial order and community norms. Similarly, the research by Bhagat (2020) with LGBT asylum seekers in South Africa suggests that structural violence functions besides hidden, personal, and intimate forms of violence in everyday life.

To this end, I argue that knowledge of violence in migration should not be bounded purely in the perspectives of EU apparatus, administrations, policy making, border crossing environment, and humanitarianism. Instead, to understand violence in migratory transit and borders, research must examine how border violence is organised into migrants' mundane routines and social relations, how it is normalised and re-produced, and transformed across time. As Scheper-Hughes (2016) argues, the locus on everyday life make the concepts of violence concrete and real. In line with this, this thesis examines social relations and routines of the everyday caught in various types of violence along Croatian-Bosnian borders and contributes to the emerging literature on everyday violence in migration and border studies.

3.7: Violence along borders targeting racialized and gendered lives.

Latif (2012) also suggests that approaching violence through the everyday foregrounds further questions of how the role of individual locations – race and gender - in violence impacts one's experiences; which this last section of the literature review aims to discuss. The social category of race is a vital point to analyse in violence (Crenshaw, 1991). Race has been imminent to violence against migrants across history, when state violence has always targeted specific ethnic and religious groups of migrants who were framed as a threat (Zolberg, 1983), and as rooted in racism, fascism and colonial practices (Fanon, 1961; Lazreg, 2008). Contemporary research shows that race in migration functions

to categorise illegal migration. Race distinguishes between that which government must promote and foster and that which can be disciplined, expelled, or even destroyed (Turner, 2015, 2018). While race, migration and violence have been extensively explored by scholars in hosting states (De Genova, 2016, 2018; El-Tayeb, 2008; Turner, 2015), little research has closely questioned the relationship between these in a European border context, such as Bosnian-Croatian borders.

However, Pajnik (2019, p 126) argues that borders are contested sites of struggle where the nation-state attempts to maintain its sovereignty and a fictive 'homogenous ethnicity'. Isakjee et al. (2020) also explore the spectre of race as apparent logic, under which violence operates at European borders and thus carries the marks of European colonialism and its civilising of 'others' with the use of violence. Also, Milivojević (2018) finds that structural violence, like the closing of borders to prevent migrants' entry, was justified by linking migrants' race at the intersection with gender. For instance, Slovenia, Bulgaria and Croatia, first brought in favourable treatment of non-SIA (Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan) nationals, who were then prevented from continuing their journey (Pajnik, 2019).

Some argue that border practices against racialized individuals are embedded in the discursive linking of migration and terrorist attacks from 11 September 2001 (Bank et al., 2017; Gineste & Savun, 2019; Mafu, 2019; Mudu & Chattopadhyay, 2017). According to Milivojević (2018), narratives of a generic brown Arab-Middle-Eastern-Muslim migrant as a potential terrorist proved useful as the key argument by government officials to strengthen the policy on non-entry to the EU, including from Serbia, Croatia, and Hungary (Milivojević, 2018). In this way, the word terrorist has been exploited by various powers to justify interventions and the use of violence against others (i.e. Arab Muslims) as self-defence (Butler, 2004a). For Kaya (2016), racism is a key ideological form, in which social and political contradictions of the neoliberal age are dealt with, including migration-related inequalities geopolitical orders.

Turner (2018) and Isakjee et al. (2020) view the border violence of liberal European states as rooted in the history of colonialism, as well as present military interventions in migrants' home states in the Middle East, while using brutality and ensuring deniability within liberal ideologies and racism. From this research appears the main argument that non-white migrants across borders are not inferiors, but are 'inferiorised' by the violence imposed on them by racist discourse (Žižek, 2009). However, the question of violence and its racial logics along land routes to the EU remain underexplored, although in the empirical section of this thesis it will be argued that the experiences of violence are significant to the everyday.

Furthermore, previous academic work on gender and migration shows that the concept of dangerous migrants is not only racialized but is also distinguished from an image of genuine refugee, usually

exemplified by women or children (Griffiths, 2015; Helms, 2015; Malkki, 1996; Turner, 2019). This gender-age divide is observable also within research as most investigations into the refugee experience of vulnerabilities, violence and the need of protection, focuses on women and children or suggests that this should be the case (Milharčič Hladnik, 2016; Zavratnik & Krilić, 2018). Consequently, an image of the refugee excludes the able-bodied mature man, making the male an invisible figure in the humanitarian refugee system (Charsley & Wray, 2015). Carpenter (2005) argues further that such assumptions also reconstruct male migrants from vulnerable would-be refugees to false refugees, and makes the men undeserving illegal migrants, commonly represented as unknown lawbreakers and threat.

Military research explores this interconnection in greater detail when examining how the socially constructed discrepancy between masculinities and vulnerabilities transforms men into violent objects. Myrttinen et al. (2017) argue that men's exclusion from vulnerability interconnects with the category of perpetrator, rendering males' vulnerability as something unimaginable. When men are examined in scientific research on violence, they are commonly portrayed as warlords, combatants and perpetrators of sexual violence, while suggesting women as sexual subjects and victims (Myrttinen et al., 2017). This simultaneously shows broader dominant notions of masculinity, which carry specific roles, expectations and position, in which violence is deeply embedded (Hall, 2002; Juarez, 2009; Seymour, 2009). Men are traditionally expected to be the protector and breadwinner, and not to seek help (Myrttinen et al., 2017; Schulz, 2018) particularly in war time (Helms, 2015).

These pre-existing cultural assumptions are of great significance in migration, as Turner (2019a) argues. Migrant men in particular are likely to be perceived as agential and dangerous, and migrant women as passive and in need of empowerment through humanitarian technologies (Turner, 2019a). Anti-immigrant sentiments and anxieties are premised on fears of non-white migrant men as sexual predators (Gallo & Scrinzi, 2016; Milivojević, 2018; Vogt, 2018), as also argued by Said (1978) and Galtung (1990), which are part of a much longer history of Orientalism through which the West has viewed the East (Kaya, 2016). Turner (2015) dates similar narratives to colonial and post-colonial European history (U.K.), when non-white male migrants were racialized as highly sexed male subjects, based on the concern that white women could become the targets of penetration from these virile, racially different subjects.

Academic research examining male migration is relatively scarce, but noticeably growing (Turner, 2019a), when researchers shed light on how men's gender intersects with their experiences of border violence. For instance, state authorities and aid providers often make significant efforts to prioritise women and children, thus excluding men from any kind of assistance such as authorised border

crossing or aid in camps (Arsenijević et al., 2018; Augustová, 2020; Turner, 2019b; Zavratnik & Krilić, 2018). As the result of this, men appear more likely to attempt unauthorised border crossing and navigate direct police violence, as observed along Serbian-Croatian borders (Augustová, 2020). Similarly, adult men are more likely to risk their lives than other sub-categories of migrants and cross the U.S.-Mexico border (Donato et al., 2008; Doty, 2011). The consequences for them are often deadly, with those most commonly found to perish in a remote area of southern Arizona males near the age of 30 from central or southern Mexico (Martínez et al., 2014).

The existing literature therefore shows that association of gender, race, and citizenship with traits as violence is seen as hegemonic; that is, they are driven by cultural and ideological norms. Therefore, to understand the logic underpinning violence it is fundamental to question the social categories upon which migrant men and women of diverse races and ethnicities are affected by border violence, as also highlighted by feminist scholars (Butler, 2004a; Crenshaw, 1991; Harris, 2000). Considering diverse individual locations therefore proves useful to provide the means for dealing with violence in migration at borders. However, the questions of how violence against migrants is constructed within taxonomies of gender, race and other locations remain understudied in the European border context, particularly along the Bosnian-Croatian borders. Yet interlocking gendered and racialized assumptions provide the conditions of possibility for the contemporary violent border security practices in Europe (Basham & Vaughan-Williams, 2013), which calls for its examination.

3.8: Conclusion.

A key objective of this chapter was to review critically the existing literature examining violence against migrants at the EU's external borders. In doing so, I have pointed to how diverse scholars approach and conceptualise violence.

Firstly, the chapter reviewed the literature on 'border externalisation and internalisation' and 'smart borders', which provides insights into diplomatic relations between the EU and non-EU states and techno-scientific border measures, while highlighting their problematic and dangerous consequences on migrants' journeys. Yet these studies say little about either migrants' experiences of these measures or their violent experiences; what violence means, its process across time and migrants' own understanding of it. Also, these two approaches to violence begin with the 'state(s)' that inflict structural forms of violence, nevertheless, this homogenous perspective of the state as a 'perpetrator' is problematic as it side-lines more concrete sources of violence. Importantly, these debates on violence are significantly under-researched in the context of Bosnian-Croatian borders, which however proves to be the focal EU's external point, where diplomatic negotiations of border externalisation take place and smart technologies are increasingly employed to target migrants. This calls for more

research attention to be given to the Bosnian-Croatian border, besides moving attention to migrants' experiences of violent border measures.

Other branches of study discuss the consequences of border externalisation and smart borders on migrants' journeys, when pointing to various harms across transit routes to the EU. The major issue with this literature is that it commonly focuses on sea routes and side-lines land routes to the EU. Importantly, there is almost no research on the latest passage across Bosnian-Croatian borders. This is all the more remarkable given that I observed in this location direct violence to take place, which remains underexposed and undertheorized in the debate on border violence generally, yet it significantly impacts upon migrants' everyday life, as we will explore below. It is essential to examine this considering that most research tends to treat violence at European borders as 'indirect' or 'structural', thus omitting direct and concrete acts of violence that organise migrants' everyday life. Drawing upon this stark contrast between the conceptualisation of border violence in the existing studies and the increasingly observed direct attacks EU land borders, this research will ask the following research question: What are the forms of violence against migrants along the EU's external border with Bosnia?

Moving the discussion into the more detailed and intimate perspectives, a further focus was the emerging and ethnographic research which examines the impacts of violence on migrants' daily routines and social relations. I have argued that this research significantly enriches understandings of violence that predominantly focus on structures and indirect actions, or that perceive violence as episodes that come and pass. Instead, research focused on the everyday sees violence against migrants as concrete and daily encounters that turn into a process and transforms across time. Nevertheless, there are rare encounters of border violence as everyday at the EU's external borders and no research has examined this at the Bosnian-Croatian border. For this reason, I advocate examining border violence as an everyday phenomenon at the Croatian-Bosnian border so as to nuance understanding of how diverse forms of violence (direct and structural) function in symbiosis and become personal.

The literature further indicates that race and gender are fundamental aspects organising border violence. Whilst the existing research predominantly focuses on (migrant) women and children as generally most affected by violence, I want to shift attention to the fact that those subjected most to violence are predominantly Arab Muslim migrant men. Whilst there is emerging research on male migration and its axis with border violence, there are no examples of how migrants are subjected to direct and crude force and impacts the everyday, to which end, this research asks: Do race and gender organise experience of border violence, and if yes, how?

As already indicated, I suggest examining the identified research questions along the Bosnian-Croatian borders, which generally remains underexamined in terms of border violence. This border is located on the symbolic line between the so-called 'Balkan (Route)' and 'EUrope', in which violence against migrants is bounded. To this end, the following chapter aims to critically review the literature on the recent history and political developments along the 'Balkans' and the 'Balkan Route' for migrants on their way to the EU, leading to the Bosnian-Croatian borders.

Chapter 4: Historical and political background of the 'Balkans' and its (transit) migration.

4.1: Introduction.

While the previous literature review explored diverse forms of border technologies and their use of violence in migration, this chapter shifts the focus to the case study examined in this thesis – the so called 'Balkan Route'. Specifically, it provides the historical and political context of migration across SEE states, where diverse forms of border violence eventually organised the everyday for migrants, as this thesis will argue. Since the existing literature discussed above shows that diverse migration flows and violence have been taking place in the SEE region before the 2015 'refugee crisis', these need to be brought into the discussion. This proves useful to question how this rich local history shapes new forms of migration and violence at the EU's external borders lying in SEE now.

The chapter begins by looking into how the 'Balkans' have been conceptualised within the historical contexts of the West-East dichotomy in Europe. By deconstructing this dichotomy, this chapter questions how migration has been perceived, narrated and consequently managed (by violence) at the EU's external borders located in SEE.

Secondly, it aims to review studies that discuss the detailed development of migratory journeys and their stoppage across SEE since 2015. The chapter questions how the migratory routes through SEE at first functioned as the humanitarian 'Balkan Corridor' enabling refugees to pass but then, they shifted to a clandestine and criminal 'Balkan Route' in policy terms. These developments significantly organised violent border deterrents, consequently pushing migrants to move to Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bosnia).

Finally, the chapter will examine the limited research on the contemporary migration passage in Bosnia, its local and international responses and lived experiences that draw a line between the newly arriving migrants and the local population. Finally, I will summarise the key arguments and highlight the gaps in the research literature on the nexus of violence and migration in SEE.

4.2: Conceptualising 'Balkans' in the past and today Europe

Migration routes across SEE became the second major transit to the EU, which are commonly framed in policy and humanitarian terms as a homogenous 'Balkan Route' (Frontex 2018; UNHCR 2019). Calling numerous states by the term 'Balkans' is intertwined with an important, often discriminatory history of West-East dichotomy in Europe (El-Shaarawi & Razsa, 2019). Numerous authors argue that states in the region have been Balkanised, and thus, positioned at Europe's periphery (Todorova, 2009) as

Europe's 'Orients' (Mishkova, 2008), together with diverse forms of violence and refugee flows across this region in the recent history. To understand the meanings of 'Balkans' and its impact on the current political and social climate across south-eastern EU's external borders, I wish to briefly discuss how the term 'Balkans' emerged and strategically evolved until the post-2015 migration.

Todorova (2009) suggests that the term 'Balkans' per se - a distinct geographic, social, and cultural entity - was invented by European travellers (latter-day journalists) only from the late eighteenth century. Before then, much of the southeast European peninsula as part of the Ottoman Empire had been perceived as a unit within Europe and Asia, Christianity and Islam. The term Balkans, however, shattered the unitary character of the oriental world. Todorova (2009) argues that the Western powers then used Balkans to label the SEE region as unmarked by Western Enlightenment and thus, economically backward, the tribal, the primitive, the barbarian (Todorova, 2009). The Balkans have been therefore constructed as the opposite of the (self-)presentation of 'Europe', coextensive with modernity and a symbol of cultural superiority and power for the last three centuries (Mishkova, 2008, p 252).

This stereotypical division of Occident and Orient (Aretov, 2012), Christianity and Islam, 'us' and the 'other' in Europe influenced conflicts and humanitarian challenges in SEE during World War II and the Yugoslav Wars. Extreme barbarities were committed by Fascist militia forces *Ustaša* in 1941, when Nazi-backed Croatia established *Nezavisna Država Hrvatska* (the Independent State of Croatia) (Hoare, 2006). *Ustaša* committed torture, brutality, and the inhumanity of genocide particularly against Serbs, Jews and Roma, which were followed by aggression from the Serb *Chetnik* forces, leading to an onslaught against Croats and Bosnian Muslims (Hoare, 2006). Korb (2010) suggests that the aim of *Ustaša's* mass violence was to 'emancipate' Catholic Croatia from the Balkan 'burden'; from the Bosnian Muslims and Serbian Orthodox Christians.

The radical struggle for Europeanisation, which Baker (2015) argues was manipulated by external powers, also played a crucial role in the wars that were triggered after the collapse of Yugoslavia in 1991. As Razsa and Lindstrom (2004) suggest, the former Croatian president Franjo Tuđman hoped to be recognized as a sovereign state for the first time in its national history to 'return' to its rightful place in Europe; away from primitive, lazy, intolerant Balkan neighbours to the southeast. Croatia wished to resurrect the *Ustaša's* state and create true ethnic borders, in which Bosnia and Herzegovina would be absorbed into a Croatian state (Pavlaković, 2008). The war created millions of refugees when at the height of the displacement crisis, fully half of Bosnia's pre-war population was dead or uprooted (Lischer, 1999).

World media focused on the specific narrative and justification of the Yugoslav 1990s wars as the 'Balkan Wars', triggered by ancient ethnic hatreds (Baker, 2015; Huliaras, 2011; Razsa & Lindstrom, 2004). Western portrayals of brutal violence during the wars were analysed as intertwined with something inherently 'Balkan', distant from the rest of Europe, which made derogatory connotations of the Balkans stronger than ever (Hatzopoulos, 2003).

The imagined divisions between Balkans and Europe continued to be focal in independent nation building in Bosnia and Croatia in the war aftermath. The final outcome of the Bosnian-Croatian 'war within the war' ended with the Washington Agreement in 1994, followed by the end of the Yugoslav wars with the U.S.-brokered Dayton Peace Agreement in 1995 (Bliesemann de Guevara, 2013). However, the agreements have been criticised for ignoring the situation on the ground, and thus failing to promote the sovereignty of the Bosnian Republic and multi-ethnic democracy (Kappler & Richmond, 2011; Malik, 2000) and poorly serving national interests in Croatia (Manning, 2004). During the first after-war elections in Bosnia, the wartime nationalists won by manipulation and legitimised the results of wartime ethnic cleansing. People continued to vote for the nationalist parties in Bosnia because those were the parties with the surest ability to deliver the resources they needed to survive (Manning, 2004). In Croatia, the war legacies and opposition of the devaluation of the Homeland War continued to be the formula for success for political parties, resulting in the Croatian Democratic Union continuing to be the key organiser and political instrument of national extremism, until the party's 2003 pro-EU centre-right turn (Jović, 2009). EU integration became also an important national goal in Bosnia, based on economic prosperity and the rule of law in a society still suffering the consequences of war, populism and corruption by powerbase political elites (Memisevic, 2009).

It is the (prospect of) EU membership, that is significantly shaping the political and social development in SEE countries despite their confined symbolic image of Balkan. According to Dahlman (2016), the EU method for ensuring the gradual Europeanisation and integration of the Balkans has been the Stabilization and Association Process (SAP), negotiated with each of the countries since 2000 (see Figure 2 below). The process primarily depends on transnational justice and cooperation with International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (Jović, 2009), and agreements covering free trade, political reform, economic development, regional cooperation (Dahlman, 2016), and humanitarian values (Jakešević, 2017). Importantly, states ought to adopt migration policies complementary to those existing in the EU, such as the Geneva Convention asylum system, and collaborate on combating illegal migration and organised crime (Stojić-Mitrović & Vilenica, 2019). Slovenia, Bulgaria, and Croatia are now EU members, with Croatia waiting to join the Schengen space during the time of writing this thesis (Huliaras, 2011; Dahlman, 2016). In contrast, Bosnia was the last country in the Western Balkans to sign the SAP with the EU in 2008 and beginning the EU integration

process (Memisevic, 2009). According to the local politicians (Sanader, 2008), the memberships re-shaped these states from the Balkans to liberal and Western democracies of modern EUrope, where violence and disorder have been removed from public sight (Elias, 2001).
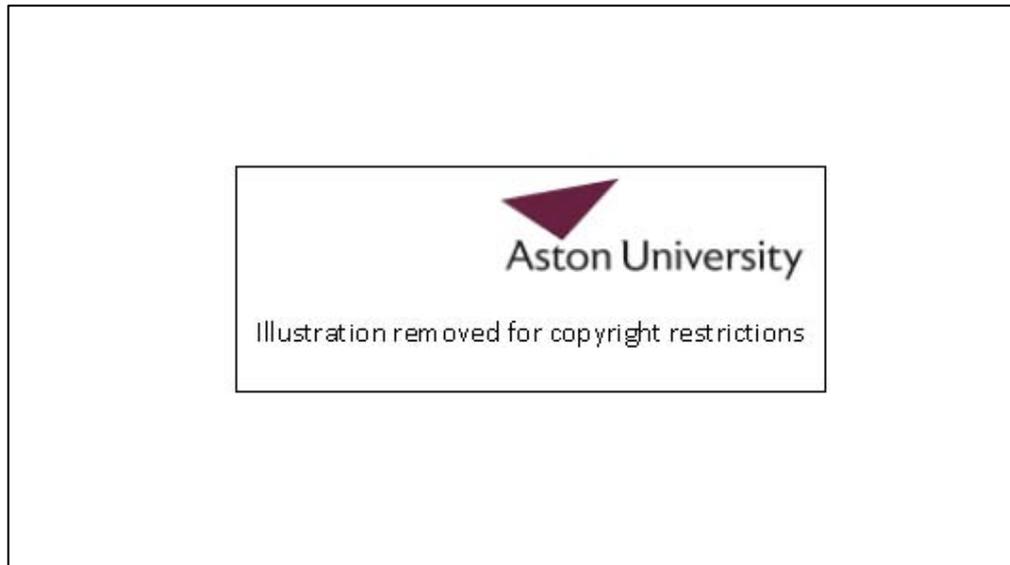
Figure 2   A map illustrating what Frontex calls EU's expansion plans in Western Balkan (Wilms, 2018).

However, the existing literature shows that war legacies, *Ustaša* symbols and fascist tendencies remain celebrated in Croatia (Pavlaković, 2008), besides playing an important role in politics. The former Croatian president Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović[6], a member of the right-wing Croatian Democratic Union, openly sympathises with the *Ustaša's* ideology of the Independent State of Croatia (MacDowall, 2018). Indeed, violence is also part of states that consider themselves as liberal or EUropean, when reflecting its anxieties and vulnerabilities (Isakjee et al., 2020). This indicates that the discourse of the far right remains mainstream in Croatia, when finding its place closer to what is considered as European, white, and Catholic borders, and seeking division from its south-eastern neighbours, which, as Dahlman (2016) argues, are still far away from joining the EU due to the legacies of war, among other factors. Countries along the 'Western Balkans'[7], like Bosnia, remain shady places of the EU and Schengen zone as stranded in the narratives of having fragile economies, a high unemployment rate, corruption, weak institutions, questionable rule of law, and diminishing political rights and civil liberties (Stojić-Mitrović & Vilenica, 2019). As a result, the Western Balkan states are stranded in an unclear and constantly shifting boundary between Europe and not-quite-Europe (Trakilović, 2020). The existing sources thus show that Bosnia is stranded in the image as a post-Ottoman, post-Socialist and post-conflict state

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[6] Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović served as a president of Croatia since 2015-2020, the most challenging period of migration across the region, which also involved the time of my fieldwork.
[7] Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Northern Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia.

with a large Muslim population, against whom European borders should be protected (Rexhepi, 2018). Razsa and Lindstrom (2004) argue that Croatia particularly has either enthusiastically or grudgingly accepted its role as the 'defence walls of Christianity' to fulfil such a task, as indicated with the example of the recent conflicts.

Border defence expectations intensified again since 2015, when SEE came to be known not only as the (Western) Balkans but also as the route for migrants from Muslim Arab countries across the Middle East and Africa to western and northern Europe. Post-2015 migration developed new pressures on Croatia as an EU member state to 'show its teeth' along its borders with Bosnia and Serbia prior to Schengen accession and confirm its ability to secure the EU's external border (Isakjee et al., 2020). On the other side of the border, in Serbia and Bosnia, pressures to improve border externalisation policies and smart borders security also emerged, under the promise of eventual EU membership. To this end, the states positioned along the 'Balkan Route' and along the EU's margins are once again struggling for Europanisation and de-Balkanisation, but now embedded in the EU's border security expectations, in which violence against migrants became the major border tool (Squire, 2017; Vaughan-Williams, 2015), as discussed further.

4.3: Migration across the 'Balkan Route'.

As the recent historical context shows, the Balkans is much more than a geographical term (Hoare, 2006) and this also applies for the migratory 'Balkan Route' – its emergence, development, and later closures, which resulted in thousands of people navigating diverse forms of violence while migrating through there to northern and western Europe. It is important to note that the passages across SEE have served as the transitory point for migration and smuggling to western and northern Europe for centuries (Ahmetašević & Mlinarević, 2018; Jovanović, 2018). Throughout the 1990s, however, the smuggling of goods, weapons and people through SEE ballooned, to which end the 'Balkans' became known as the 'Balkan Route' (Lewis, 1998). Ahmad's (2011) research shows that Macedonia and Serbia were transit points for generations of Pakistani migrants, yet their journeys became more dangerous and expensive after the 9/11 terrorist attack and the intensification of smart border technologies[8]. More significant migratory transit through the route was marked in 2014 when 150,000 Kosovans fled to Hungary, Austria and Switzerland because of chronic precariousness and uncertainty, which established the logistics and infrastructure for further migration through here (Stanivuković & Neuman, 2019). During these movements, the 'Balkan Route' was still hidden from public sight (Kasparek, 2016). This changed in August 2015 with the media portraying a '(European) refugee crisis' (Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017); migration to Europe triggered by the Arab Spring across the Middle East

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[8] Ibid, Chapter 3.3, p 25.

and North Africa (Nascimbene & Di Pascale, 2011), the Syrian conflict (Al Hussein, 2018), the ongoing military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq, and poverty (De Genova, 2017), just to name but a few.

Yet migratory land routes in SEE have been side-lined in scholarly work in contrast to the Mediterranean and Aegean Sea Routes (Rozakou, 2019). Milivojević (2018) explains this academic blind spot by the instability of the region since the 1990s wars, and thus the challenges to conducting research there, besides the difficulty to gain official access and navigate language barriers for foreign researchers. For this reason, scholars who documented and analysed migration events in SEE were particularly those associated with the local (academic) institutions or having national roots in the region. Their insightful findings reveal that diverse migratory routes are closely interconnected, when land routes in SEE were initially an alternative to the more dangerous sea routes, especially for those who had lost relatives in the Mediterranean (Isakjee et al., 2020). For this reason, SEE is a vital location to research to understand contemporary migration and violence at the EU's borders.

This existing research shows that the migratory routes went primarily from Turkey and Greece to Macedonia, Bulgaria, Serbia, Hungary, and Croatia; and through Austria, Slovenia and Italy to western and northern Europe (Stojić-Mitrović & Vilenica, 2019; Stanivuković & Neuman, 2019). At this point, some EU member states (Germany, Croatia, Hungary) employed 'open-border' policies and suspended the Dublin Regulation[9], which reframed the 'criminal Balkan Route' to the 'humanitarian Balkan Corridor' (El-Shaarawi & Razsa, 2019). The formalised and relatively safe corridor enabled migrants to transit from Northern Greece to the EU within two or three days, in special trains and buses that were often even free of charge (Beznec et al., 2016; Santer & Wriedt, 2017). The journeys were assisted by transit states, issuing 72-hours temporary documents, allowing migrants to transit onwards (Kasparek, 2016; Lukić, 2016). This 'open-border' period in SEE is often described by scholars as the 'long summer of migration' (Hess & Kasparek, 2017; Stojić-Mitrović & Vilenica, 2019; Stanivuković & Neuman, 2019).

Although Europe as the world's richest continent was about to host barely 8% of the worlds' displaced population (Kasamani, 2017), the mainstream political parties around EU countries (United Kingdom, France, Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands, Austria, Italy), started expressing anxiety over the places of migrants (Isakjee et al., 2020). Questions of migration became even more precarious for SEE Schengen countries, such as Hungary and Slovenia, as well as EU member Croatia, with fragile control systems and pressures to prove its EUropean position (Nedoh, 2017; Stanivuković & Neuman, 2019). These pressures resulted in radical and fast border measures.

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[9] Dublin Regulation is an EU agreement that requires people to apply for asylum in the first EU state they reach or risk deportation back to that first state if they travel elsewhere (El-Shaarawi & Razsa, 2019).

In Hungary, the president Viktor Orbán stated that the country belonged to Christian West civilisation and Europe and it had a moral obligation to protect the borders of Hungary that in turn also protected Europe. To this end, Hungary decided to construct an US$80 million razor wire fence along its border with Serbia in July 2015 (Thorleifsson, 2017). Also, a new law was passed making illegal entry into Hungarian national territory a prosecutable crime punishable by up to three years in prison for those who violate it (Nedoh, 2017). The only legal access from Serbia to Hungary was via the newly established 'transit zones', where migrants could apply for asylum (Stojić-Mitrović & Vilenica, 2019).

These new measures criminalized the right to seek asylum in Hungary for most migrants (Nedoh, 2017), particularly men travelling without women and children (Augustová, 2020). With the aim to resist these, some migrants attempted more dangerous illegalised routes – as shown by the tragedy of 71 dead bodies that were found on 27 August 2015 in a lorry on an Austrian highway (Santer & Wriedt, 2017). Over 4000 migrants and local groups who were mobilised to act in solidarity created a 170-km march from Budapest to the Austrian border, which is known as the March for Hope (El-Shaarawi & Razsa, 2019; Hess & Kasparek, 2017; Santer & Wriedt, 2017; Stanivuković & Neuman, 2019). What followed was another razor wire fence construction along Slovenian-Croatian borders in October 2015 (Nedoh, 2017), increasing deployment of paramilitary migrant hunting patrols in Bulgaria (Rexhepi, 2018), and closure of the Greek-Macedonian border in Idomeni in December 2015 (Santer & Wriedt, 2017). The European Commission eventually allocated €3.8 billion euros to the whole former Yugoslav territory from the EU's Internal Security Fund to help reinforce border management at the EU's external borders (Dobreva & Radjenovic, 2018).

The humanitarian corridor was officially closed in March 2016 when the European Council announced that '(i)rregular flows of migrants along the Western Balkans route have now come to an end' (Santer & Wriedt, 2017). The corridor closure was also related to the EU-Turkey agreement on the limitation of these movements (Šantić et al., 2017). As the result, thousands became stranded particularly in Serbia, where the primary responses of the local population were mostly filled with empathies due to their recent war and refugee experience and a perception of migration as temporary (El-Shaarawi & Razsa, 2019). However, the same experiences of the recent disorder and violence, fragile economy, and the desire for EU membership changed the local responses to hostilities when the Serbian Government took down grassroot support, tried to remove all migrants out of public spaces, and deployed border militarisation (Stojić-Mitrović & Vilenica, 2019; Obradović-Wochnik, 2018; Stanivuković & Neuman, 2019). A similar shift from humanitarian to securitised approach was encountered in Croatia (Jakešević & Tatalović, 2016), Albania (Stanivuković & Neuman, 2019), Kosovo and Macedonia (Rexhepi, 2018), and Greece (Obradović-Wochnik & Bird, 2020).

These border measures made migration across the region to the EU (Croatia and Hungary) illegal, and thus returned its designation with 'criminal activity' and its characterisation as the 'Balkan Route' (El-Shaarawi & Razsa, 2019). This also became prominent in the political maps by the European Border and Coast Guard Agency – known as Frontex (see Figure 3), which according to van Houtum and Bueno Lacy (2020, p 198), portray migration across the Balkan Route through its 'risk analysis' as a threatening invasion of migrants taking over a defenceless EU. On the same lines, Bird et al (2020) argue that using the term Balkan Route also serves as a specific EU policy tool, which uses the traditional connotation of the region as the 'Badlands' of Europe, to push and conceal migrants' precarities and dire living conditions out of EU territory. Balkan Route is therefore the shadow space between West and East, blurring the boundaries between legality and illegality, and thus produces informal and extra-governance structures (Stanivuković & Neuman, 2019). The way migration is imagined and managed (by violence) along EU external borders therefore stems from the characteristics of the European and Balkan projects themselves (De Genova, 2017), which have deep historical roots discussed here in the first sub-chapter. For this reason, Trakilović (2020, p 50) argues that the 'Balkans' ambiguous position in the European imaginary needs to be taken into account in understanding the character of, and the response to, the migration phenomenon'.

Figure 3   A map by EU's Fontex (2019), portraying what the institution refers to as the Balkan Route used by migrants to the EU.

4.4: Border violence and the Balkan Route.

Despite the official route's closure, daily movement across Serbian borders onwards showed that the routes continued to be active. Militant and legislative border closures only made the migratory movements irregular and more hazardous. The year of the route closures, Frontex (2016) detected

130,325 unauthorized entries from Serbia to Croatia and Hungary. Games, how migrants call unauthorised border crossings via green zones, became the only option to move from Serbia across Croatia or Hungary onwards, when avoiding subjection to border securities (Augustová, 2020). However, the game conveyed dangerous and violent processes when Hungarian and Croatian state authorities responded to the game players by chain push-backs; which became the key component of border security along the Balkan Route (Augustová & Sapoch, 2020). Its definition has been developed by Push-Back Map Collective (2020, p 199):

> Push-backs are expulsions, direct deportations, readmissions, or other forms of immediate involuntary return across one or several territorial borders. Depending on the regulatory framework in place, these forms of forced displacement can be legalized under national law—as in Hungary— or semi-formalized, for example by relying on bilateral agreements or informal practices.

The involuntary nature of push-backs signifies the regular use of violence, which are academically understudied. Push-backs indicate that although seeking asylum is recognized as a right in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Art. 14), in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (Art. 18) (among other relevant documents) (Albahari, 2019), the law is systematically violated along EU borders. The use of violence by state authorities, which the push-backs often incorporate, also go against the absolute prohibition of torture and inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment under Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights and against the prohibition of collective expulsion, which applies to all displaced persons, both irregular migrants and asylum seekers (European Court of Human Rights, 2020). No state may permit or tolerate such cruel treatments or torture (United Nations, 1975). Finally, according to the EU Directive on Asylum Procedures (2005/85/EC), all migrants, including those recognized as 'irregular' migrants, are entitled to information about asylum, translation assistance, the ability to present their case to a competent authority, notification of the outcome, and the right to appeal a negative decision (Vaughan-Williams, 2015).

As the consequence of the continuous push-back practices, migration journeys across SEE are not a linear singular route, as portrayed in the EU-centred policy and humanitarian language (see Figure 3, Ibid, p 58). Instead, as Obradović-Wochnik and Bird (2020) argue, migration across here functions through more complex multiple and divergent routes, which are constantly being disrupted, when people are being pushed, detained or die on the way; the process called by Stojić-Mitrović and Vilenica (2019, p 542) 'forced circular mobility'. As the result of this, since January 2018 and January 2019, NGOs and activists encountered over 21.000 new arrivals in Bosnia, which still had not had the

sophisticated border technologies used along Croatia (INFO PARK, 2018; UNHCR, 2019a). Thousands arrived and temporary resided in Sarajevo train stations, parks, and other public sites (Ahmetašević & Mlinarević, 2018), which was the image previously seen in European cities, from Athens to Budapest, Madrid and Paris.

4.5: Transiting Bosnian-Croatian borders.

There is little literature discussing in detail Bosnia as the migratory transit route which can be explained by its recent emergence, together with the major attention paid to the sea routes, as discussed previously. With thousands of migrants coming to the country, the Bosnian population suddenly faced what Bobić and Janković (2017) call two-fold challenge mass migration flows, mass emigration and mass transit migration. Among the little research that has been conducted on post-2018 migration in Bosnia is the report by Ahmetašević and Mlinarević (2018), drawing on their participatory action research. The authors point to struggles of the Bosnian Government to coordinate responses to the new arrivals due to the country's post-war dysfunctionality. Ahmetašević and Mlinarević (2018) also highlight poorly managed work of the UN agencies (IOM, UNHCR, UNICEF), to whom the funding from the European Commission was later allocated due to Brussel's lack of trust in the government, but who barely considered the local context and directly impacted on a further weakening of the state; the issue previously encountered during the post-war legacies of the Dayton agreement (Kappler & Richmond, 2011; Malik, 2000). Thus, these local dynamics resulted in poor migration responses and no chain of responsibility, which differs to other countries in Europe.

This posed several challenges for migrants navigating the passage here, ranging from legal to material support in Bosnia. Besides the bureaucratic problems of applying for asylum, Ahmetašević & Mlinarević (2018) suggest that Bosnia particularly struggled to provide shelter for the newly arriving. Eight accommodation centres were opened, but most were run in abandoned factories by IOM and the two (one run by volunteers) with better living conditions were opened only for families. However, the majority of people were heading to Bihać and Velika Kladuša (Kladuša), the towns positioned at the northern borders with Croatia, where the EU requested that no centre was placed within a 30 km radius of the border. Croatian state representatives were in constant contact with the authorities in Bihać and Kladuša (Ahmetašević & Mlinarević, 2018). On the other side of the border in Croatia, Frontex has been using airplanes and visual data to stream to the over 1000-strong Croatian border police, and technologies such as watchtowers, thermal vision cameras, drones, helicopters, and barbed wire acquired through EU funds to assist them with 'interception operations' since July 2018 (Isakjee et al., 2020).

The ethnographic study by Hromadžić (2019) examined one of the urban ruins, *Dom penzionera* (Pensioner home), located by the Bosnian-Croatian border in in Bihać , which became a new home for migrants attempting to transit the country. Hromadžić (2019) argues that this empty building has been housing 'human waste' rejected by local citizens across dozens of years (seniors, rebel youth, migrants) and signifies the country's struggle to transit from conflict to peace and dysfunctional to functional state in comparison to the imagined West and Europe. Although Hromadžić (2019) examines violence and solidarities in migration in the urban ruins, she omits from her analysis violent push-backs from Croatia to Bosnia. However, Isakjee et al. (2020) argue that push-backs construe migrants' experiences in Bosnia, as it had been previously encountered along Serbian borders with Hungary and Serbia. Also, whilst Hromadžić (2019) discusses migrants' narratives in Bihać, Kladuša slipped from any academic examination.

I identified the same knowledge gap on the town Kladuša within war legacies, except Lischer (1999) and Christia (2008). These authors point out that the northern Bosnian region transformed during the Yugoslav times into a highly profitable industrial centre, in contrast to the poverty of the rest of the country, and this economic disparity remains until today. This was thanks to the *Agrokomerc* company established by a Muslim from Kladuša, Fikret Abdić, during the time of socialist Yugoslavia (Christia, 2008). In 1993, Abdić, declared the Autonomous Province of Western Bosnia in Kladuša, leading to intra-ethnic war and over 25,000 people fleeing from the town in front of the advancing Bosnian Army, creating a 30-mile long stream of people. Lisher's study (1999) discusses that inhabitants of Kladuša were living in awful conditions of makeshift camps and destroyed buildings with no electricity and little clean water during their refuge on the other side of the border in Croatia. Abdić organised an army and attempted to regain control over Kladuša. However, his attempt resulted in the second exodus, while many refugees attempting to reach safety in Croatia were said to be pushed back to Bosnia by the Croatian army, who were not hesitating to shoot those resisting (Lisher, 1999). While Abdić had been convicted and sentenced to twenty years of imprisonment for war crimes (Ivanisevic, 2004), he was elected mayor of Kladuša after his release from prison, and remained in the post during the time of my fieldwork. Dahlman (2016) also points out that many migrants from Bosnia arriving in Western Europe in the early 1990s were prevented from applying for asylum by governments, subjected to limited entry to safety and expulsions to the first safe country (Croatia), which seems to be a similar experience to those transiting Bosnia now.

What this shows is that Kladuša is an important but understudied location where migration and violence inter-sect across the recent past and presence. To this end, I argue that this location has much to show us about the EU's border violence against migrants, as embedded in the broader symbolic and political dichotomy between Europe and Balkans in the Western popular imagination. For this reason,

I conducted my research there when questioning how this town and its historic-political context shaped the social fabric of the migration route through the area since 2018, when thousands of people had arrived here to enter the EU.

4.5: Conclusion.

As this chapter outlined, the existing literature shows that Bosnian-Croatian borders remain part of a highly problematic dichotomy of the Balkans-Europe margins, frequently used in Euro-centric narratives, which had been radically enforced particularly during the 1990s Yugoslav Wars. The post-war prospect of EU membership did not diminish the confined symbolic image of Balkanism (Todorova, 2009), which persists in cultural, political and economic tensions, particularly for Bosnia as the last SEE country entering the EU integration process. In contrast, the research conducted in Croatia - Bosnia's neighbour drawing the geopolitical line of EU entry - indicated that the country continues to use far right discourse when reassuring its position within 'European', 'white' and 'Catholic' borders. While we know that this local context along the Bosnian borders with Croatia played a fundamental role in violence in the past, there is limited knowledge about violent tensions during today's 'liberalisation' and 'EUropeanisation' process of the region that is culturally distinguished from violent measures yet, as I observed, underpins the management of migration here.

Indeed, the existing research also shows that the historical dichotomy between Balkan and Europe are used as a policy tool for migration management, yet the region still remains underexamined in contrast to the Mediterranean Sea, which is a more accessible field location for international scholars. Nevertheless, the migratory land pathways across SEE countries have much to inform us about the EU's policies of closed borders and militarisation, which are commonly entwined with the use of direct violence, as argued by Jones (2019). However, we know little about the intersections of diverse forms of violence and migration and how these are organised by the ambiguous position of the Bosnian-Croatian borders in today's Europe, which needs to be taken into account. This is all the more remarkable given that the Bosnian border with Croatia turned into the latest transit spot in migration but remains absent in the existing literature.

Deriving from the literature on the historical Balkan-Europe dichotomy, war and post-war period, and contemporary migration and its academic blind spots, this thesis explores how the local context of Bosnian-Croatian borders plays in violence that migrants experience. While examining diverse forms of violence against migrants, and their impact on the everyday, this thesis considers the local dynamics discussed in the existing literature and bring it into the analysis of contemporary violence observed at the borders. Drawing upon the critical review of the studies examining the background of the Bosnian-

Croatian border, I will thus ask the following question: To what extent does the context of Bosnian-Croatian border organise migrants' experiences of violence?

To be able to empirically examine this research equation, together with other questions highlighted in the literature review above, the following chapter will outline and reflect on methodologies and ethical considerations while living and conducting research at the Bosnian-Croatian border for eight months.

Chapter 5: Ethnography of violence and activism: navigating methodological and ethical research choices with migrants at the Bosnian-Croatian border.

5.1: Introduction.

This chapter will firstly provide the rationale behind diverse methodological and ethical decisions that guided the research process. It will firstly focus on the epistemological thinking of what violence means, in line with the theoretical concepts guiding this thesis (Crenshaw, 1991; Galtung, 1969, 1990; Scheper-Hughes, 1992), which considers the cultural construction of violence according to participants' own lived experience and interpretations. It will also discuss the choice of qualitative research and how this complements the theoretical grounding of the study and research questions. The chapter will then move onto the discussion of specific research choices and ethnographic methods, and how these were used in the course of the fieldwork.

Since self-reflective writing - the capturing of ideas, curiosities, intellectual wanderings, and ethical concerns - is a crucial part of (ethnographic) research practice (Doty, 2010), it will be incorporated throughout this chapter. I will specifically reflect on the degree to which access to specific fieldwork place and sites is a matter of choice in migration and ethnographic fields; how possible it is to undertake research that is genuinely collaborative with participants; whether or not researchers can establish relations of reciprocity by volunteering and through border violence report collection; and how cultural differences between researcher and participants can be navigated. All these issues will, of course, be discussed in relation to my own fieldwork choices and practices. The chapter will then continue with an account of how the fieldwork data was thematically analysed. Finally, it will discuss ethical considerations and especially participants' anonymity and the commitment to do no harm, which turned out to be the most problematic to navigate in the constantly changing violent field of borders.

5.2: Epistemologically approaching violence in migration research.

Extensive academic work on violence (Arendt, 1970; Benjamin, 1996; Derrida, 1967; Fanon, 1961; Foucault, 1975; Galtung, 1990; Lazreg, 2008) signifies that thoughts of what violence means are often fraught with ambiguities. What violence means depends upon meanings attributed to violence across diverse contexts and situations (Keane, 2004; Lazreg, 2008; Perry, 2006) as what some people recognise as violence, may not be considered violent by others (Hume, 2009). Since violence is communicated through systems of meanings shared between people, including a researcher and her participants (Pedelty, 2011), this study undertakes the epistemological stance of interpretivism. The interpretivist paradigm therefore allows us to approach violence and the experience of it as depending

on the context, here the Bosnian-Croatian border; and people, here the Arab Muslim migrant men who are subjected to it.

The interpretative paradigm thus proves useful to move beyond the state-centric analysis of violence that commonly occurs in migration studies and as discussed above (de Vries & Guild, 2019). In contrast, the interpretative paradigm explores migrants' everyday experiences of violence in their own terms (Scheper-Hughes, 1992), and thus opens up understandings of violence based on the social and political arrangements in which it is experienced (Galtung, 1990). This further enables participants to be treated as agents in defining what violence means to them, based on their different social and political practices and traditions, rather than assuming that European juridical definitions and the experiences they produce are the norm (Fiske, 2016; Jamar & Chappuis, 2016).

To explore the daily life at borders and migrants' subjective understandings of the violence it involves, thus requires a qualitative approach (Hammersley, 1990). Yet Jacobsen and Landau (2003) suggest that quantitative methods are necessary to produce statistically representative samples and scientifically sound knowledge in migration research. Also, Galtung and Höivik (1971) highlight that violence ought to be measured in numbers of deaths. In contrast, Farmer (2009) argues that numbers of deaths provide only one crude measure of violence since they cannot reveal the meaning and the nature of suffering that people experience in an array of violent situations. Moreover, violence cannot be objectified and quantified so that a check list can be drawn up with positive criteria for defining any particular act as violent or not (Scheper-Hughes & Bourgois, 2004). This means that a quantitative approach already makes assumptions about how migrants' world is (Rodgers, 2004) and so it cannot capture the complex nature of borders, their everyday complexities and the place of violence within these. In order to question migrants' subjective and daily experiences of violence a qualitative approach is most appropriate.

5.3: Using ethnographic research methods along the Bosnian-Croatian border.

Before moving on to the discussion of the research methodologies used in this research, I wish to firstly establish a rationale for these. It has been argued that understanding violence in the everyday has been predominantly anthropological work, which calls for participatory and extended fieldwork. Existing migration studies provide insightful analysis into violence, but most drew upon non-participatory and short visits in the field, mostly using interviews, which resulted in examination of structural violence but neglected direct and concrete acts of violence. For this reason, Brambilla and Jones (2020) suggest that border and migration research will benefit from ethnography. Ethnographic methods offer useful fieldwork tools to better explore the relationship between borders and diverse

forms of violence, as embedded in the local context (Brambilla & Jones, 2020; Vogt, 2018). What follows is an account of the ethnographic methods used in this research, and reflections on their value.

5.3.1: Fieldwork site as a researcher's choice?

Vogt (2018) raises important questions when she asks where, exactly, is 'there' in the field when we are talking about ethnographic sites of migration, given that these are often fluid and involve transient populations? I use this question as the lens for reflections on (not) choosing and accessing my fieldwork site. Due to the quickly evolving migration movements and its violent stoppage, leading to the perpetual re-direction of the routes, I struggled to choose the fieldwork place. When choosing a research location, I excluded sea routes leading to Greece, although the existing studies indicated that migrants and activists established numerous makeshift camps there, which were perpetually illegalised by numerous state rules – the topic I was initially interested to research[10]. I did so due to the concerns about the problem of over-research in Greece, where extensive portrayals of 'refugee flows' were entwined in the 'flow of various researchers', which could restrict my access or result in a lack of critical attention to struggles of migrants in other locations (Cabot, 2019; Sukarieh & Tannock, 2013).

In contrast, I found that little was known about migration in Serbia, which was the second largest transit for migrants at EU borders. Besides the research lacunae, my previous research in refugee camps in Serbia and the consequent knowledge of migratory routes here, together my Slavic background, were all conducive to identifying Serbia as a promising fieldwork site. However, since the migration patterns were perpetually evolving, and academic studies were deficient in understanding these changes, I decided to leave for a one-month pilot study in Serbia during my first year of PhD, when I learnt that the makeshift camps were growing in this location. It was this that motivated a future eight-months of fieldwork I then negotiated there, beginning in May 2018. To my surprise, when I returned to Serbia, I found the camps almost empty. 'Everybody left for Bosnia because there is new game now. Here, border is closed (because of) too much (police) beatings. I go to Bosnia tonight', Badih told me, a young Afghani man, who was preparing for the further journey with his friends.

As Hage (2005) points out, in many ways, ethnography is not a matter of choice but a function of one's degree of immersion. I travelled by bus from Belgrade to Bosnia, to follow the migratory routes there. When I arrived in Sarajevo, my previous cooperation with activists gave me the opportunity to become immediately involved in food distribution for migrants arriving in the city from Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece, Turkey and other locations, where they had been previously stranded. I was observing for a week the migrants trying to enter overcrowded public transports heading to the northern towns Bihać or

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[10] I discuss the rationale for changing the research focus later on, Ibid, p 61.

Kladuša, from where their new games were going to begin. I was informed that there was only little aid for migrants in Kladuša and offered to join activists there as a long-term volunteer and a researcher. I wished to be committed to the new surprises that, although they caught me off-guard, had a potential to result in fruitful data collection, as commonly happens in ethnography (Gille, 2001). I left to Kladuša, which based on the unexpected chain of situations, reaching beyond my pre-fieldwork pilot assessment, became my research site for the following eight months. As Bliesemann de Guevara and Kostić (2017) point out, messiness and uncertainty are not encouraged as outcomes of policy-relevant research. Yet messy and uncertain practices are part of doing fieldwork (Bøås & Bliesemann de Guevara, 2020). Interestingly, my messy entry to the field proved useful to learn about how border violence had triggered secondary migration movements and develop my relations and cooperation with migrants bounded in this messiness, leading me to Kladuša.

5.3.2: Militant research and volunteering in refugee camps in Velika Kladuša.

Using volunteering in refugee camps as an ethnographic research choice was inspired by the ideas of militant research, which places at the centre problems of a community, with the objective to both understand and confront them (King & Learmonth, 2015; Stringer, 1996). Militant research is premised on intensive and reflexive research collaboration with our participants, in which researchers assume the role of active political practitioners to try to make our work relevant to those who we study (Apoifis, 2016; Juris, 2007). In practice, as Graeber (2009) argues, militant research means that a researcher is involved in direct actions in her ethnographic field, which is a common approach used in (Women) Social Movement studies (Maeckelbergh, 2009; Voss, 1996; Zald & Ash, 1966).

This methodological approach also fits well in violence research with migrants due to its political and ethical commitments to participants, who strive for acute transformation of their living and travelling spaces that expose them to harms (Jordan & Moser, 2020; Juris, 2007). Some scholars (Albahari, 2015; Esin & Lounasmaa, 2020; Iliadou, 2019; Isakjee et al., 2020; Jordan & Moser, 2020; Kasparek & Speer, 2013; Mould, 2017; Vogt, 2018) used volunteering with migrants to examine violence and borders. However, it seems that despite its benefits, long-term volunteering is not commonly utilised as a research method due its unpaid, time-consuming and physically and physiologically exhausting nature. All these are issues even more difficult to navigate in an increasingly neoliberal academic outlook and fast operating academic context, limiting physical or social access to the field (Bliesemann de Guevara & Kostić, 2017; Routledge & Derickson, 2015). However, my monthly doctoral stiped, one year of a fieldwork period, no caring responsibilities and good health enabled me to become a long-term volunteer-researcher.

It is important to note that I had been previously involved in volunteering for refugees in Serbia and the U.K, and for people with disabilities in the Czech Republic and Ukraine, for years before entering my doctoral programme. In doing so, I wished to question the political categorisation and social marginalisation of certain groups of populations, and particularly in the post-Communist background, which I come from. I grew up in a slow process of political and social rehabilitation after the totalitarian regime in the Czech Republic and political violence and the questions of migration were inherent in my family history. Yet, the Czech Republic is one of the most reluctant countries to sympathise with the current migration to Europe. As a Czech who is simultaneously the EU member enjoying free movement and political freedom, this paradox was bothering me and resulted in my interest in the topic. I did not wish to only hear through interviews about migration and violence in their abstract forms. Instead, I wanted to see and participate in a refugee community and politically act. I believe that direct actions are more likely to have an impact on transformation of such crucial issues such as border violence, at least on the micro level while supporting people in the camps. Hence, my research interest and methodologies were inevitably affected by my family history and political and social backgrounds. I thus agree with Lumsden (2013, p 3) who argues that 'you are what you research', and I would also add, 'and how you research it'.

I was volunteering and using activism for eight months in Kladuša, with a two weeks break in September and four days in December, which enabled me to conduct intensive fieldwork with daily access into the life at the borders, its patterns and transformation across the four seasons of the year. The majority of the fieldwork was conducted in the makeshift Trnovi camp (see Figure 4), as well as numerous abandoned houses around the town, where smaller groups of migrants lived. I was cooperating with two small activist groups, consisting of local and international unpaid volunteers.

Figure 4   Trnovi camp in the summer (phot by Aliah, Iraq[11]).

Volunteering was mostly guided by the emergency needs of migrants and the challenges of navigating permissions and restrictions to provide aid by the local authorities. After my arrival in the spring, myself and three other volunteers focused on a mobile shower and clothes exchange provision nearby the camp, run from two regular washing machines in an old house where we lived. My days started around seven in the morning in the showers, where around seventy people per day could wash themselves, shave, exchange their dirty clothes for clean ones, as well as seek medical aid, rest and socialise. From late afternoon we cleaned the showers and drove dirty towels and clothes back to the house to wash them, stopping on the way at squats to deliver drinking water. On other days, I was helping a group of local war veterans to distribute food in a local restaurant. During the evening, we returned to the camp to distribute clothes, tents and blankets to dozens of newly arriving people, (re-)building shelters, organising activities for children, or teaching English. The autumn brought the rainy season and the winter snow, with temperatures reaching $-20°C$, which **also meant new challenges and needs, such as the provision of warm clothes and wood for fires to prevent hypothermia.**

I was aware of the potential research pitfalls that could result from my dual role of a volunteer and a researcher, which could slip into what Cabot (2019) criticises as ambulance chasing, being immersed

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[11] Published with the consent of the author of the photograph.

into aid and omitting research duties. A number of steps were taken to prevent this. Firstly, I ensured that besides living in the field for an extensive period, I would also 'hang out' with migrants and local communities, after my volunteering finished, which Rodgers (2004, p 48) identifies as intensive, informal and interpersonal interactions research. Secondly, to understand the local context in which border violence took place, I regularly talked with the local volunteers and residents about their histories and opinions on the migratory situations. Importantly, I was almost every night spending time in the camp. I used this time to establish a rapport with migrants and learn about what had preceded their arrivals in Bosnia, their plans for the games, the day-to-day practices, challenges at borders, and hopes for their future. Finally, I was learning Arabic with my participants to develop my conversation skills in their language and to further my understanding of their interpretations of violence.

Volunteering gave me a unique opportunity to daily observe and participate in both mundane practices, rituals, relations in camps as well as observe daily returns of injured people after their cross-border journeys. I was daily engaging in informal conversations, especially with migrants who were aware of my role as a researcher, to understand their encounters and interpretations of various daily situations emerging at the borders, without audio recording them. Instead, I was audio-recording myself or writing down bullet points on my phone to capture major points after conversations, as well as my daily observations. I was then transcribing these in further details together with my reflections into my laptop research diary during the nights. After few months of intensive fieldwork, I was recording my research diary on a weekly basis.

Using volunteering as an ethnographic method was analytically demanding and physically exhausting particularly the first few months. To jot down, reflect on, and incorporate so many situations in my research diary was often challenging, but I always managed to find a few minutes on the side of my volunteering duties during the day and then dedicate 30-60 min in the night to write this up more fully. When the voluntary work grew, the limited living space I had became a new challenge. After weeks of sharing a bed with another volunteer, I moved to my car, parked in the garden, where I slept for three months. This allowed me to stay close to the camp, while simultaneously creating privacy for myself and writing up my research data in the night. It is a measure of the conditions in which I was working that my car actually provided the bigger sleep space. It was also more secure, since I could lock the door, and it offered much more reassuring accommodation than the volunteer house, with its insecure doors and missing windows. However, when the winter started approaching, myself and another volunteer, Rosalinde[12], decided to rent a flat. In doing so, we wanted to live in a warmer environment

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[12] All participants' names have been changed to protect their anonymity, which is discussed in greater detail later on in Chapter 5, Ibid, p 70-71.

and create more space where we could invite my closest participants for dinner and offer a couch if they had nowhere else to stay, which was happening almost on a daily basis. This brought a new dynamic to my research, when I was in much closer contact with my closest participants, which resulted in our more transparent relations and collaboration.

Although Jordan and Moser (2020) assert that volunteering offers a reciprocal engagement with research subjects, I argue that volunteering itself does not address reciprocity in research knowledge production. When using direct solidarity actions, researchers need to further question how the knowledge produced through research could be of use to migrants and their social struggles, beyond re-inscribing their academic interests (Routledge & Derickson, 2015). Indeed, Sukarieh and Tannock (2013) argue that a common issue in migration research is that participants have no say in what is being studied about them, which may result in a lack of relevance on the ground as well as missing a research information on violence in participants' own understandings. In line with this, I noticed that participant's illegal and makeshift living places mattered less to them than my research questions assumed, and that the most pressing issue identified by my participants were the police attacks and push-backs from Croatia to Bosnia. I came to realise that the attacks together with other forms of violence significantly shaped their daily life at the borders; themes large neglected in research and which I wanted to explore further.

5.3.3: Border violence report collection.

Placing the focus on border violence, however, posed new methodological and ethical questions. I was meeting daily migrants after their push-backs, as they approached me and other volunteers in the camp to communicate their experiences of verbal and physical attacks. Importantly, no organisation was present to record evidence of either individual cases of direct violence or the scale of this violence. Migrants commonly said during our conversations that 'no one knowing about attacks meant violence to continue', which turned out to be true, when I observed the increasing brutality and scale of border attacks across a few weeks. This made me re-think my research methodologies and ethics.

Scheper-Hughes (1995) argues that when a researcher observes violence at close quarter, returns to a safe environment and closes the findings in academia, she collaborates with the relations of power and silence that allow destruction in the field to continue. Yet scholars commonly avoid any political stand on the working out of violent events due to a fear of abandoning scientific objectivity and dangerous immersion in the emotional worlds of our participants (Woon, 2013). However, Jamar and Chappuis (2016) argue that it is absurd to believe that a researcher does not bring his own normative and political predilections into the research. Also, when a researcher observes violence in the field,

she also recognises the possibilities for changing such realities (Vrasti, 2008). Not to speak out about these abuses or remain detached is ethically impossible (Lundy & Mcgovern, 2006), and can lead to the researcher's lack of personal control and even trauma in or after the fieldwork (Jamar & Chappuis, 2016). Therefore, researchers need to ask themselves whether they should turn a blind eye to abusive and predatory behaviour when conducting research (Goodhand, 2000). To this end, numerous scholars (Bird et al., 2019; Brambilla & Jones, 2020; Dhesi et al., 2015; Frank, 2019; Isakjee et al., 2020; Jamar, 2017; Kasparek & Speer, 2013; King & Learmonth, 2015) call for research practices that are in line with the militant research approach; that is, to document violence and its effects, when making their knowledge accessible to policy makers, practitioners, civil society actors, and ordinary people.

Drawing upon this, I further used reports compiling instances of violent push-backs when conducting semi-structured interviews with migrants. The interviews proved useful to capture information about direct violence, which I could not otherwise collect via observations due to the unexpectable, clandestine and dangerous nature of violent push-backs. I firstly developed the standardised interview framework, based on the previous examples of border violence monitoring by activists and NGOs[13], and further incorporated other volunteers' and migrants' suggestions to the reporting format. I was also discussing the interview format with a medical organisation and independent lawyers, with previous experiences of border violence monitoring. As my research progressed, I also attended a one-day training session on border violence monitoring organised by the Hungarian Helsinki Committee. The semi-structured format of my interviews allowed me to ask specific questions that captured evidence about push-backs, such as dates, times, geo-locations, descriptions of officers and their weapons used, photos of injuries and caused damage, medical reports (see Figure 5), while at the same time giving migrants a chance to explore in-depth issues that they felt were important in their own narratives. These key points extracted from the interviews and evidence material were used for activist purposes, while the whole interview narratives were together with informal conversations and participant observations analysed and used for the purpose of this thesis.

The interviews were conducted either in English, or in the language that participants felt comfortable to communicate in[14] and translated to English by their friends or other camp inhabitants, due to having no possibility to cooperate with professional translators. The interviews were mostly conducted in a café, participants' shelters, nearby the mobile shower services or other calm places accessible to me

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[13] I was inspired by the reports about border violence compiled by No Name Kitchen Serbia, Rigardu, Fresh Response and Hungarian Helsinki Committee along the Serbian-Croatian and Serbian-Hungarian borders.
[14] All languages in which the interviews were conducted with the help of translators are listed in Appendix, Table 1, Ibid, p 194.

and my participants. In total, I conducted 68 formal, recorded interviews about violent push-backs, which ranged between 15 to 90 minutes in length.
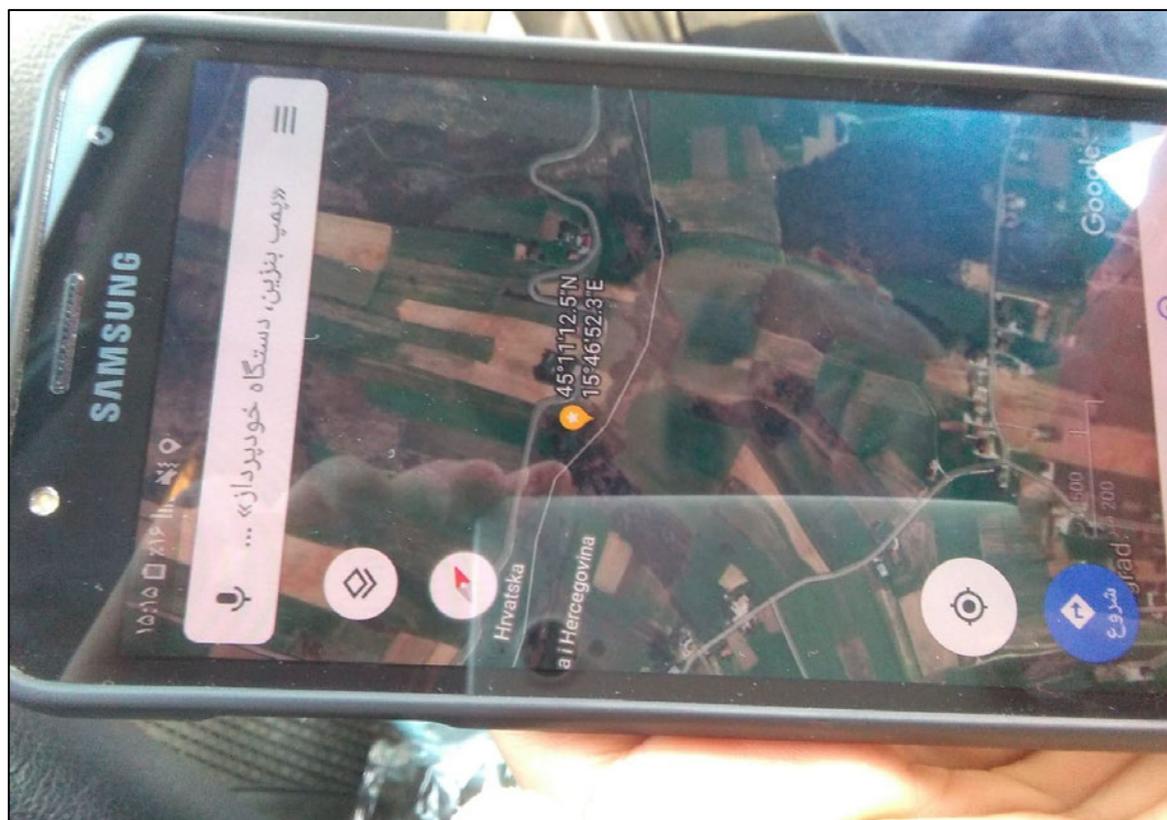
Figure 5   Allocating the location of push-back (photo by author).

The dissemination of the data, for both activist and academic purposes, was discussed with the migrant community in the camp, when following their proposals about what was going to happen with the data. However, this was re-negotiated with each participant individually before the interviews started, besides obtaining consent to use the data for academic purposes. As the result of this collective process and consent of each individual participating in the interview, I transcribed all interviews into a word document and identified extracts proving the evidence of the attack, for writing monthly 'violence reports'. These reports served as practical guidelines to humanitarian organisations[15] and competent authorities[16]. By doing so, I wished to bring attention to migrants' experiences, ideas, and wishes for change beyond an academic audience.

When collecting the data for both activist and academic purposes, I was learning about detailed violent strategies and migrants' understanding of it, yet I was daily reflecting on both mine and my

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[15] MSF, IOM, Amnesty International, UNHCR.
[16] Croatian Ombudswoman for Human Rights, Members of the European Commission and the European Parliament, European Council on Refugees and Exiles, LIBE committees, FRONTEX, and lawyers opening litigation cases in the European Court of Human Rights.

participant's positionalities to spot biases throughout the research process. To reflect on these positionalities, the following section will outline the recruitment of my participants and in detail discuss our cooperation.

5.3.4: Participant selection and collaboration: European female researching violence with Arab male participants.

To examine quotidian dimensions of violence and also open up its subjective dimensions for the migrants based on their gender and race, the research focused predominantly on young adult (18-40) able-bodied men, stranded in Bosnia, whom I observed to be the major group exposed to border violence. Nevertheless, among my interviewed participants were also an elderly individual and two men with physical disabilities, who despite their visible vulnerabilities were also subjected to diverse forms of violence. I was also informally approached by several unaccompanied minors in the camp who wished to tell me about their accounts of border violence. While no people younger than 18 years old were formally interviewed for the purpose of this thesis, their accounts are considered here based on our informal communication in the camps, while navigating ethical considerations specific to research with minors, which I return to discuss later on[17]. To examine further the argument about border violence as dependent on the construction of gender, race and other social categories, I also conducted interviews with 8 women. My participants were originally from the Middle East, Asia and Northern Africa[18].

Interviewees were selected on the basis of circumstance and snowball sampling techniques that allowed flexible recruitment within the context of unpredictable violent incidents and participant's availability (Cohen & Arieli, 2011). In practice, migrants approached me or other volunteers when they returned from the border following push back, and while using our services in the camp they would often tell us about the violence perpetrated against them. Firstly, our group ensured medical care for them and then, if appropriate, asked if they would like to be interviewed for the purposes of legal and public advocacy and academic purposes. The objectives of the 'violence reports' described above were explained consistently to the whole community of migrants in the camps. This helped to create a snowball effect, when people in the camp were passing the option to record violent incidents to others, who later approached me or other volunteers voluntarily.

A second line of investigation involved participant observation and informal conversations in the camp and with a particular focus on a group of twelve young men (18-27) from Syria. I first met them after

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[17] Ibid, Chapter 5, p 69-70.
[18] For more information about nationalities, age, sex, interview language, and other migrants involved in the push-back together with the interviewed, see Appendix, Table 1, Ibid, p 194.

they had been attacked by Croatian border patrols and participated in the interviews for border violence reporting and my research. One of them, Rashid[19], had broken ribs as the result of the attack. I was driving Rashid to a hospital for several hours and was frustrated by my inability to understand his pain due to my limited Arabic and his inability to speak English. Over the next few days, I kept visiting Rashid to see whether he was recovering, and his friends, who could speak English, invited me for a dinner to their *heima*. Rashid asked me whether I wanted to teach him and his friends English in return for them teaching me Arabic. After a few weeks of our language classes and dinners, I explained to them in more detail the purpose of my stay in Bosnia as a student researcher, and asked them if they would like to collaborate in my research, and they agreed. Our daily interactions continued for six months.

While Reedy and King (2019) argue that an activist approach aids the researcher in coping with emotionally difficult situations due to collaboration in activist communities, in my experience support and reflections on events at the borders did not come only from activists but from the community as a whole. Since most volunteers stayed in the field for only a few weeks or months, my long-standing connections in the field was with my closest participants. My participants were often helping us in aid provision and informing me and other volunteers about push-backs. I appreciated my participant's presence not only for my research and mutual support but also for my safety, as similarly encountered by Vogt (2018) at the U.S.-Mexico border. While migration research commonly refers to migrants' vulnerabilities and impossibility of avoiding violence, I found this narrow portrayal to be false and problematic as it replicates colonial logics of apartheid and marginalization. Certainly, it was challenging for migrants to deal with border violence. However, I found my participants, predominantly men coming from war zones, as better skilled at navigating violent fields due to their previous experiences than me. For instance, my participants were able to stop regular inter-communal fights in the camps and to ensure mine and other volunteers' safety by intervening in the fights and communicating peacefully in their mother tongue.

Importantly, I often reflected on my research process through discussions with the participants, which is a fundamental aspect in ethnographic practice (Berry, 2011), yet mostly described as solely researchers' practice. These discussions also reflected on those processes in daily life at borders that were crucial to identify and to understand diverse positionalities of privilege and power (Manning, 2018), including those between researcher and participants.

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[19] All participants' names have been changed to protect their anonymity, see more information in Chapter 5, Ibid, p 70-71.

This latter point is important because despite my attempts to increase reciprocity between me and my participants through volunteering, our relations were shot through with insurmountable power asymmetries. My positionality as female, white, non-Muslim, and an EU citizen presented power differences between me and my participants that affected the way they construed and interacted with me. My participants were all Sunni Muslims, following everyday traditions of Islam. Most of them had had restricted interactions with women in Syria, except female family relatives. They originated from rural Syrian towns, where the local population rejected the regime of Bashar al-Assad and wished to remain living a traditional patriarchal Muslim life without governmental interventions. All lost some relatives in the Syrian Civil War; some had family members in prison or had been recruited to the Syrian Arab Armed Forces against their will.

Our diverse positionalities were often reflected during our interactions but were observable particularly when we first met. The first day, a few men, including Tahir, refused to talk to me or even make eye contact due to my being a foreign woman. However, when they found out I that I had transported Rashid to a hospital and attempted to report the attack against them at the border zone, they hosted me in their tent and offered me a chai, but with reluctance. A few months later, Tahir explained this initial hesitation:

> Tahir: It is *haram* (forbidden in Arabic) to look into eyes of a woman. No touch woman! (Foreign) woman should not sit with men and talk.
>
> Me: But Tahir, you are looking to my eyes now. And I sit with you and talk with you every night. This is not haram?
>
> Tahir: Before it was. Now, you are my sister, so no haram. I can sit with you and talk because I love you as my sister. Even if I hug you, it is not haram because I have no haram thoughts about you. Now, I know that you are good because you help me.

The above narrative shows that our daily co-existence in the camp could positively impact mine and my participants' gender and cultural performativity. As Butler (2004) points out, the concept of gender and cultural performativity are socially constructed and not definitive, when Herbert (2000) adds that gender and culture are challenged and spatially inscribed in daily processes. Thus, positionality barriers between me and my participants were mitigated when I was daily present in the camp for eight months, trying to communicate in my participants' language, and teaching each other about our backgrounds. These resulted in closer research participation even with the men, who came from monocultural backgrounds with traditional conceptions of gender relations.

However, my methodological approach did not totally remove the differences emerging from our diverse backgrounds. Particularly, me being an EU citizen and able to enter the borders to Bosnia and leave at any moment without risking my life was in sharp contrast to the positionality of my participants, and this difference between us was ever present. Also Irwin (2006) argues that a researcher's ability to leave the field poses the major ethical questions of unequal research relations. Indeed, while the roles of an aid provider and a friend were fluid, the role of a displaced person was solid. Consequently, the distance did not collapse, and I could never fully enter my participants' violent realities and their community due to our different social and political locations despite direct actions and developed relations in the field, which highlights the major limit of my research knowledge about border violence.

Moving beyond collaboration with my closest participants, I found establishing research relations with trust and legitimacy a challenging task in the makeshift camps, which due to their open space attract journalists, researchers, smugglers, police, tourists and many unidentified visitors, leaving question marks about their intentions. Long-term volunteering mostly proved a useful way to overcome being considered as suspicion and to establish trust. However, once I was asked by a young Iraqi boy: 'Are you a smuggler? Some people think you are smuggler because you live here for long time and speak Arabic with people'. For the same reason, I was also considered by an older man to be a spy working for the Syrian Government. This shows that being daily present in the field as a volunteer/researcher and learning insiders' language is only a partial answer to conduct methodologically and ethically sound research. This methodological approach can paradoxically create new suspicious assumptions about a researcher and thus, the role to be trusted must be daily re-negotiated individually with participants.

5.4: Thematic data analysis.

This fieldwork produced a unique and, I would argue, significant data set. The 68 interviews were transcribed verbatim from the audio records. My data also included 137 typed pages of observation and conversations taken from my research diary. To identify, organise and analyse this data this research drew upon thematic analysis (Nowell et al., 2017). The data was analysed both during and after the fieldwork.

During the fieldwork, the data analysis concerned only the interview-data analysis in a Word document. I transcribed all formal and recorded interviews each month to a Word document for the purpose of writing policy-oriented 'violence reports'. This proved useful for my thesis because I was inductively selecting themes and generating basic codes within this set of data on direct violence. This means that I was identifying varied themes across line-by-line interviews, focused on direct forms of

violence (theme 1), such as strategies of direct violence, its impact on migrants' health, weapons used by police, verbal threats, and destructions and robberies of migrants' private possessions. I also identified broader/structural violence (theme 2) at this stage when coding administrative procedures that migrants said to experience at police stations.

After the fieldwork, the data analysis focused on all cross-material data set from the 8 months of fieldwork, when questioning the complex forms of violence identified by migrants and how these impacted their day-to-day life. I used the qualitative data analysis software NVivo, which allowed me to more easily navigate finding insights in unstructured data. Firstly, I identified varied themes across line-by-line field notes and interviews concerning border violence and everyday life. While asking the questions, 'What are the most crucial and the most repetitive daily events and actions by my participants in the camps and at the borders?', 'How do my participants interpret and understand their actions and events in their everyday life?', and 'Which individual characteristics as well as external factors influence such events and actions, particularly those of violence?'. As the result of the thematic analysis, six major themes were generated: masculinity and race, police attacks, broader inequalities, violence in the everyday, Europe-Balkans dynamics. Then, I identified important sections of the text within each theme and attached codes to them, to identify interesting aspects of each theme and the patterns that underlie them (Nowell et al., 2017). The coding resulted in three levels, which was particularly used in the theme of the 'violence in the everyday', where hierarchical coding proved useful to capture diverse layers of the men's transformation of the everyday as the result of border violence (self-perception, relations with others, daily routines).

After completing the data coding in the NVivo software, I used the codes and their narratives to write four data analysis pieces (each 8000 words long), each discussing one of the major themes together with my personal memos and reflections. Emerson Fretz and Shaw (1995) call this process 'integrative memos writing', and argue that the purpose is to re-experience, rethink and gain new insights into the ethnographic data as well as to reflect on how a researcher understood what she saw within the data and in which order. This stage of writing encompassed the first attempt to structure and analyse the data by creating a cohesive narrative capturing detailed patterns identified within codes, with contexts and backgrounds. The final stage focused on developing theoretical prepositions; drawing the link between my data and existing theory.

5.5: Ethical questions and do (no) harm in violence research.

This fieldwork and collection of data was guided by a number of ethical considerations. Firstly, I will outline how I obtained consent from my participants with respect to the border research settings in a migration context, to possible fault expectations and to young age. Whilst conducting research on

violence, I further identified two ethical concerns – anonymity and do no harm - which presented the major disparity between ticking the boxes of ethical approval before the fieldwork and then navigating its problematic consequences while collecting the data. These are discussed in the following section.

5.5.1: Obtaining consent.

This study has been informed by the British Sociological Association's ethical guidelines and Aston University's Ethics guidelines. I had obtained ethical approval from the Aston Ethics Committee in April 2018 (before entering the field). I re-submitted the ethical approval again in June 2018 when I incorporated interviews about violent push-backs to my study, which was also approved. I obtained oral consent from all the interviewees, my closest participants, as well as people, whose conversations and comments were incorporated to my research diary. I considered written consent inappropriate in the context of the migratory routes I was intending to explore (Langmann & Pick, 2014). Participants said they had had to repeatedly sign forms that had undermined their rights and mobility; when being forcibly moved from makeshift camps to detention centres, apprehended in border zones, or arrested in police stations during the games. Consequently, migrants were suspicious of signing official-looking documents, and for this reason it was avoided. Instead, I dedicated considerable time to establish dialogue and trust with the participants in the ways detailed above and discussed with them at length my research in order to provide the basis for them to provide informed consent orally. Consent was, however, re-negotiated in different phases of my research, when my closest participants were actively involved in defining research questions, formatting the interviews, reflecting on the data, and decision-making about dissemination of the data for public advocacy purposes.

As noted, children travelling with adults and (unaccompanied) minors were not the focus of my research yet their voices appear in my data as they matter in making sense of border violence and diverse groups of migrants it targets. Firstly, violence against a few children is discussed in this thesis while using data collected during the interviews with their parents, who gave me oral consent to do so. Secondly, I met several young males between 14 and 17 years old who wished to tell me during our informal conversations about their experiences of violence. While researchers usually use adult gatekeepers to obtain their consent from minors and include their voices to study (Hopkins & Bell, 2008), these young people were travelling without parents and adult family members and no formal services with social workers were available in Kladuša. This made the obtaining of parental/adult gatekeeper consent impossible. They also identified themselves as adult men based on their cultural backgrounds and the past violent experiences. Indeed, many showed the cognitive and emotional capabilities to decide to talk about their push-backs, navigating difficult life in the camps, and indicating independence on their journeys. This goes against conventional ideas of how minors epitomise

increased vulnerability and lack agency. As Chase et al. (2020) argue, the category '(unaccompanied) minor' is dependent on geographical and legal contexts, which are all time and space contingent. Since I did not wish to ignore or silence the young people's voices, yet I also wanted to respect European academic guidelines around the ethics of informed consent, I do include their testimonies gathered through our informal conversations in the camps, even though they were not interviewed.

As another important ethical concern related to obtaining voluntary informed consent, I identified potential unrealistic expectations from the research project with all participants when conducting interviews about push-backs. To address this, I explained before each interview the aims of the research with my participants to ensure they understood the possible implications of reporting violent incidents and to avoid them having false expectations and hopes. Indeed, the danger of unrealistic expectations is great particularly in situations of widespread distress and only limited external means of support (Goodhand, 2000). Before the beginning of the interview, some participants contested that they hoped to use their recorded testimony of violence to access legal transit to their destination and/or obtain asylum in the EU. I then explained clearly (and apologetically) that the research project could not achieve this, clarified the aims of the interview. As a result, a few people felt an interview would not be useful and thus decided not to proceed. For the remainder who accepted, I orally acknowledged before each interview that they were free to pause the interview or withdraw at any time with no need to specify the reason. As pointed out to previously, I used the help of other migrants to translate the interviews with people who had no or limited knowledge of the English language, to avoid involuntary consent and prevent misunderstanding of the research objectives, process, and dissemination.

5.5.2: Anonymity and do (no) harm.

Ensuring participants' anonymity is crucial in violent fields, to not only protect their privacy and dignity, but also to minimise the potential forms of harm (Knott, 2019). A number of steps were taken to do so. Firstly, all information about the individuals participating in the research process has been anonymised; all names and identifiable information have been changed. Secondly, all collected data (e.g. audio/digital files, notes, and research diary) were stored securely on my password protected computer. I transcribed all interview audio files to word documents, stored in my laptop, when all paper version of interview notes was destroyed, and the audio files were stored securely online and deleted from my laptop. Finally, when disseminating any data publicly on websites and social media to raise the awareness about border violence, all names and identifiable features have been also changed. However, medialisation of the migrants' practices and places along the borders, where my participants temporarily lived, had a negative impact on their privacy in the camps.

On the one hand, the public sharing of violent narratives has impact on social transformation (Esin & Lounasmaa, 2020), and facilitates democratic discourse (Persson, 2019). On the other hand, Knott (2019) argues that when a researcher decides to publicly disseminate research data in a conflict area, it is imperative to think about the potential for harm to research participants, the researcher herself, and the wider context, by what material is published. However, the question is whether researchers are able to predict all potential impacts of public dissemination in violent fields, which, as Knott (2019) argues, are quickly evolving. While from the wider context, the media strategy had a positive impact on state authorities' decisions to acknowledge border violence and in some cases investigate the cases, it had indirect negative effects on my participants' privacy, although no one was identified within the data that I disseminated.

The first published information about violent push-backs took place in The Guardian newspaper, followed by an influx of media, which significantly harmed the social context where my participants lived in. While professional journalism is crucial to explore what images and stories can tell the public and social scientists about more ambiguous aspects of life at borders (Langmann & Pick, 2014), practices of many omitted any collaboration with migrants. Journalists were often stepping into private lives of people in the camps, with no consent and empathy, taking images of peoples' faces and injuries from the most dramatic angles, and after a few hours disappearing, as also observed in Serbian camps (Augustová, 2020). Participants wished and consented to publish the materials in which they were anonymised, but they had not consented to the greater visibility and the politicisation of themselves and their living spaces afterwards, which I had unconsciously triggered when engaging with media.

On the one hand, drawing on the militant research significantly impacted my own research practice as a politically committed and trying to 'do good for my participants' in the field. However, I also found that to do help is often on the edge to do harm in violence research because violent fields are constantly changing and the fact that the participants have no legal protection and do not live in private and protected places. Thus, although using ethnographic methods with direct political actions was identified as the most suitable research tool at the borders, as discussed throughout the methodology chapters here, I identified numerous ethical pitfalls in these methods, besides the analytically, psychologically and physically demanding nature of being daily present in the refugee camp. Reflections on these, however, stimulate discussions on research methodology and ethics when calling for more engaged academic knowledge with participants and advocating for transparent and equal research, beyond ticking boxes of ethical approval.

5.6: Conclusion.

This chapter detailed the methodology that was used for this study exploring border violence against migrant Arab Muslim men, as daily experienced and interpreted by them. This objective and seeking to understand violence through the theoretical lens of the everyday (Scheper-Hughes, 1992) influenced the adoption of a qualitative methodological approach. This study particularly drew upon ethnographic methods and ideas of militant research, conducted in my role as a volunteer for eight months and using daily participant observations and semi-structured interviews with migrants to compile reports on violent push-backs.

I began this chapter by posing the question: 'Where is the fieldwork place?', which enabled me to reflect on how migratory pathways as fieldwork places are constantly on the move, as those crossing them. While moving from the primary selected field – Serbia – to the newly emerging camps in Bosnia was an inherently messy process, following these fast changes allowed me to immerse myself into the field on the move, as organised by violence and solidary responses to it, and develop positive and trusted bonds with my participants. Thus, ethnographic methods allowed me to enter and engage with the field and the people there under difficult to navigate and perpetually evolving conditions.

The focal part of this chapter then reflected on methodological choices guided by ethnography and militant research, as well as my personal values. These choices presented a number of methodological and ethical challenges, particularly the one of inherent power inequalities between me and my participants and navigating the dual role of a volunteer and a researcher. However, the chosen methods proved to be the most suitable to understand violence as everyday and the reflections on them contributed to the calls for more politically and ethically committed research practice (Bird et al., 2019; Cabot, 2019; Jamar, 2017; Jordan & Moser, 2020; Juris, 2007; King & Learmonth, 2015; Scheper-Hughes, 1995; Vrasti, 2008). While daily volunteering in makeshift camps proved an intensive and often exhausting fieldwork, this allowed me to daily observe violence as a process and to question how it organises the everyday at the border across the four seasons of the year, which is a difficult task with the increasingly fast operation in academia.

The triangulation of the participant observations with border violence reports collection via semi-structured interviews with the migrants then enhanced my knowledge on direct violence. The interviews allowed me to encounter detailed strategies of the police's crude attacks, which I could not directly observe due to the clandestine and dangerous nature of police operations. Thus, using the two sets of data from participant observations and interviews encompassed violence as a comprehensive everyday phenomenon, ranging from structural forms of violence in the camps to direct police attacks against migrant men at borders, as bounded in the local context of the Bosnian-Croatian margins. This

research approach, I believe, resulted in a significant and novel data set created under demanding conditions.

The final section laid out the range of ethical concerns that rose before and while conducting the research. Despite various precautions to address potential ethical issues before setting off for the fieldwork, the borders scored with violence are constantly evolving fields, where academic ethics forms are not enough to address numerous ethical questions. I argue that it was rather the daily reflexive thinking and discussions within the whole camp community, including the migrants, which alerted me to ethical pitfalls and led to me continually developing the ways to address them. To this end, like Chase et al. (2020), I advocate that research ethics should cease being viewed solely as an institutionalised, tick box process within academia but as a process that involves messiness and failures, as also Bøås and Bliesemann de Guevara (2020) argue. For this reason, I suggest questioning what equal research is and transparently reflect on it as researchers, friends and public advocates of our participants, who are living with us in the field and are impacted by our actions. This proves useful to conduct our research according to ethical practices, which I hoped to demonstrate in this chapter.

Chapter 6: The role of the historical Balkan-Europe dichotomy in violence against migrants at Bosnian-Croatian borders.

6.1: Introduction.

This chapter uses fieldwork data to examine present-day migration and violence along the Bosnian-Croatian border, and especially the border town Kladuša, where the research was conducted. While this border point is commonly assumed to be just another transitory point along the Balkan Route, it has been historically scored with violent struggles for Europeanisation between Croatia and Bosnia throughout the recent war conflicts and remains stranded in a problematic dichotomy of the Europe-Balkans margins (Razsa & Lindstrom, 2004; Trakilović, 2020). Whilst this historic-political context impacts migration policies here (Bird et al., 2020), it remains unclear whether and how it also shapes direct and concrete acts of violence against migrants along the EU's borders, such as Kladuša. In line with this, this chapter aims to answer, 'to what extent does the local context of the Bosnian-Croatian border organise migrant's experiences of violence'?

It answers this question, firstly, by presenting the data collected at the time of my arrival in Sarajevo and the early research in Kladuša. I specifically discuss how the migratory passages across SEE re-routed to Bosnia, while questioning how this transformation had been managed by migrants' previous experiences of border violence along the whole region marking the so called 'Balkan Route'. I outline this broader SEE context as vital to understand before moving into the discussion of how the passage across Bosnia, where violence soon occurred, was experienced and narrated by those living and migrating through Kladuša.

It then moves onto the exploration of the migrants' movement across the Bosnian-Croatian borders onwards and their meaning makings of this passage, as shaped by their new experiences of border violence as well as solidarities here. Migrants' understandings of the region are compared with other actors' interpretations of these passages, such as the local population, volunteers, but also policy makers, humanitarian agencies and the media. The purpose of this comparison is to develop analysis of how the Bosnian-Croatian border has been conventionally narrated from diverse European perspectives, as rooted in discriminatory history, and how these narratives then organised violence against those trying to cross this border.

Building upon this, the chapter re-thinks the EUro-centred conventional understanding of what Balkans and Europe mean by focusing on the narratives of migration and violence told from Kladuša. The attention is paid to personal histories of the local population and the present experiences of migrants. I specifically question how these narratives matter in the everyday life in this small border

town scored with solidarities, when coping with violence from the other side of the border – Croatia. By doing so, the analysis adds another layer for understanding how the local context influences migrants' experiences of violence at the border, yet, it simultaneously triggers solidarities that stands against such violence.

The final part looks at the everyday life at the Bosnian-Croatian border from a broader time scheme - eight months observations - when pointing out the major transformations in the local responses towards the migrants. These will be placed into the broader context of what Bosnia, similarly to other former Yugoslav countries, aspires to be in relation to its place in Europe and the EU particularly, and how this impacted the local responses towards migrants and their daily experiences of violence in Kladuša. By doing so, this chapter will bring the local developments at the border into the perspective of the EU's broader security approach in SEE to highlight the empirical implication of this micro context to macro violent border patterns against migrants.

6.2: Arriving to the last 'open' border in Bosnia.

After getting off the bus from Belgrade in Sarajevo in June 2018, I walked to the History Museum, to a meeting organised by volunteers aiding hundreds of newly arriving displaced people in the country. When I entered the meeting room, my gaze was caught by a photo exhibition on the walls, which were titled as the 'journeys across the Balkan Route'. The photos captured border checkpoints with thousands of people waiting, escaping police batons, adults carrying children and walking via fields, and men covering their injuries. While this violence was visually captured in the EU margins of Greek, Hungarian and Croatian borders, using their police forces to facilitate and stop the movements, its narratives of chaos and violence were linked to what is considered as the 'Balkans'. Serbia and Macedonia, lying by these EU's peripheries, as Razsa and Lindstrom (2004) argue, became vulnerable to the vagaries of the changing social and political map of Europe, which now was represented in the images of police brutality that I was looking at.

The meeting started and the main organiser, Bosnian activist Nadja, firstly said she had been lucky to survive the siege of Sarajevo in the 1990s, like most of the people coming from war zones and now sleeping rough around her city. With the longer time spent in the country, I noticed that Bosnians began our conversations about the newly arriving migrants with their stories from the recent wars. This showed, as I became aware, that the locals' own narratives of violence and displacement mattered in their responses towards migrants; for some, shaping solidarities, but for others rejection. Indeed, there were many locals who distinguished themselves, their culture, religion, and experiences of fleeing from the newcomers, which was also previously encountered by Hromadžić (2019) in her research conducted in Bihać.

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The meeting focused on how to fill the gaps of the state's system by volunteering initiatives; to provide food, blankets, medical aid, and occupy an abandoned building in the city and use it as temporary accommodation, due to the only one state organised accommodation centre Delijaš, only having capacity for 160 people. Then, the talk moved on to the re-emerging violence along the northern Bosnian borders with Croatia. 'Croatian police is beating them (migrants) like they have been beating them by Serbian border and in Hungary before', said one girl. The subjection to the direct border violence, that I kept hearing about from the activists and the newly arriving migrants, showed that the secondary migration in the region had not been driven only by the search for new alternative ways to the EU, as argued by Ahmetašević & Mlinarević (2018). Essentially, trying to move from the previous transit spots in SEE became impossible due to the perpetual direct violence by border guards and police harassment. I encountered border violence as the major trigger of the secondary movements in the region, yet, leading to new episodes of border violence.

Indeed, the border between Bosnia and Croatia had been always an option of transit but increasing deployment of violence elsewhere made this option the only one. To this end, I later learned that migrants standing in the train station in Sarajevo often referred to Bosnian borders with Croatia as the 'last open' transit point from South-Eastern Europe to the EU. Albeit, Croatia as an EU member used smart border technologies, such as EUROSUR and EURODAC (European Commission 2019) and Bosnia was on the way to improve its own smart border security system since 2001 Europeanisation process (Geiger, 2016). Hence, migrants' understanding of the 'open (Bosnian-Croatian) border' referred to the lack of militarisation and the use of direct violence rather than the 'open Corridor', which used to be a relatively safe and state-assisted transit across the region in 2015 and 2016 (El-Shaarawi & Razsa, 2019).

After the end of the meeting, I walked to the main train station to join volunteer-led food distribution for the displaced people sleeping rough around Sarajevo. From the line of people waiting for food, I could hear someone shouting my name. I turned around and saw Badih, whom I had talked to one week ago by the Serbian-Hungarian border, from where he was making his journey to Sarajevo[20]. While helping to distribute food and chatting with the people there, several others told me that they had also walked from Serbia, where they had spent months or years trying to cross the border, but their attempts mostly resulted in beatings by Croatian and Hungarian border guards and forced returns. The journeys from Serbia to Bosnia, however, were not easy, as the 375 km long border mostly consisted of the Drina and Sava rivers, resulting in several people drowning as the year progressed. Others said to travel from overcrowded camps in Greece, which Iliadou (2019) previously examined as inflicting

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[20] Ibid, Chapter 5, p 54.

enduring and repetitive suffering and pain to migrants through endless time and waiting. A few men also walked from Bulgaria, where the existing research showed the borders being enforced by the brutality of 'migrant hunters' (Jovanović, 2018), and prison sentences for unauthorised entries to the country (Augustová, 2020). For a week, I was seeing overcrowded buses making their journeys to the northern borders, Kladuša and Bihać, from where migrants began their journeys onwards to the EU territory - Croatia.

During the first few weeks of my research in Kladuša, I observed that while new people were daily arriving, almost none were leaving, and increasing numbers were returning due to what I quickly understood to be the push-backs. While migrants arrived in Kladuša with hope to avoid police interceptions and attacks, the border which was recently involved in the war, conflict and mass migration (Baker, 2015) soon undertook a new face and forms of violence. The Croatian Ministry of the Interior reported a 70% increase of so considered 'illegal border crossing attempts' in 2018 (European Commission, 2019), which however mostly included migrants seeking asylum in the EU states. Under this legal framework of 'crime', the sounds of helicopters soon emerged and larger numbers of police patrols were deployed at the Bosnian-Croatian border, closing the migrants' 'last open' transit from SEE to the EU.

I opened this chapter by introducing migrants' new journeys in Bosnia, which as I argued, resulted from the border push-backs and violence employed across SEE region. Bosnia has been seen as another transit spot along the (Western) Balkan Route in border security terms (Frontex, 2020b). However, the research on the history of Bosnian-Croatian relations shows that the events from the Ottoman Empire until the Yugoslav Wars are intertwined with discriminatory dichotomy between Balkans and Europe and violent struggles in this specific location (Baker, 2015; Huliaras, 2011; Razsa & Lindstrom, 2004; Todorova, 2009), and well-established smuggling operations here (Ahmad, 2011; Bliesemann de Guevara, 2013). Due to this context, it would be therefore inaccurate to discuss Bosnia merely as another transit spot of the Balkan Route when examining violence against migrants along its borders with Croatia. To this end, the following sections question how the meaning makings of the Bosnian-Croatian borders by the newly arriving migrants and the local population are affected by the recent history and violent struggles for de-Balkanisation and Europeanisation, now embedded in the EU's expansion of border controls to the SEE region.

6.3: *Rihla* and games across the Balkan Route and the European Union's borders.

Whereas Frontex visualises the migratory journeys across 'Balkan Route' as singular and linear pathways leading to the EU, portraying 'threats' of undocumented migration (van Houtum & Bueno Lacy, 2020), I found that migrants' experiences and understanding of their journeys significantly

differed. The expression 'Balkan' as inherently intertwined with the past war conflicts and Frontex's migration risk analysis of the 'Balkan Route' got lost in the camps. Yet, the experiences of violence did not disappear from the migrants' journeys but shifted closer to where Balkan assumes to conventionally end, and Europe begins – Croatia. It is the experience along the EU's external as well as internal borders, away from Bosnia, that strongly resonated in migrants' understanding of the borders and their crossings, and which this section explores.

In late September, I was sitting in the Trnovi camp by a fire next to Cala, a 50 year old woman from Iraq, travelling with her two teenage daughters. She and her daughters returned from the Sedra Hotel, a formal accommodation centre for families, back to the makeshift camp, before trying go on *rihla* (journey in Arabic and an expression for the unauthorised border crossing) to Croatia for the third time. Cala had a close friendship with a Bosnian woman, whom many in the camp called 'Mama', who equipped her with warm clothes and food for the journey. Cala was cutting up chicken but did not seem to have an appetite as she worried about her upcoming trip: having no money to pay a smuggler for what she considered 'safer' car transport and facing danger to walk for weeks in mountains, with only little knowledge of the terrain, and a high possibility of being pushed back again. While expressing her worries, she was telling me about her whole journey from Iraq to Turkey and then, to the SEE - Greece, Macedonia, Montenegro and Bosnia. She described each border that she had crossed, how and with whom. After, she started talking about her plan to walk from Bosnia to Croatia – the EU entry, and then to Slovenia - the Schengen Zone, from where she wanted to freely take a bus to Belgium due to no more border controls. 'This is the border between hell and heaven', she said, 'from here until Italy, it is hell. Everybody would do everything to cross this border. But they go and come back, go and come back, go and come back.'

Cala's and other migrants' journeys consisted of perpetually moving onwards and being forced backwards across diverse EU and non-EU border zones and inner states, towns and mountains, rivers, highways, makeshift camps and state-run accommodation centres. During the conversations with migrants, I learnt that their clandestine travels were (mis)directed by human smugglers, rumours heard across camps or read on Facebook, and, as previously pointed out by Obradović-Wochnik and Bird (2020), by various maps, flyers and signs passed on the way. People knew better which places to avoid rather than which to follow and often chose to travel across dangerous natural environments with the least possible human detection, such as rocky terrains and heavily-mined fields surrounding the Bosnian-Croatian border in Kladuša and Bihać (see Figure 6, below). I commonly saw my participants using their mobile maps, where they were inserting small red points, signifying new locations of police violence against those who just returned to the camp after their push-back and used their experiences

to create a common strategy. Most of these maps were filled with dozens of red points, each carrying a story of mistreatment, which migrants wished to avoid during their next attempt.

Figure 6   A map on the wall of a makeshift camp in Bihać, showing dangerous areas contained by mines (photo by author).

These journeys, however, mostly ended by push-backs to Bosnia, where they were waiting in camps and then, travelling again – the cycle that many were repeating for months or years until succeeding or, for some, dying. This ongoing multifaceted and multi-layered movement matches the 'forced circular mobility' (Stojić-Mitrović & Vilenica, 2019, p 541), which was previously examined in Greece and Serbia (Obradović-Wochnik & Bird, 2020). What we can read from these migrants' narratives is that increasing the EU's externalisation of smart and militarised borders, merging various EU and non-EU borders into a more synchronised apparatus (Andersson & Keen, 2019; Norman, 2020), rerouted migration to Bosnia, rather than stopped the movement. This turned the country to a new transit spot of forced circular mobility, albeit, now managed in different local political and social contexts. As the result of the EU's expanding border operations, using various forms of violence across the wider neighbourhood, Cala's understanding of borders from Bosnia, to Croatia, Slovenia, and Italy also

merged into a synchronised geographical zone that she described as the '(one) border between hell and heaven'.

During our conversation, Cala did not once use the term 'Balkan (Route)', which was lost in the camps. Instead, Cala and other people in Bosnian camps referred to border crossing as the game, the term previously used by migrants in Serbia (Augustová, 2020), which is the same theatrical term that Andersson and Keen (2019) attribute to the externalisation border politics. Many Arabic speakers also commonly called their cross-border journeys simply *rihla* (journey in Arabic). When discussing locations of game and *rihla*, migrants commonly named individual countries marking their journeys in SEE and merely spoke about the 'Balkan Route'. Interestingly, I also hardly heart the term 'Balkans' to be used by the local population, who perceived their place of living as Bosnia, an independent state in the heterogeneous region.

The way that the people living and migrating across Bosnia perceived their living and travelling spaces, thus, significantly differed to the language of the EU's border agency, who usually talks about the 'Balkan Route', the term that is inherently linked in Frontex's reports to the combat of cross-border crimes (Frontex, 2020a). In the similar manner, humanitarian agencies (IOM, 2020b; UNHCR, 2019a) and media (Townsend, 2015; von der Brelie & Salfiti, 2018) commonly used the term 'Balkan(s) (Route)' in their titles to portray humanitarian issues and narratives of border violence in a homogenous SEE region. These only reinforced the derogatory connotation of the Balkans as again a problematic and violent region and not-quite-Europe (Trakilović, 2020). Following this narrative, the only actors talking about the 'Balkan Route' on the ground were international volunteers, when one told me: 'I am not surprised that this (violence against migrants) is happening here because this is Balkans.'

This comment echoes Hatzopoulos' (2003, p 26) argument how violence in SEE has been often analysed in public and political narratives 'as intertwined with something inherently 'Balkan', conditioned by dark aspects of Balkan history. Such narratives became a powerful EU policy tool to frame migrant's precarious living conditions in SEE as 'normally' occurring in 'other' places (Bird et al., 2020). Yet, I argue that the ill-informed 'Balkan' devastating face as a region-specific predicament (Hatzopoulos, 2003) now also proves useful to perceive even more direct and crude forms of violence as occuring in the Balkans 'as usual'. Paying attention to the terminologies of what Bosnia and the SEE region mean in migration and violence context of the EU's border external management is thus fundamental due to its politically powerful West-East dichotomy in Europe that this language carries (Razsa & Lindstrom, 2004; Trakilović, 2020). This terminology now plays an essential role in the management and concealment of violence against migrants from Croatia and Slovenia, as the EU members, to Bosnia, as also pointed by Isakjee et al. (2020).

However, as Cala's description of 'border of hell' shows, migrants' experiences of violence were not physically bounded in Bosnia - the assumed location of Europe's periphery of Islam and violence (Huliaras, 2011; Mishkova, 2008; Razsa & Lindstrom, 2004; Todorova, 2009). Instead border violence, particularly the direct and the most crude forms, were daily taking place in the internal 'liberal and Christian' EU's territories (Isakjee et al., 2020; Razsa & Lindstrom, 2004), which will be considered in greater detail by the interview data on push-backs[21]. These divisions, thus, function to legitimate border violence (Galtung, 1990) in places where violence and cross-border crime have been historically normalised within the West popular imagination from the Ottoman Empire (Todorova, 2009), across WWII (Hoare, 2006; Korb, 2010), and the Yugoslav Wars (Baker, 2015). For this reason, the violence (against migrants) is not shocking to hear about or see for EUropean and western observers in the context of post-2015 migration, which itself has been portrayed as 'crisis', and thus, requiring radical measures, such as violence (de Vries & Guild, 2019).

6.4: Violence and solidarities along Bosnian-Croatian borders: re-thinking 'dangerous Balkans' and 'safe Europe' from Kladuša.

Building upon the discussion in the previous section, the question arises as to how those living and migrating across the Bosnian-Croatian border understood this border organised by the old and discriminatory dichotomy of what Europe and Balkans mean. In seeking to answer this question, I now turn to the narratives by migrants and the local population in Kladuša, whom both daily exchanged their experiences of violence, struggles but also solidarities emerging from these dominant narratives. By doing so, I wish to re-think how to locate violence at the Bosnian-Croatian border from the past conflicts and the present border measures. This provides further insight into how the local border context and the life there, scored with the histories of violence, organises the violence against migrants taking place at the time of the research.

Whilst around 40,000, predominantly Muslim, Bosnians in Kladuša were personally affected by the recent wars through displacement, exile in precarious living conditions, violent push-backs from Croatia, and the denial of asylum application in the EU (Christia, 2008; Dahlman, 2016; Lischer, 1999), they had to deal with hundreds of people trying to migrate through their small town, but being pushed back and remaining. Residents of Kladuša commonly said during our conversations that their families had emigrated during the war and did not come back. Although a few new villas stood shining next to old houses in the town, built by Bosnians who lived in northern Europe or the USA and returned only for holidays. Others, predominantly young people, left Bosnia after the war due to the economic and political destabilisation of the country, while following better work opportunities. The youth

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[21] Ibid, Chapter 8, p 109.

remaining, including volunteers, often remarked that they wished to leave to western and northern Europe but struggled to obtain visa and working permissions as EU non-members. Hence, both those who were born and lived in the town and those who were trying to transit through there lacked an EU passport and faced restricted access to the EU, although the existing research asserts that Bosnian citizens ought to be granted e-passports and visa-free travel to the Schengen Area in exchange for integrating the EU's smart border system (Geiger, 2016). In addition to the common experiences of war and violence, economic struggle, migration, closed mobility to the EU between the residents from Kladuša and many migrants, many also shared the same religion – Islam. These all had a significant impact on the communal living.

However, I observed that particularly the fights and violence happening in Kladuša in the 1990s seemed most significant in shaping the daily co-existence and solidarities between the local people and the newly arriving displaced population. The local owner of a restaurant, Imran, who was a war veteran, was providing with his friends around 500 dishes per day, free of charge. Volunteers, including me, were helping to clean dishes and serve food in the restaurant. At the end of the day, Imran would give us food and tell stories about the war, how him and other men were defending their families and saw their friends dying: 'It was difficult time. All men in this town were fighting. But we are here, we are alive. No one died of hunger during the war. So, no one will die of hunger here now.' Reminders of the war violence, that Imran often talked about, was visible when meeting the local men in their forties and fifties without a limb or dependent upon a wheelchair, who were full of various stories from the war.

In an abandoned aeroplane hangar called the 'Helicopter Place', another local war veteran, Adin, was daily coming and giving food to around thirty Afghan men. Adin had close friendships with these men, whom many like him fought in conflict zones and now faced other attacks at the borders, as he said during our conversation. Adin's family had migrated to Germany and he told me he had to find a new family to look after in the 'Helicopter Place'. Like the former plane hangar, dozens of other buildings around the town turned into provisional shelters for male migrants since they had been abandoned, ruined, filled by holes during the war, their business went out, or their construction had been interrupted by war and post-war events.

I further became aware that the direct attacks played a fundamental role in the dynamics of the newly emerging struggles for survival by migrants, firstly, allowed by the post-war urban architecture visible with every step around Kladuša. In the old buildings around the town, many of which were missing windows, walls and facades, migrants' few possessions mixed with dusty and damaged furniture that

had reminded due to these past war experiences of the local populations. The biggest provisional homes for migrants particularly occurred in several abandoned *Agrokomerc* buildings, which had played an important role during the Yugoslav Wars. The previous research (Ivanisevic, 2004; Lischer, 1999) showed that the businesses run in these buildings had financially allowed their chief executive officer and the current mayor of Kladuša, Fikret Abdić, to claim his personal autonomy over the town during the wars; the events that led to mass migration and Abdić's conviction for war crimes. Thus, the urban ruins of *Agrokomerc* in Kladuša, like the *Dom penzionera* (Pensioner home) in Bihać (Hromadžić, 2019), carry historically encountered conflict sites and decay, which now provided a shelter to migrants trying to transit Bosnia to Croatia.

It was not only the devastating architecture that carried the past and present narratives of violence and organised the everyday life in Kladuša. Essentially, the local population was seeing and hearing about the new violent struggles at the border, which seemed familiar to them and triggered their responses. Many local residents told me during our conversations that they had experienced flash-backs of war fear while hearing screams and gunshots from the nearby Croatian border, daily seeing the migrant men slowly moving around the town with fractured and broken limbs, and listening to their stories of police attacks during the push-backs. Although the push-backs of migrants from Croatia had a different face of violence – certainly incomparable with the mass killings portrayed during the Yugoslav Wars (Baker, 2015) - the migrants' harms were an ominous reminder of the war violence in this border town.

Interestingly, a few locals also told me that they believed the push-backs were overseen by the same Croatian officers who once fought against them, the Bosnian Muslims, during the war, and remained in the military and police. This comment indicated that ethnic and religious difference was again encouraging violence in this border location, stranded in the old Croatian struggle of 'defending walls of Europe and Christianity' (Razsa & Lindstrom, 2004) from the 'backward East and Islamic Other' (Rexhepi, 2018), with the aim to prove its independent state position in the EU and the future Schengen zone. This also demonstrates the following public comments by the Croatian president Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic: 'Bosnia and Herzegovina is an unstable country', which is 'now controlled by militant Islam (of migrants)' (Sarajevo Times, 2019), and in line with this, 'a little bit of force is needed to push them (migrants) back' (Kreizer, 2019). These narratives of Bosnia as the dangerous Balkans, now reinforced by migration from the Middle East and Africa, are also re-produced by remarks by other EU politicians, such as the French president. Emmanuel Macron has recently stated that Bosnia as the Balkans presented the 'problem of returning jihadists' and a 'ticking time-bomb' (Aljazeera, 2019).

The encounters and analysis so far pursued in this chapter illustrate deep discriminatory connotations of Bosnia as the Balkans and post-conflict state with radical Islam within the EU political discourse, especially Croatia, enforcing violent responses against the migrants at the Bosnian-Croatian border. The Europe-Balkan dichotomy impacts the migrants' everyday life at the border today. As the above narratives show, the past violent conflicts echo in contemporary police border violence against migrants in Croatia, while triggering everyday solidarities in Bosnia. The old political narratives about where Balkan lies have proved useful to mark a line where Europe should be divided and protected from the backward East and Islamic Other (Rexhepi, 2018). This old legitimisation of ethnic and religious violence against those labelled as threat, which ought to be pushed from 'Europe' to the 'Balkans', proves useful in the today's violent migration management. Through the interview data it will be shown that the history of ethnic conflicts often triggered racialized direct attacks by individual Croatian policemen against Muslim migrants during the push-backs, which I discuss in greater detail in the following chapter[22], besides remaining fascist and racist tendencies in Croatia (Pavlaković, 2008).

It needs to be said that these official legitimised narratives about from where a threat is coming and where violence and disorder (in migration) belongs significantly differed to the daily lives of migrants and the local population in Kladuša. While the injuries of migrants were directly inflicted by police in EU's geographical spaces, on the other non-EU border side – Bosnia, the injured people were often medically treated, provisionally sheltered, clothed, fed and locals often tried understand them by the Bosnian citizens and volunteers and aid providers. The Bosnian people feeling empathies and engaged in bringing donations to the Trnovi camp or were hosting minors and families in their private houses. I observed on several occasions staff in restaurants and cafes to say to the displaced men not to pay if they saw they were injured or distressed. One day, I was sitting with Haji, an old Iraqi man in a café, while he was telling me about the conflict in Iraq and his confusion about how to get to Germany to his family. Suddenly, one older Bosnian man, sitting by the next table stood up, came to Haji and hugged him: 'We know how you feel', he then said based on what he could hear from our conversation. I could see one tear dropping from his eye: 'Good luck', he said to Haji. One cafe owner also admitted to me that welcoming migrants presented a new economic opportunity in an otherwise calm town with not enough customers and income. A few locals were also known to facilitate clandestine car transports to the other side of the border when trying to improve their economic situation.

Despite the rich empathies, hospitality and help, people in makeshift camps often stressed that they could not stay in the country due to its poor economy and lack of life opportunities as well as

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[22] Ibid, Chapter 7, p 93.

complicated administrative system of asylum claims. As Aziz (21, Afghanistan) noted: 'People in Bosnia are very good, but life here is not good. Here is no camp, no work. Bosnian people are trying to leave themselves.' Indeed, there needs to be drawn line between personal and institutional level when support by Bosnian citizens differed to the state, which provided no or only limited aid.

When focusing on the Bosnian borders with the EU, Croatia and Slovenia, the question remains how migrants perceived their onwards movement there. The official rhetoric of transnational justice and humanitarian values that Croatia and Slovenia had to employ as new EU members (Jakešević & Tatalović, 2016), and which symbolically re-shaped them to liberal democracies of modern EUrope (Sanader, 2008), seemed confusing and controversial to many migrants. For instance, Hisham (22, Pakistan), who was sitting with me in a café after he had been pushed back from Croatia to Bosnia, told me during our recorded interview:

> Croatian police caught us and started beating us, kicking us, punching us. I am completely confused why they were beating us. Is this really Europe? They don't have right to beat us. There are the rights we have. Even animals have the rights in Europe and we are humans. … Why the European Union does not take any action? Why do they allow them to beat us? Why the hell Croatia is denying the refugees to stay? This is illegal action.

Hisham's expectations of what he considered as the entry to the EU had deviated from the reality. Hisham, like most people walking to northern and western Europe, had mostly imagined the EU territory in line with the officially framed European values and way of life that emphasised human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, rule of law and human rights (European Union, 2020). However, people pushed from Croatia back to Kladuša daily put these values in question: 'Is this really Europe?', 'Is it legal to push us back?', 'Where are the human rights?'. Even those who heard about border violence in the previous transit locations, or in their home countries before starting their journeys, struggled to locate violence in EUrope as incompatible. This also demonstrates Iman's (19, Afghanistan) comparison of violence in Europe with violence in his home country, while sitting on the broken matrass in the Helicopter Place and looking at the injured arm of his friend from police attack during the push-back from Croatia: 'Fuck Europe, Taliban would be better than this'.

What emerges from the fieldwork is that the socially and politically accepted idea of where violence commonly takes place versus where it is not tolerated, as well as which nations and regions are more violent than others, makes violence look, even feel, right or not recognised at all (Galtung, 1990). These justifications of borders and states play an important role in migration management at Croatian-Bosnian borders through violence. The official rhetoric of the EU member states, including Croatia and

Slovenia, as 'humanitarian' and 'democratic' (European Union, 2020), is set in comparison to Bosnia, as the historically portrayed opaque of Europe and 'dangerous Balkans' which encourages us to imagine that the country as a violent, criminal and mass-migratory place is usual.

As Taussig (2004) argues, direct violence and terror are always in An-Other places, always elsewhere, in troubling worlds, where the rule of order is deeply suspicious and wild order historically exists. This has been also portrayed in scientific research on violence in migration, which focuses predominantly on Africa, (Cuéllar, 2005; Malkki, 1996; Onoma, 2013), Middle East (Khalili, 2008; Shahid, 2002) and Asia (Akhter & Kusakabe, 2014). With Arab and Muslim migration taking place in Europe, the new An-Other place within the discourse of border violence is northern Bosnia, an assumed violent and Muslim outskirt of Europe. This assumption proves useful to absorb border violence under discriminatory assumptions of what Bosnia historically means to the rest of Europe, with the aim to eliminate border violence visibility. Although the migrants' injuries are inflicted elsewhere (Croatia and Slovenia), Bosnia as the 'Balkan' state therefore functions as a place where harmed bodies can be thrown away and hidden from the EU's sight, although visible while walking through Kladuša. This geographical concealment of violence matches to the previous migration research in Greece, Serbia and Bosnia (Bird et al., 2019; Isakjee et al., 2020), yet, it is positioned within the narratives of the local population and migrants here, which have not been examined before.

In contrast, the EU's symbolic dimension and cultural superiority are not compatible with state's violence against individuals or groups (Mishkova, 2008; Trakilović, 2020). Therefore, direct infliction of violence against the migrants participating in this research is successfully denied as unimaginable in the EU. This is in line with the previous argument by Isakjee et al. (2020) that the use of violence against migrants sits uncomfortably with the liberal, post-racial self-image of the EU, which paradoxically allows and justifies the violence to happen. Indeed, what the research here reveals is that the direct attacks, tortures of migrants, and lack of aid in the Bosnian camps are handled with impunity as they are portrayed as unrelated to EUrope. The case of Croatia particularly demonstrates this. Croatia is self-presented as a real European Christian state, which, as the existing research (Korb, 2010; Razsa & Lindstrom, 2004) shows, historically distances it from the 'primitive and lazy Muslim Balkans' - Bosnia. As the result of this, the responsibility for border harms are not only difficult to reject in the EU territory – Croatia, but even logical to reject as there are no injured bodies to see due to their push-backs to Bosnia. Thus, the attacks can successfully continue as unimaginable but also as non-existent.

However, the lived experiences and meaning makings of Bosnia by migrants and the local people presented here are far away from the historically rooted discriminatory assumptions of what the

'Balkans' mean. The data here, thus, allows us to re-think how to locate violence (in migration) in Europe and Europe's self-location in (no) use of violence. The question remains how the local responses and lived experiences evolve across longer time, when Bosnia aspires for eventual EU membership. This means that the country, similar to other former Yugoslav states, obliges to collaborate in combating illegal migration and organised crime across Europe (Stojić-Mitrović & Vilenica, 2019), which consists in particular of using various forms of violent measures, which target migrants who seek asylum rather than criminal organisations.

6.5: The European Unions' border control expansion in Bosnia

The co-existence between local residents and the migrants and the daily life in Kladuša were in motion and significantly changed when migration no longer seemed as temporary and exceptional but became the condition of daily life. This section aims to track these changes and their impact on the migrants stranded here across my eight months spent in Kladuša. It also questions how these changes were triggered and organised by the EU's broader approach to border controls, under the promise of Bosnia eventually entering the EU, as it has been previously observed in other SEE states.

I became aware that long-term migration clearly placed migrants, their aid providers, local population and its governments under pressure. Being stranded in Kladuša for months and facing various forms of violence in daily life resulted in many young men living in camps and squats using more alcohol, drugs, increased inter-communal tensions, fights and robberies. The atmosphere in the town particularly changed with the murder of a young Moroccan man in June 2018, who was stabbed by his friend in an argument while both were drunk. These events quickly jeopardised the whole migrant community in the town. The restaurants that once had an open door for displaced people with no money were shouting at anyone with darker skin to get out. When I was sitting in a local hotel, two Iraqi boys, Hassan and Mostafa, came to me and asked if I could try to speak with the bar staff about a possibility of renting a room there, 'They don't speak to us. Maybe they don't understand English', Hassan said to me. When I approached the bartender, he started shouting at me: 'You, fuck off and your friends! Tell them to get the fuck from my country!'. When I tried to explain their situation, he pushed into me. Another day, when I was walking from the camp an old local man started shouting at me: 'Why have you been feeding them? They are big problem and they have to leave now. Fucking migrants. Stop helping them!'

All hotels and most restaurants in the town claimed to be 'full' or were 'not open for foreigners'. Some of their workers were not so direct, apologising that 'Sorry but I would have problems with boss if I serve you'. On another occasion, an Iranian woman, who just arrived in the town, asked me if I could cut her hair because the local hairdresser rejected her: 'I wanted to go to have my hair done but when

I went to a hairdresser, she said that it was just for Bosnians. So, I think today is maybe some Bosnian day or celebration or something.' She smiled innocently, without an understanding the sudden changes that I had been observing daily. Men and boys living in squats around the town also said their places were subjected to police raids and evictions. The evictions escalated in the winter and were happening in late night hours when the town was covered by snow in December and January. Random squat evictions turned into the daily forced relocations of all people with dark faces and no identification documents, who were just walking around the town, to the newly established Miral camp.

Simultaneously, local people who maintained contact with the migrants became harassed by Bosnian police. For instance, Emina, who was hosting in her private flat two minors said she was to be charged 2000 euros for a 'new law' of accommodating undocumented migrants who did not apply for asylum in Bosnia, which was the majority. Those who were subjected to controls and policing were also international volunteers, including me. Bosnian police started regularly visiting our shower trailer nearby the camp and places of accommodation, asking for passports and controlling our permissions to stay in the country. Landlords of the houses, where volunteers lived, were told to visit police stations: 'They (police) were telling me that you are dangerous and that for sure you are smugglers', our landlady told me, after one of the visits.

Soon, another new law was announced that international volunteers needed a special 'volunteering visa', but those who had tried to obtain them were denied one. Police used these new laws and obligations as an excuse to criminalise all aid in the town, based on the assumptions that our services functioned as the pull factor. They believed that if the aid would disappear, all migrants would have no reason to stay. As the consequence of the criminalisation of solidarities and aid, the volunteering activities became clandestine, trying to be moved out of public spaces and police sight. I moved to a small flat nearby a forest at the end of the town. All people visiting me from the camp for a shower, dinner or just to have a rest after push-backs, had to come to my flat in the night to avoid being seen. I often worried when I heard a car parking outside of my flat or a sudden knock on my door, which could mean a police investigation. In January 2019, just before my departure back to the U.K., a female volunteer, Maria, came to me really frightened as assuming that we were under daily police surveillance, intensifying the above described harassments: 'The police stopped me, and they were telling me to leave the country. They were telling me that they knew where I stayed and in which bed I slept, that I sleep with Frank. But nobody knows that I slept with him. How can they know? I am really scared.'

While certainly many locals had not sympathised with migrants since their arrival to the country, open hostilities towards migrants were rare. However, the hostilities quickly became omnipresent for migrants and all who were known to provide aid in makeshift camps around the town. A similar shift in responses from governments facilitating migrants' transit and locals sympathizing with the newly arriving migrants due to similar past experiences of wars into criminalisation of aid provision, police harassments, direct attacks and even killings of migrants were previously encountered in Croatia (Jakešević & Tatalović, 2016), Serbia (Beznec et al., 2016), Albania (Stanivuković & Neuman, 2019), Kosovo, Macedonia (Rexhepi, 2018), and Greece (Obradović-Wochnik & Bird, 2020).

On the local level - in Kladuša, some residents' change of their approaches towards the migrants can be referred to the increasing disorder visible around the town; abuse of drugs and alcohol, and inter-communal violence. However, the further chapters will explore how migrants' everyday precarious choices, harmful routines and distorted relations are closely interconnected with the broader violence, in which they live[23] rather than in individual misbehaviour. These were simultaneously accompanied by the everyday policing of the migrants and the efforts to forcibly relocate them out of the public spaces as well as to develop pressure on all supporting them. When the local population saw these happening, many started perceiving the migrants in the state official's narratives as 'criminals', and consequently adopting this narrative. Others began avoiding contact with migrants due to the fear of being subjected to the police measures. Under these pressures, migrant men particularly were excluded from the (public) life in the town, which proved to be a powerful policy tool, when Obradović-Wochnik (2018) asserts that migrants' removal from public spaces in urban cities and borders result in their exclusion from aid and social network.

The national police responses, however, were managed by the governmental and district orders, as examined in the research by Ahmetašević and Mlinarević (2018), who were pressured particularly by external factors and the neighbouring state, Croatia. As Rexhepi (2018) argued, the national interests of the former Yugoslav states are often effectively managed by the external powers, and that particularly 'eventual EU membership' as well as financial support for migration and border managements, which now proves to be the case of Bosnia. Albeit, it needs to be remembered that Bosnia is differentiated from its neighbours in terms of negotiating with Brussels due to the furthest stage of EU succession process (Memisevic, 2009), the local government not being trusted by Brussels (Ahmetašević & Mlinarević, 2018), as well as Bosnia being viewed as problematic and in need of constant surveillance (Rexhepi, 2018).

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[23] Ibid, Chapter 10, p 146.

Due to these issues, it can be expected that Bosnia adopted the EU's migration, border anti-migration and violent approaches as necessary for improving its EU succession process. Importantly, such change in the local responses towards migrants were previously observed in other former Yugoslav states, whom are relatively ahead of Bosnia in their EU succession or are now EU members. The data here shows that this adoption of new measures under external pressures are the policing of public spaces, harassments, forced relocations of migrants to closed camps, and adopting new legislations that sought to criminalise aid in makeshift camps and public spaces. To this end, Bosnia became the latest state of the EU's border security externalisation, which stretches across countries like Niger, Libya, Turkey, to internal states, such as Greece, Bulgaria, Croatia and Slovenia (Andersson, 2014). Indeed, each state has a different role in border controls, in line with its power, and uses different forms of border violence (Zaragoza-Cristiani, 2017), which also applies to the borders stretching between Bosnia and the EU states – Croatia, Slovenia and Italy.

Thus, the EU Croatia and Slovenia play the role of the most common direct perpetrators of border violence – with easy managed impunity due to its geopolitical location. In contrast, Bosnia as the 'Balkans' functions mainly as the space to absorb the results of this direct border violence, as Isakjee et al. (2020) argued and this research confirms. Yet Bosnian state authorities also comply with these border practices through removing migrants and their supporters out of public sight through the active use of oppressive laws and harassments, often leading to the migrants' exhaustion. I observed that when migrants had no more strength to continue their journeys due to severe mental or/and physical harms, they were either offered the humanitarian voluntary return by IOM to their home countries, funded by the EU Commission, or some died of overdose or committed suicide in makeshift camps, which resembles de Vries and Guild's (2019) findings on exhaustion as a policy tool in migration. This more passive approach of violent border measures in Bosnia, therefore, stems from the country's integration to the EU, while getting rid of the label 'Balkans'. Hence, the daily life, co-existence and transitions in the microscope of the small Bosnian town of Kladuša, reveals broader border approaches of violence and its externalisation patterns across the SEE, while simultaneously points to the specific historical conflict and discriminatory context of Bosnian-Croatian borders, which now plays a fundamental role in border violence against migrants.

6.6: Conclusion.

The analysis pursued in this chapter reveals the developments of migration and violence along the Bosnian-Croatian borders, with the locus on Kladuša. By doing so, this chapter sought to show how the local context of this border town as well as its transformation that I observed during my eight-months

long research significantly organised the migrants' experiences of violence, but also generated solidarities.

This evidence was firstly outlined by mapping the migrants' secondary movement from other SEE states to Bosnia, which had been triggered by violence along Serbian borders with Hungary and Croatia, imprisonments and attacks in Bulgaria, as well as waiting in overcrowded Greek camps. These attacks and struggles were portrayed in the EUro-centric narratives as taking place along the 'Balkan Routes' – 'other' places with wild and violent order, now leading to a new transit spot in Bosnia. In the same lines, Bosnia has been framed by the prominent EU politicians and border agency (Frontex) with discriminatory connotations; the Balkan state stranded in ethnic violent hatred, militant Islam, and designated with the 'criminal' Balkan Route. Moreover, Bosnia's neighbour Croatia has a far-right government that distinguishes itself from the Balkans as part of the 'real' (i.e. Christian) Europe and radically re-assures its position in the EU. I found this local context important in organising the border measures in Kladuša, particularly triggering crude forms of violence against the migrants during the push-backs from Croatia to Bosnia.

However, the migrants' meaning makings of their journeys across Bosnia significantly differed to the dominant narratives about the 'Balkans' and thus challenged the derogatory connotation of Bosnia as problematic and violent. In contrast, the migrants understood their journeys based on violence when calling their journeys games, daily occurrences in many EU states, most commonly in Croatia rather than what is considered to be the Balkans, Bosnia. This sheds light on how violence can be sanitised by the language of cultural superiority, such as Europe over Balkans and Christianity over Islam, which helps to make violence more legitimate or not recognisable at all (Galtung, 1990). Thus, framing Bosnia as the Balkans proves useful to legitimise the injuries and poor living conditions seen in Bosnian camps, a further example of how powerful and dangerous the term 'Balkans' is as a policy tool in migration (Bird et al., 2020; El-Shaarawi & Razsa, 2019; Isakjee et al., 2020). In the same way, EU membership symbolically designates the adoption of democratic and liberal values, and this is utilised to legitimise radical border measures in Croatia and conceal the use of violence as controversial or incompatible with the EU (see Isakjee et al. 2020).

Nevertheless, I argue that the discriminatory portrayals of histories of violence and migration in the 1990s at the Bosnian-Croatian border did not only generate new forms of violence, but also triggered solidarities in Kladuša, which are important to highlight when exploring how the local context organises the migrants' journeys. Although the analysis finally revealed that the local context was transforming when migration in Kladuša turned from temporary to permanent. This developed not only put pressure on the Bosnian government, but particularly on its EU neighbour Croatia, triggering further border

externalisation policies and violence from the EU to Bosnia. This ranged from the Bosnian government introducing a new law criminalising solidarity with the migrants, the local police evicting the makeshift camps, business owners closing their services for the migrants, to the police threatening the migrants and all those supporting them. This transformation in the local responses has been also observed elsewhere in SEE states, as managed by the governmental and district orders pressured by the neighbouring EU states and the promise of 'eventual EU membership' (Ahmetašević & Mlinarević, 2018; Rexhepi, 2018). While this research provides only little information about international diplomatic negotiations, it contributes to the literature on migration in SEE region when revealing the evidence of the concrete adoption of new border measures in Bosnia, which are in line with the border externalisation in the whole SEE region.

The conclusion to be drawn from this chapter is that the location of Bosnia as historically rooted as the 'outskirts of Europe' vs. potential 'future EU member' generated new forms of violence against the migrants at the Bosnian borders across time, besides legitimising and concealing the attacks from Croatia here. Thus, the ethnographic observations presented in this chapter captured the border and its organisation of migrants' subjection to violence as a process, influenced by the local histories of violent conflicts, yet, constantly in motion under new (international) political pressures.

Importantly, not only spaces of migration but also migrants themselves are culturally legitimised as the subjects of violence, particularly upon their gender and 'race', when those experiencing violence at the Bosnian-Croatian borders are predominantly migrant men of colour. The following chapter explores the intersections of gender and 'race' in migration when asking how these social categories predict and mediate border violence.

Chapter 7: Construction of gender, race and other social categories in border violence.

7.1: Introduction.

While the previous chapter shed light on the legitimisation of violence through ideological distinctions between Europe and Balkans, this chapter develops this by shifting its focus to the ideological construction of migrants as 'others'. Specifically, it encompasses how gender and race are constructed in border violence against the migrants and how they intersect, while exploring the question: Do race and gender organise experience of border violence, and if yes, how? It aims in particular to reconsider masculinities and race within border violence in more nuanced ways. To do so, it will draw upon literature on race and gender in violence (Butler, 2004a; Crenshaw, 1991; Harris, 2000; Isakjee et al., 2020) and cultural legitimisations of violence against certain groups of migrants (Galtung, 1990).

The chapter firstly discusses the migration category of single men, as imagined construct within its opposite category of 'real refugees' women and children. It questions the experiences of border violence as dependent upon dominant cultural assumptions of manhood, predicting the perception and treatment of migrants at the borders. To do so, I firstly focus on lack of legal border crossing options from Bosnia onwards, games, and the violent push-backs that follow, and then discusses the withdrawal of the aid in the camps, as dependent on gender in migration. Moreover, I shed light on race and religion and discuss how these intersect and mediate border violence against Arab Muslim single men within the context of the Bosnian-Croatian borders.

The final section summarises the main arguments, before moving onto the chapters that will in greater detail examine diverse forms of border violence and what these mean in the everyday life at the borders.

7.2: 'Men have to feel pain to be men'.

It was July and the Trnovi camp was dusty and hot, although the sun was slowly setting. In the middle of the camp, the so called 'Syrian centre', a young boy was sitting, rocking his body front and back, holding his torso and screaming out loud from pain. Several men were standing around him and speaking loudly in Arabic, some turning their heads around like they were searching for someone. One of them saw me and started running to me. The only word that he was saying repeatedly in English was "doctor", taking my hand and leading me to their tent. When I saw the faces of the others, a few had scratches and black eyes and others had red marks on their legs and arms. One pointed at two destroyed phone displays and shouted in English: 'Fuck Croatia police!'. The boy on the ground, whose

name was Rashid, said that he had pain in his ribs. 'He thinks that his ribs are broken. They (Croatian border police) pushed him on the ground and were stepping on his back and kicking him', his friend Mohammed, who could speak English, translated to me. A nurse from our volunteer team arrived, gave Rashid a cream and pain killers, and told him to wait for the next day to transport him to the hospital for x-ray.

The men tried to go on *rehla* (trip in Arabic), and as Mohammed explained, their plan was to walk from Bosnia to Italy but if they had been apprehended in Slovenia, they would apply for asylum there. However, the Slovenian police ignored their asylum request and handed them over to the Croatian patrols, who drove them in a white van to the Bosnian border. There, the similar scenario happened as to dozens of other men every day. Police took them one by one from the police van and attacked them with batons. The boys talked about their pain and fear they felt. The adult men were expressing mainly anger and repeated that they had not a chance to protect themselves against the patrols with guns.

After smoking a few cigarettes while sitting around the fire, the atmosphere calmed down. The men started re-playing the whole scene of the border attack, making fun of the tragedy that had happened to them a few hours ago. They began pushing each other and fighting like children. The largest one, Sajid, pushed Rashid and wanted to kick him in his injured ribs. This made others shouting and laughing. 'No, stop. Let him!', I tried to protect Rashid. 'Men have to feel pain to be men', Mohammed said. I looked around the mud field covered by plastic sheet shelters, broken tents, and rubbish, which was a playful target of street dogs running around. I could hear hundreds of male voices speaking, laughing and shouting. I thought that all these men had either passed such a test of manhood, some many times, or they were going to pass it soon.

All men in the camps were aware of the pain awaiting for them at the borders when discussing *rehla* and games, drones and helicopters, patrols, detention rooms and cells, white deportation vans, insults, batons, guns, broken bones, stolen money, destroyed phones, and fear of being pushed back to the camps again. It did not matter whether they did not perceive violence and pain as a part of their manhood or whether they considered themselves as strong and tough like Mohammed; they were made to feel the pain to eventually cross the border. Awareness of the violent and difficult nature of these journeys is one important reason why most men came alone to this border and left their wives and children behind in camps in Greece, Serbia, Turkey or Lebanon, with hope that their families would follow them safely through family reunification programmes after their arrival in the EU. However, their manhood and dark faces were simultaneously the essential presumption of the everyday pain at the borders. Mohammed, Rashid, Sajid, Zakaria and their friends were then planning the next *rehla*,

which they set off after their injuries had healed, when feeling ready to test again their fears and manhood.

This example from my field diary shows that those who were narrating various forms of border violence, ranging from physical attacks perpetrated by border patrols to deprivations in makeshift camps, were mainly men travelling without women and small children. These men were recognised by humanitarian agencies and state authorities as single men; the label that rests upon a social discrepancy between masculinities and vulnerabilities (Myrttinen et al., 2017; Schulz, 2018). Being a man stranded along the EU's external borders is perceived in policy terms within the already limited support there as being 'strong' and 'able to cope' with harms due to the stereotypical assumption of masculine agency. Travelling 'single' further attributed to a man his 'independence' from family as well as aid in transit camps. However, these men were not single as they had families in their home countries or other transit locations who relied on their journeys. Consequently, single men were positioned on the other side of those considered vulnerable real refugees; women, children and families (Griffiths, 2015; Helms, 2015; Malkki, 1996; Turner, 2019a).

These assumptions had seriously affected the way border security and humanitarian organisations and diverse actors in the camp treated single men as a demographic despite their rich diversity in nationality, ethnicity, languages, and the past history. As showed in the above diary excerpt, security border regimes violently targeted the men's movement across the borders as 'illegal', considering them as not deserving of protection and suspicious when they did so, leading to their push-backs to Bosnia. There, however, humanitarian initiatives often positioned the men at the bottom of their priorities, when the majority were left to limited or self-managed aid. Hence, the single men were not only made invisible at the borders, as argued by Charsley and Wray (2015), but their masculinities made them a further visible threat during the games, leading to their exposure to the most crude forms of border violence. This constant movement between visibility and invisibility indicates that categorisation of a migrant as a single man, dependent upon his gender, had serious consequences on the men's not having the possibility for authorised border crossings, violent attacks and push-backs, and support in the camps.

I argue that this struggle of moving between visibility and invisibility within border violence as driven by gender, together with other social locations, is fundamental to explore the border violence as a subjective experience. As Zolberg (1983) and Vaughan-Williams (2015) suggest, violence in migration historically targets specific group of migrants. However, migrant men with Arab and Muslim origins, such as the majority of single men stranded along the Bosnian-Croatian borders, are often excluded from these groups in academic discussions, which often focus on browned-skinned women and

children as the genuine victims of violence. Nevertheless, I found the migrants' male construction of gender and race at the EU's borders significant in how violence was organised, and, thus I include them into the analysis of border violence here.

The lack of focus on masculine experiences within migration and border violence in scholarship appeared to be paralleled within public discourse, both along and beyond the EU's external borders, where masculinity and virility and protection were not compatible and imaginable. After my return to the Czech Republic where my family lived, I was collecting donations of blankets and male clothes, to bring them back with me to Bosnia. When my neighbours found out that the donation was for the men, some refused to contribute: 'I would rather burn those blankets than give it to male migrants', is what some told me. I then discussed with my parents the demographics of the migrants in Bosnia, explaining that volunteers struggled to obtain donations for the men but were overloaded by clothes for children and women. 'I don't understand why men are coming here. They are men. Why did they not stay in their country and fight for freedom?', remarked my father.

These reactions suggest how frequent notions of masculinity and the male roles embedded in them frame understandings of migration; the men are expected to protect others, such as his country, nation and family, rather than to be protected, as also suggested by Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1996). It is these 'failures' that intensifies in times of violence, as studies of gendered violence in military and war research suggest (Helms, 2015; Myrttinen et al., 2017; Schulz, 2018). Abandonment of the role of a protector emasculates a man, and simultaneously turns him into a default figure within the protection system in migration. As Helms (2015) argues, male migrants are often accused of being cowards, shirking their duty toward family and country by not fighting.

However, these dominant assumptions do not only make specific groups of men invisible, but often turn to be dangerous when a migrant man demands protection. 'Tell me. Is not strange that all these refugees are young, healthy strong men? You have never thought who possibly send them here? Maybe they are dangerous to us', a young Serbian man told me on the bus while traveling to northern squats, where hundreds of male migrants temporarily lived. His comment highlights that able-bodied migrant men are seen as suspicious and potentially dangerous when asking for protection, and thus undermining their patriarchal assumptions to be strong. It also suggests that when male gender further intersects with young people of 'military' age (Turner, 2019), and a country of departure is considered as war zone (Myrttinen et al., 2017), a man is then disproportionately liable to be perceived as an (ex) combatant and a security threat rather than a refugee (see also Carpenter, 2005). This shows that the pathological portrayal of the men (of colour) as violent (Galtung, 1990; Harris, 2000), terrorists (Bank

et al., 2017), or even sexual predators (Gallo & Scrinzi, 2016; Turner, 2015), is reinforced in the context of transit migration, as it is commonly reinforced in war and military contexts (Myrttinen et al., 2017).

The gendered stereotypes repeated by my father, my neighbours and a Serbian passenger may seem in the first sight not politically significant as distanced from the border managements. However, these stereotypes often emerge in political discourses, which tend to justify the violent border measures. For instance, the Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán pointed out that '70% of the migrants are young men and they look like an army' (Bank et al., 2017), besides framing 'illegal migrants as poison and a public security and terror risk' (Milivojević, 2018). Such stereotypical notions of gender, framing racialized migrant men as suspicious, inferior and in need of control result in material practices in forms of survey and control (Razack, 2004), as border violence against migrant men at the Bosnian-Croatian border illustrates.

Specifically, as the result of linking male migration with a terror, the single men are stranded in a parallel movement between being considered as a visible threat and directly attacked versus being considered as not vulnerable enough and rendered as invisible in the humanitarian aid in the camps. The tendency to consider single men as not-enough-refugees, cowards failing to protect their home countries or dangerous (ex) combatants, has thus a significant violent impact on their everyday life at the borders, which the following section explores in great detail.

7.3: 'Single (migrant) men' moving between visibility and invisibility in border violence.

While the previous research in Serbia shows that single men were excluded from the legal transit onwards in comparison to families, and thus, left to play the games (Augustová, 2020), I found that all migrants (men, women, children) arriving in Bosnia had no legal channels onwards. This also differs to the U.S.-Mexico borders, where those attempting unauthorised border crossing and risking deaths are particularly young adult men (Donato et al., 2008; Martínez et al., 2014). In Bosnia, gender and the family unit diminished within the state-managed border transit system as no individual was classed by the state authorities or NGOs as vulnerable and prioritised to legally enter the EU and claim asylum there.

However, I found that gender soon played into priorities within unauthorised border crossing management as well as who appeared to be most at risks of daily border attacks. Whereas the men were regularly departing for the games and *rehla* in Bosnia with their GPS locators their only possession, families told me during the interviews how they had walked for weeks in mountainous terrains and with limited food, while also trying to avoid detection by border guards with loud or crying children. For this reason, most families explained how they would pay thousands of euros to human smugglers, to transport them in various vehicles faster and safer to Italy. Families also pointed out that

they were given priority on the waiting lists of smugglers-run transports, offered better prices and treatments by people smugglers than the men.

Importantly, gender also impacted on the men's experiences of direct and crude forms of violence during the push-backs. The families, who were discovered and apprehended by the border patrols, either managed to claim asylum in the country of apprehension (Croatia or Slovenia) or were pushed back to Bosnia, mostly without the use of physical violence, in contrast to the men. Single men recognised that border guards avoided using attacks during family push-backs and for this reason, many sought to leave for the games with families. This strategy stemmed in the men's belief that border guards would not attack them in front of the women and children, whom they felt in most cases to be considered as vulnerable and protected from violence, unlike the men. However, the men regularly told how they were violently targeted in front of the women and children, and a few women shared stories of how they had to observe with their children physical attacks against their male companions. For example, Eram (47, Iran, August 2018) said during the interview: 'They took all single (men) on the side and started beating them. We (women and children) were standing by and watching. Police were beating them with batons. 5 policemen on 5 single (men). Every policeman was beating one single man and kept beating them. One man was crying and another was vomiting. They stopped but after started beating them again.'

Hence, within the established border deterrents along the Croatian-Bosnian borders, which were over time increasingly brutal, the single men were the dominant demographic group targeted by border patrols. While the women and children were often told to step aside, the men were attacked, as Jalal (22, Syria, November, 2018) stressed during the interview: 'When the police see small children, they don't beat them, but when they see me and I am a man, they beat me'. The consequences of the daily border attacks were visible in the camps, where dozens of male injured bodies struggled to move around while cleaning and covering their injuries. Although it needs to be highlighted that the women, in contrast to the men, told me how they would be sexually harassed by border guards through inappropriate body searches or being forced to remove their clothes. Nevertheless, more extreme forms of violence, such as severe beatings resulting in serious injuries, broken and fractured bones were reported only by two women, compared to dozens of single men. Here, at least, the violence against women and children appeared to be a more random behaviour of individual police officers rather than something systematic when compared to the experiences of the men.

Interestingly, those women and children who were physically attacked pointed out that the attacks were often initially targeting their father or brother but turned against them when they stood up to protect their male family members. For example, Fatima (40, Iran, July 2018) told me during the

interview that the officer attacked her 15 year old daughter while she wanted to save her father from the attacks during the push-back: 'My daughter was walking as the last one (during the push-back from Croatia to Bosnia) and she saw her father being beaten. When my daughter saw her father being beaten, she said to the police: "Please, stop beating my father and beat me instead of him." And the police started beating my daughter.' Similarly, within different interviews, the men said that their wives or children got injured while they were instinctively protecting them, but the attacks were not initially targeting the females or children.

While the cases of women and children being directly attacked or injured during the push-backs were rare, in contrast to the regular direct attacks of single men, abused and injured women and children returning to Bosnian camps attracted high levels of attention and concern. This firstly demonstrate the responses of the local residents, who often searched for medical care and food and clothes or even accommodation for the families, after they had been forced to return to Bosnia, while the men struggled to obtain basic medical attention and shelter after their return from the border. The women's and children's wounds were also attracting the attention of journalists, who arrived in Bosnia to portray stories of border violence and misery. The wounds on a female's or a child's body were more likely to satisfy the media demands as these were depicting the so considered real vulnerable victims, who were too weak to protect themselves against violence.

Similarly, the attention of lawyers involved in legal advocacy of border violence victims, with whom our organisation cooperated, often rejected the abused men as not worth of their work. When I asked one lawyer from an anonymous organisation to help to open a litigation case for an Iranian adult man, she responded: 'One hearing at the court costs 500 euros with the discount and it will be lots of work. If we would do this all effort and money would be spent for this, we should pick the case of some child or a woman'. As she said, a few cases of families mistreated at the borders opened their litigation cases and their pushbacks attracted attention by the competent authorities. While migrant women and children certainly need academic attention and ought to be protected as the most vulnerable, I agree with critical scholars who argue that such heteronormative assumptions lead both to migrant women's infantilization and to the needs of migrant men being overlooked (Helms, 2015; Turner, 2019b), and more importantly, as the data here shows, the violence against the men to continue with impunity.

I further learned that gender then impacted more subtle and structural forms of violence within the everyday living conditions and humanitarian (non)provision of aid in Bosnia, where people returned after their push-back. Little support in the camps provided by NGOs, related differently to the single men than to the women and children. While in the spring 2018, families lived by the side of the single men in the makeshift Trnovi camp, in July the same year, UNHCR and IOM workers arrived in this camp

and started selecting 'vulnerable' individuals for their relocation to the newly opened formal 'Hotel Sedra' camp, while writing down names of families. The rumours spread how Sedra was a nice hotel, where private rooms, three meals per day, clean water, hot showers, and medical care were provided; all lacking in the Trnovi camp. While the men were looking at the last families entering buses and leaving, they started questioning: 'So, what will happen with us now? We will keep living here like animals? Can we go to the normal camp? We have been here for six months and we are tired.' The men were relocated after snow and rain severely destroyed the makeshift camp in December the same year, to a former factory camp 'Miral', which differed from the Trnovi camp only with a shelter, but poor hygiene, no privacy, and limited aid remained. Miral, a male-dominated camp, also became known as a place where security guards commonly using violence against male residents, resulting in the death of Ahmed, a 53 year old man from Iraq, in March 2020.

State-run humanitarian gaps, such as accommodation and aid in makeshift camps, were filled by sensibilities of local and international activists and the local population, whom all however, also thought differently about single men than other demographics. While volunteers in the Trnovi camp acknowledge single men and were interested in their needs, their limited donations and capacities excluded the men when priorities had to be established. For instance, in the spring 2018 with the high influx of the newly arriving migrants, families were given most of the donations; tents, blankets and sleeping bags, while many males were seen to sleep rough without any cover. Furthermore, voluntary donations were filled by women's and children's items, and therefore, the men often struggled to obtain shoes and clothes. When alternative accommodation was established by international volunteers in Sarajevo, it was also available only for the families: 'No, we never take any single guys. Just families because they are much more vulnerable and at risk', said Paul, a volunteer. Hence, marginalisation and the consequent invisibility of single men in humanitarian support commonly stemmed from the limited resources and capacities of aid providers, who prioritised women and children as their struggle for aid was considered as more in need than the one of single men. The priority was established based on gender and family unit, like in state-managed border systems discussed previously, perceiving single men as able to cope with harm.

Similarly, dozens of Bosnian citizens shared their private accommodations with families, women, and children. The local population also entered the Trnovi camp to share their food with those in need, particularly during Muslim religious celebrations. For example, dozens of residents arrived in the camp by cars during Bayram (Eid). The local people were walking around the camp with boxes full of food, looking into tents and searching for children and women. When they found out that in most cases the tent was occupied by single men, they left without donating, and continued searching for their right receivers of their aid. The men started making fun and kept shouting: 'Here, we have a baby!', and

pretended to cry out loud like a baby with laughter but remained ignored. Through these jokes, the men made a serious point about their role on the bottom of hierarchy of aid that excludes them and reproduces violence. Thus, single men are perceived and treated as based on the dominant cultural assumptions about masculinity and its role in migration by diverse actors, ranging from state authorities, humanitarian organisations, international volunteers to local residents.

This shows that (single) men have an uncertain and controversial position in migration, as highlighted in an emerging research on male migration discussing border technologies and border practices (Arsenijević et al., 2018; Augustová, 2020; Bigo, 2011; Milivojević, 2018) or humanitarian technologies (Carpenter, 2018; Charsley & Wray, 2015; Turner, 2019a; Turner, 2019b). Turner (2019a) argues that this uncertainty particulalry impacts the men's position in humanitarian aid; the men still endow with power, agency and independence even in the precarious context of migration, and thus, are side-lined in the hierarchy of support, which this research confirms. However, the encounters here also shed light on other forms of violence – direct attacks, which work on the premise that the men coming from conflict-affected societies are ex-combatants due to the discrepancy of their masculinity with victimisation (Myrttinen et al., 2017), which are generally underexamined in the research on male migration. Thus, the assumptions about men's role in migration at the Bosnian-Croatian borders as 'independent', 'strong' or 'threatenig' predicted the complex experiences of violence, when on the one hand, rendering the men invisible in humanitarian aid, but on the other hand, constructing the men as a visible threat during the games, triggering police attacks. Whilst gender is assumed to organise violence against women (Crenshaw, 1991; Shepherd, 2007; Stubbs, 2015), the migrant men became the most prominent victims of gendered violence within so the considered liberal European police security at the Bosnian-Croatian border.

To this end, I argue that it is the direct and brutal forms of violence from which the specific dynamic of how the migrant men are perceived and treated at the EU's external land borders stems, which has been also previously observed by the Serbian borders with Croatia and Hungary (Arsenijević et al., 2018; Augustová, 2020). The single men migrating across the Bosnian-Croatian borders are considered agential, powerful, and violent particularly by state authorities, such as border patrols. Deriving upon Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005), these assumptions allows predominantly male state authorities to exercise force and re-assure their power in competition within masculinity over other-migrant men. Although I observed that the anti-male-migrant anxieties are premised on fears of Arab Muslim men, which suggests that gendered violence is racialized, which means that it is further legitimised by race and religion (Carr & Haynes, 2015). In line with this, the following section explores how how gender in tandem with race organise migrants' sujbection to violence.

7.4: Racialized violence? Making sense of Arab Muslim male identities in border violence.

Whilst the importance of gender on border violence is clear, it is fundamental to further stress that those living in the makeshift camps and trying to play games were mainly men, who commonly shared other social locations, such as race and religion despite rich differences among them. The majority were men of colour and came from Arab countries either in the Middle East or North Africa. Most were Muslims, while only a few were Christians, Hindu, and almost none were atheists. Since the northern Bosnian population were also predominantly Muslims, the men often told how they were treated with respect and care in the camps around Kladuša. Imran, the ex-veteran and the owner of the restaurant hosting migrants would often say: 'Bosnian or Syrian, (it) does not matter. We are all Muslims.'

However, Muslim men were trying to hide their religion when moving only a few kilometres across the Bosnian border into Croatia. They feared being mistreated by Croatian patrols, who were mainly Christians with the recent histories scored with Muslim-Christian violence (Hoare, 2006; Razsa & Lindstrom, 2004) and the right-wing government striving for 'white' and 'Christian' borders (MacDowall, 2018; Pavlaković, 2008). Participants pointed out during the interviews that their Arab Muslim identities were stressed by the border guards, who were stripping them naked, destroying their phones, and attacking them during the push-backs. When Muslim men revealed their religion to Croatian border patrols during the pushbacks, this often triggered verbal or/and physical attacks. For example, Abu (54, Iraq) told to Croatian police officers that he was a Muslim, with the intention to show that he had good values without any violent intentions, and asked the patrols to let him go: 'One police told me: 'So, you are a Muslim? Muslims killed my cousin during the war! Fuck Muslims!' He got very angry when I said that I was a Muslim and he was horrible to me. He was shouting at me and kicking to my legs and deport (pushback)' (Abu).

'When you say I am Muslim, I am Arab, Croatian police don't like you. They are racists', also pointed out Majid (24, Algeria, July 2018). Indeed, discriminatory assumptions about race and religion were explicit when police officers were insulting the participants before or while violently pushing them back to Bosnia. These insults were mostly stressing the men's origins, upon which the police considered them as not deserving to enter the EU territory: 'You don't go to Europe, fuck you, go back to Bosnia!' (Houmam, 22, Syria, November 2018) or 'Police said to us: 'Go back and not come, fuck you!' They were saying: 'You are terrorists, Taliban!' (Ferdous, 17, Afghanistan, June 2018). The men described that these insults made them to feel 'scared', 'humiliated', 'less than human', 'criminal', 'terrorist', or 'savage', as they pointed out during the interviews.

This shows that the men were attacked based on their biological and cultural characteristics, such as skin colour, nationality and religion, besides their migration status and gender. Bhui (2018) suggests

that practices against Arab Muslim men, such as surveillance, violence and imprisonment are observed across Europe when policing system legitimises violence against Arabs and Muslims, as also discussed by Fanon in post-colonial France (1961). Such practices call to perceive and treat this group of men as a homogenous terrorist group, as illustrated by the interview narratives here, which goes in line with the war on terror approach, in which male gender and racialization of Arab Muslims construe the focal social categories to target those considered as dangerous (Razack, 2004).

However, it needs to be said that a few women, like the men, reported that the police were using their race and religion while inappropriately body frisking them or forcing them to remove their clothes. For example, Madina, who was travelling with her children and husband, felt that her religion and country of origin played an important role for the border guards, who were pushing them back:

> I said to the police that I was a Muslim and refused to take off my clothes. But they said, 'No problem' and took off all my clothes. They forced me to take all my clothes off and kept repeating to me: 'Pička ti materina (fuck you in Slovenian, meaning go back from where you came from)' … After, the police told me and other women maybe five times or six times to take off our scarfs, but I did not want to. My son was scared and told me: 'Mum, please, remove your scarf because otherwise maybe they hit you' I was crying. And the police removed the scarf from my head and threw it on the ground. It was very difficult for me. The policeman told me: 'This is the last time that you wore your scarf. Here is not Afghanistan, here is Slovenia, here is no Islam!' (Madina, 47, Afghanistan, August 2018).

This illustrates how Arab and Muslim identities are racialized in the exercise of border violence, mostly for the men, and that in the crude attacks, but also for a few women and their children, while being subjected to body searches and sexual harassment. The participants considered their race and religion, particularly triggering violence when intersecting with male gender. We can read from the migrants' narratives that their subjection to violence was organised by racial purity and gender domination, when white, Christian and predominantly male border forces used violence when racializing migrants as Others. Indeed, race and gender are framed in feminist literature as the pivotal social categories for the particular distribution of social resources, causing structural violence, but also leading to experiences of direct violence and its legitimisation (Anthias & Yuval-Davis, 1996; Crenshaw, 1991; Harris, 2000; Mills, 1996; Razack, 2004; Stubbs, 2015; Yuval-Davis, 2006), as illustrated here.

However, how can we make sense of border violence targeting specifically racialized men when most feminist literature considers women of colour as in greater risk of violence? Although I met a few women reporting violence, which cannot be side-lined, I place in the centre of the discussion here Arab Muslim men. It is these men that I found as more prone to direct and brutal violence in the specific

context of the Bosnian-Croatian borders due to the different cultural categorisation of gender and race in migration. Here, uncontroversial refugees in need of help are portrayed as brown-skinned women (Griffiths, 2015; Malkki, 1996), while illegal migrants, criminals, terrorists and combatants are portrayed as brown-skinned Muslim men (Milivojević, 2018). From this is evident that to understand violent realities at the border, we must understand both men's and women's perspectives to overcome gendered and racialized categorisations such as violent and dangerous Arab Muslim masculinities, victimised and imperilled Arab Muslim femininities framed in modern civilised western subjectivities (Razack, 2004). This is of great importance given that Harris (2000) argues that mostly men of colour are subjected to the crudest police security practices in liberal democracies, which also implies for border violence at the EU's external land borders.

The men told of their awareness of the border violence as gendered and racialized, and attempted to prevent it in different ways. For instance, one boy coming from the north of Algeria told me that he was scared to go in the game with his close friend from a southern region of Algeria, whom was darker than him: 'I am worried to move with him although he is my friend and I respect him. But you know, his face, when someone will see us, they will immediately call the police and you know what follows', he said. A few Muslim men also told of how they would shave their beards or wear a crucifix around their necks when departing for the games, as they believed that looking like a Christian or being a Christian would have protected them. As Ibrahim, a 26-year-old Christian from Algeria, explained that being a Christian saved his life during the push-back, when he escaped with severe back injury:

> It was in the forest in the night and I could see almost nothing. There were some men in black masks and black clothes. They started beating me and I fell on the ground and I could feel blows everywhere and electric (shocks) in my neck. They kept beating me and beating me. For a moment one stopped because he was tired from beating me, but others continued the beatings. I started shouting loud for Jesus to help me and saying a prayer, and suddenly, they stopped and let me go (Ibrahim).

Ibrahim's testimony allows us to further map how diverse forms of violence closely intersect with the assumptions about gender and race and function as key features of the everyday experiences along the EU's borders with Bosnia, as shaped by racism and patriarchy (Crenshaw, 1991). From the data it is clear that gendered and racial violence did not occur randomly, but rather underpinned the logics of the crudest border attacks. Also, Isakjee et al. (2020) argue that the racial nature of border violence cannot be contingent on the explicit avowals on behalf of the oppressor.

How race underpins the logics of treating diverse migrants is not only visible on the ground but also in political and humanitarian statements presented across the media, which further demonstrates

racialization of border violence against the men of colour. The narratives about 'defending Christianity' from the 'virus of terrorism' and 'mixed-race nations' have been heard from the countries on the EU's edge, such as Croatia and Hungary, who use brutal attacks of migrants along their southern borders (Fekete, 2018; Razsa & Lindstrom, 2004). Such racialized and gendered language of border control has transferred from the far right to the mainstream in SEE (Milivojević, 2018, p 88), which significantly mediated the men's experiences of border violence presented here.

The racializing of Muslim migrants as unwanted 'others' within a white Europe is not only visible through the direct attacks in Croatia and Slovenia. It has been argued elsewhere that race in migration predicts more subtle and structural forms of violence, such as the denial of aid in the Calais camps (Isakjee et al., 2020) or closure of legal transit in SEE region to maintain 'homogenous ethnicity' in the EU (Milivojević, 2018; Pajnik, 2019). The use and obscuration of violence, in its direct forms, is particularly explicit along the Croatian-Bosnian borders, where injuries are pushed from Croatia to Muslim and 'other' not-quite-European places in Bosnia, where violence is assumed to belong and remains unquestioned[24]. Simultaneously, Croatian border practices are being financially supported by the EU Commission and praised as an outstanding job by prominent EU politicians[25]. Importantly, gendered and racialized violence against migrant men has been also observed beyond Europe. For example, Bigo (2011) argues that the imagined threat in the U.S. border controls racialize Hispanic migrant men the same way as Arab Muslim men in Europe.

Indeed, racialized and gendered logics of violence, particularly in its structural forms, has been imminent to the liberal and modern democracies across the world, which adds to the encounters how race and gender organise border violence presented here. Profiling based on the intersections of gender and race is a crucial aspect of broader smart 'open' and 'liberal' border approaches across Europe, the U.S. or Australia, which target those classified as potential threats (Amoore, 2006; Didier Bigo, 2014; Hess & Kasparek, 2017; Reece Jones & Johnson, 2016). For instance, in February 2020, the chief executive officer of Ryanair Michael O'Leary said that Muslim men travelling alone should be profiled at airports as potential bombers as 'this is where the threat is coming from' (Aljazeera, 2020). In the same way, fear of non-white migrant men, who pose a rape threat to 'our white women', is a tried and true formula that reinforces the notions of white male actors across Croatia and Hungary (Helms, 2015), which was similarly used as the governmental technique to control white family units colonial and post-colonial Britain (Turner, 2015).

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[24] Ibid, Chapter 6, p 74.
[25] Ibid, Chapter 8, p 109.

Indeed, these political narratives are not new as the rich literature shows that race in violence has been imminent to European colonial histories (Fanon, 1961; Foucault, 1975; Lazreg, 2008). The racial and gender roles are shaped by assumptions about migrants' social and cultural backgrounds in post-colonial European white states, particularly those re-assuring their position there, such as Croatia. These narratives producing and re-producing fear of the migrant Arab Muslim men as terrorists or threats are thus used as an anti-immigration politico-cultural strategy. According to Kaya (2016), these narratives do not only legitimise violence against racialized migrants but also reinforce European power and identity, similar to how other forms of racism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries operated. To this end, the violence experienced by the migrants cannot be understood outside racism, nationalism, and patriarchy as these create social conditions in which such violence is rendered as natural, expected, and even to be regarded as deserved (Vogt, 2018).

Essentially, border violence is rationalised (Galtung, 1990; Said, 1978) when violence is sanitised by the supposed superiority of Christianity over Islam, white face over brown face, and Europeans over Arabs. Legitimisation of racial hierarchies can be encompassed in the history of how Europe orientalised Arabs and Muslims as the most recurring images of the Other across colonization (Said, 1978), to the post 9/11 Western military interventions in the Middle East within the war on terror (Basham & Vaughan-Williams, 2013), and border practices against racialized migrants at the EU's borders today (Isakjee et al., 2020).

I found that these assumptions are not random, but rather are reinforced structurally when formalising rules or orders at the Bosnian-Croatian borders (i.e. right to asylum, legal border access, humanitarian aid, who is subjected to push-backs and direct violence). Once such behaviours become integrated into laws and social mores, state authorities and others involved in border violence may find themselves in positions of rationalizing their acts simply because 'I was only doing my job, following orders' (Schneider et al., 2017, p 69), which echoes reaction of a Croatian border guard to one of my participants during the push-back, who told him: 'We have orders to beat you all'. This argument also finds support in the previous research that shows that political ideologies of European states go hand in hand with racially converting Muslim migrants from Arab states to 'backward' and 'dangerous' cultures, towards which exploitation in home states or diverse forms of violence along borders are triggered and justified (Helms, 2015; Isakjee et al., 2020; Mafu, 2019; Milivojević, 2018).

Hence, some border practices are indeed made possible by certain operating logics that are always already both highly gendered and racialized (Basham & Vaughan-Williams, 2013, p 510). To this end, I argue that the negative symbolic positioning of Arab Muslim migrant men at the European borders does not only allow violence to be triggered against them, but importantly, it also allows this violence

to operate with no visible marks as the men's lives are culturally imaged as not quite refugees, not quite men, and as Butler (2004) argues, not quite lives, besides the fact that their injured bodies are thrown away in the not-quite-Europe – the Balkans, where violence supposedly belong.

7.5: Conclusion.

By highlighting how male gender with Arab Muslim origin and other social locations intersect and shedding light on how these organise border violence, this chapter has offered a critique of the existing research that argues that violence impacts specifically women and children (Hladnik, 2016; Pajnik & Bajt, 2012; Zavratnik & Krilić, 2018). The encounters from the Bosnian-Croatian borders and their analysis instead showed how the neglect of the men in migration research treats migrants as would-be refugees, which often slips into their perception as non-vulnerable. I found such dominant cultural assumptions common among state authorities, humanitarian agencies and other actors who manage the migrants' journeys, which proved to be dangerous. This echoes Harris' (2000) argument that cultural fantasies of race, nation, and gender in white liberal societies result in violent police security to overcome non-white male evil, as also illustrated in the context of the Bosnian-Croatian border.

I have argued in this chapter how single men appeared to be at the highest risk of diverse forms of border violence. This was firstly explained by the dominant assumption of masculine agency; men are considered as 'strong', 'not vulnerable' and 'independent', in contrast to genuine refugee women and children (Griffiths, 2015; Malkki, 1996). This chapter also showed that when masculinity intersects with migration, particularly from war zones, the men travelling 'single' were deemed 'unreal refugees' and 'threats'. As the consequence of this, the men were perpetually moving between violent invisibility in the camps – left out of the aid provision and legal support, and violent visibility during the games – subjected to interceptions, direct attacks and push-backs. Data on male migration in scarce (Arsenijević et al., 2018; Augustová, 2020; Carpenter, 2005; Charsley & Wray, 2015; Turner, 2019a, 2019b) and my argument here highlights how it is intertwined with the experiences of diverse forms of border violence. However, direct violence along the borders as a predominantly masculine experiences remains underexamined in the studies on male migration, which construes the main contribution of this chapter.

I further argue how race intersects with gender to organise violence against these 'single' men, who were predominantly Arab Muslims. The dominant ideologies about race and religion were explicit themes in my conversations with the men as they explained how their Arab Muslim identities were stressed by the border guards as they stripped them naked, destroyed their phones, and attacked them. While the intersections of gender and race in violence are dedicated to women in feminist literature (Crenshaw, 1991), it is my argument here that these intersections also play a crucial role in

men's lives. I have argued that race allowed for cultural legitimisation (Galtung, 1990) of the violence against the male participants; it made it feel 'right' or at least 'not wrong' as those subjected to beatings were positioned as 'others'.

Whilst racialized violence has been imminent within the past colonialization and today's militant presence of Western states in Arab Muslim states, how race and visible difference in particular organise violence is also illustrative along the Bosnian-Croatian borders. This border context is particularly significant to understand also due to its recent Muslim-Christian violence and the Croatian far-right government. Violence against Arab Muslim male migrants thus signifies the ongoing struggle for pure ethnic – white and Christian borders in Croatia, under its struggle for Europeanisation; most recently the succession to the Schengen Zone.

Chapter 8: Games and push-backs: the direct border violence.

8.1: Introduction.

It has been argued in the previous chapters that geographical distinction between what is considered as Balkan and Europe is used to legitimise violence against migrants, when this context clearly organised the men's border games, and violence that followed them. Moreover, the pre-existing ideas about gender and 'race' within European liberal discourse in the same manner predict and mediate violence against Arab Muslim migrant single men in the context of the Bosnian-Croatian borders. Following this we are still left with two important questions. First, what are the migrants' experiences of violence when playing games from Bosnia into EU member states, where they are being deterred by state authorities and pushed back? And, second, how do the migrants understand that violence? It is the first of these questions that will be considered in some detail in this chapter by asking what forms of violence against migrants take place along the EU's external border with Bosnia.

This chapter begins by setting out the process of what many migrants call the 'dirty work of push-backs', which often ends their border games, when most commonly Croatian border guards inflict harm on game players and their possessions. It explores the extent of the direct violence on migrants and its everyday detailed processes. By doing so, this section aims to further our understanding of the direct form of border violence, which is commonly side-lined in academic literature.

The chapter will then shed light on how this direct border violence evolved across time, when discussing its perpetrators and broader mission to combat cross-border crimes that underpins the objective of the direct violence. This topic will be narrated from a horizontal perspective – that is, migrants whom are at the heart of this study, rather than the vertical perspective of state-centred approaches as discussed in Chapter 3 (Ibid, p 33). As we have seen, the focus on the latter often results in only partial answers to what violence means in its 'structural' forms, without concrete persons and direct actions on the ground. In line with this, the chapter focuses on the direct attacks and seeks to identify its 'structural' origins which in reality, construe concrete smart and military technologies, bilateral agreements and international cooperation during 'push-backs' stretching between EUs' external and internal borders.

From there, the chapter will explore the detailed patterns of violent police strategies targeting border crossers' bodies, possessions and persona, as narrated by the migrants. Drawing upon the men's subjective experiences encountered during the interviews, it will explore where exactly this direct violence takes place and what these places, together with the violent police strategies, indicate in

terms of a broader understanding of how the direct border violence functions and sustains with impunity.

Finally, the conclusions will summarise the major arguments of this chapter, when pointing to how the direct violence functions in the border enforcements and how the migrants experience it. It will establish a foundation for further examination of the research question that asks in which forms border violence functions at borders after migrants are pushed back to Bosnian makeshift camps, before moving to the focal examination of this thesis of how these diverse forms of violence impact migrants' everyday practices and relations.

8.2: 'Dirty work of push-backs'.

One morning when we arrived at the shower trailers with Rosalinde, there was already a long queue of men waiting to wash themselves. I saw many familiar faces greeting us. Some other faces were new, who were either pushed to Kladuša the previous night or came to prepare for the new game. The day was cold and all standing in the line were nervous while waiting. Some were arguing about overtaking each other in the line, resulting in arguments. As the day passed, again, another man was trying to jump the queue, while slowly walking directly to the door of the shower trailer. He was arguing, but in low voice, that he just returned from the game, was injured and needed to have a shower immediately. Others got angry and started showing him dirty clothes and their bruises: 'You are not the only one who got punishment yesterday! We all need to shower! Go to the line!', a man with Pakistani accent shouted out in English. But while others could stand and wait, this man fell on the ground. When I helped him to sit down, he told me his name was Saad. He explained that he had taken some medication to kill a pain in his chest, which made him feel dizzy:

> Croatian commandos kicked me into my chest. It was horrible. They were deporting us around 3 in the morning and for three or four hours after, we were searching for each other in a forest. They were beating also an old man, who was there with us and now has broken finger. They were humiliating us badly … Do you have a cigarette? I have money (pulling ten Bosnian marks out of his pocket), but I cannot go to the supermarket because I feel so dizzy and tired. I keep vomiting blood. I can't eat anything as I vomit it back out. I think, I have maybe internal bleeding from so many kicks into my chest (Saad).

Later, while Saad was being treated by a medical volunteer, I went to see the other three men who had been deported with him and agreed to meet me for a coffee and interview. When entering a café, I saw a tall man in his thirties, with a dirty leather jacket that was probably two sizes bigger than he needed. His name was Mahmoud, and he was half Palestinian and half Syrian, as he later noted. Next

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to him, was an old man with wrinkles on his face, greeting me in Arabic: '*Marhaba*', with a smile. He introduced himself as Haji, which in the Arabic language means a title of a respected elder. Indeed, this former Iraqi army general was sitting straight during our whole conversation, talking about the border attack with his head up and covering his broken finger into his jacket sleeve to prevent anyone from seeing it. Haji insisted on paying for my coffee from his last money, which he managed to save from the Croatian police during the push-back. 'If you pay, I leave', Haji said. The last one sitting by the table, Saad, was an Iraqi young-looking boy with light moustache and broken glasses on his face. I wanted to sit next to Mahmoud because he was fluent in English and had offered to translate for others if I did not understand, but he refused: 'Sorry, but please don't come too close to me because I smell horrible. I had no shower for one week because during the game, you can't shower. I am sorry but I feel ashamed of my smell. All hotels refuse to rent a room to refugees. So, no shower for us.' I moved my chair further to make him feel comfortable and switched on the voice recorder on my phone. Mahmoud then started narrating what had happened to him and the other 16 people travelling with them during their pushback the previous night:

> Croatian commando put all of us into very small van, into a boot. For thirty minutes, they were driving us, very fast, like on purpose, stopping and driving. There was not enough air inside. Saad started vomiting, and children started crying. It was really awful. On the way, they stopped the van and let the family with children go. I don't know where they are now. But all men, they left us inside and transported us into different location to beat us. At the border, they opened the car, and Saad was still vomiting, and they saw him vomiting but they started beating him. They hit him on his arm with a baton. They made us to sit down, closed the van, one by one, and they asked me: 'Where are you from?' I said to him: 'I am from Syria.' He answered: 'What is the matter with Syria?!', and he started beating, beating, beating. And after, he told me: 'Go!'. Ok, so, when I started walking from the van, I had to pass all of them (police officers). They made different lines and while passing these lines, they were beating me with batons. I was falling, and they kept beating (me). When it was Saad's turn, his glasses fell from his face. So, when he run, there was a tree in front of him and he crashed into that tree because he could not see properly (all men laughing).

When Mahmoud paused, Saad then described how a commando poured water on his head, and when he felt water and could see nothing just water over his face, they started attacking him with batons to his back and arms. Finally, the commandos pushed him down a hill and he broke his arm while falling. At the end of our conversation, Mahmoud stressed that he will have a rest for two days, before returning to the game.

I have quoted Mahmoud at length because men like him, as like many others, considered the attacks as 'horrible'. Nevertheless, they would conclude that they were planning to risk being beaten again as they believed it was necessary to eventually reach their destinations. This is attributed to having no legal and safe transit options since the official closure of the 'Balkan Route' in March 2016 (Santer & Wriedt, 2017), when policies were put in place to stop the migratory movements. However, direct violence was called into an action when structural violence crumbled, which is a vicious cycle pointed out by Galtung (1969) when one form of violence is always ready to reinforce the other. This cycle, when legal and safe passages are closed, giving migrants no other option than to attempt unauthorised border crossings, harms and deaths, are known to exist along the Mediterranean and Aegean Seas to Italy and Greece (Albahari, 2015), in the desert between Mexico and the U.S. (Coutin, 2005; Doty, 2011), to the shores of Australia (Parsley, 2003), as well as internal EU borders between France and England (Jones, 2019).

While I was chatting with dozens of men waiting for showers the mornings following their push-backs, I could see how tired they were and often screaming from pain, but most had no doubts to start new games. As Abdullah (19, Syria, October 2018) said to me while cleaning his face full of scratches after being pushed out of the hill by the Croatian police the previous night: '*Wallah*! (I swear by God in Arabic), I rest and sleep and in two days, again to Croatia!' Abdullah and his friends were lucky as they stayed in Kladuša for only a few weeks: 'I see you in England soon!', he joked when leaving to the Croatian border. After one month, I found out that he was in London, the end point of a journey that for the majority of people took years or was never completed. While Abdullah got lucky, the regular game scenario, however, resulted in more black eyes, sprained ankles, broken or fractured limbs, and footlong bruises from baton strikes.

Those pushed out of the EU appeared again in Bosnia, with their phones destroyed and no money, waiting in long lines for voluntary medical assistance, to wash themselves and clean their muddy clothes in the provisional showers. Similar narratives were common rather than exceptional when the vast majority of men in the camps said to me during our conversations that they had been either subjected to physical attacks or witnessed others being beaten while being pushed back from EU's states throughout their journeys. While living in Kladuša across the four seasons of the year, I was learning how this violence functioned on the ground through its systematic organisation and deployment of diverse perpetrators and their weapons, based upon the migrants' experiences and interpretations of this violence, which the following section explores.

8.3: Understanding structural organisation and perpetrators of direct border violence.

Those stranded in Bosnia shared a collective experience of the direct violence, which I observed was dependent and flexible upon the wider EU's as well as national Croatian border managements and their trending securitising tools; as changing and increasing over the time of my fieldwork and the weather. Upon my arrival in Bosnia in the spring 2018, most people in the camps who had been apprehended during the games described being driven to Croatian borders with Bosnia. There they were expelled by police officers in blue uniforms matching those of the Croatian regular police (Temeljna policija). According to the migrants' narratives, these officers mostly damaged their phones and stole their money, and in several cases hit them with plastic batons while shouting at them to go back to Bosnia.

During this time, it seemed that police used slaps, kicks, punches, blows with batons and physical force only occasionally, and then only when suspecting that an apprehended person was a human smuggler. A 17 years old Ferdous from Afghanistan, who lived in Bosnia for about seven months and was trying to walk across the Bosnian-Croatian border almost every week, was attacked as an assumed 'smuggler' several times. When Rosalinde and myself drove the van to bring water to the 'Helicopter place', where Ferdous lived with thirty other men, we noticed him standing by with a broken arm. 'They (Croatian police) saw I had GPS and information was in my mobile. He (policeman) asked me if it was my phone and I said yes. He said that I was a smuggler and he started beating me into my head and slapped me, 'tack' 'tack'! and he said that I was a smuggler', Ferdous explained about his injury from his last game.

This and other police accusations of smuggling, however, were based on weak evidence, for instance, finding an open GPS on a phone or a person's ability to communicate in English, upon which he was considered as leading the whole group across the borders and then attacked. These attacks served as a punishment outside of juridical procedures for possible criminal activity. While combating human smuggling has been the major part of the European Agenda on Migration (European Commission, 2015) and Frontex's mission (2020), the attacks, however, were generally targeting migrants wanting to apply for asylum in Croatia or Slovenia or pass further. The similar disparities in fighting crimes and saving lives have been extensively researched in the Mediterranean Sea, where humanitarian values are used to enforce border controls (İşleyen, 2018). For instance, Sekulić (2017, p 45) pointed out the Joint EU's Operation Triton actions fighting smugglers: 'The narrowness of the operations' mandate – i.e. only targeting traffickers – leaves open questions of the migrants'. In line with this, it has been argued that the combat of smugglers at sea – pushing the boats back to their places of departure (Andersson, 2014; De Genova, 2017; Garelli & Tazzioli, 2018; Stierl, 2018) and withdrawing of aid to boats in difficulties (Cuttitta, 2018; Squire, 2017) - function as strategies of non-arrivals for migrants

from the Global South (Weber & Pickering, 2011) rather than combating human smugglers. This also applies in the security operations across the Bosnian-Croatian-Slovenian borders, with the difference that the violence is inflicted by a human direct force, which substitutes for the inhospitable nature of the Mediterranean Sea or the desert between Mexico and the U.S. (Doty, 2011; Martínez et al., 2014).

However, when the numbers of people arriving in Bosnia to attempt the games increased in July 2018, when warm weather made it easier to migrate, I observed that the perpetrators of the direct border violence and their tactics changed into more systematic and brutal ones, despite the EU's repeated calls for humanitarianism (Avramopoulos, 2018). Simultaneously, the helicopter above the camp was flying more regularly and pointing strong lights over the camp and forests. When I went to smoke on the balcony of our volunteer house in the night, I could hear gun shots from the nearby border. Rosalinde was sitting next to me in silence, waiting to know if more shootings were going to be heard and after, saying: 'Tonight will be many push-backs and tomorrow, many sad faces in the camp again, pfff.'

Interestingly, the study by Isakjee and colleagues (2020) shows that it was after July, 2018 that Croatia started receiving more EU funds for 'interception operations' to deploy airplanes and visual data to stream to the over 1000-strong Croatian border police, and technologies, such as watchtowers, thermal vision cameras, drones, and helicopters. With the deployment of these smart border measures, I observed more visible bodily injuries across the camps, which rather confirms the argument by Kraska (2007) and Jones and Johnson (2016) that the techno-scientific borders are deeply intertwined with a military approach and the use of direct violence, rather than mere symbolic or structural violence (Amoore, 2006; Bigo, 2014). This echoes Galtung's (1969) argument that there is a causal relationship between structural violence, such as border policies and technologies, and direct attacks. In confirmation, those returning to the camps from the Croatian border stressed they were often detected by drones, and then attacked and expelled by the special border units dressed in black army-like uniforms.

People across the camps commonly referred to these police groups as 'commando' or 'military' and described them as big men with masks. For this reason, several Iraqi and Syrian participants said that their perpetrators reminded them of combatant and terrorist groups from their home states, for instance Daesh causing them flashbacks of previous harms. Others also pointed to the sword symbol on the commandos' uniforms; identifying the Croatian Special Police (*Specijalna policija*), and to dark blue uniforms and berets that match to the Croatian Intervention Police (*Interventna policija*); both units are under the authority of the Croatian Ministry of the Interior. Further camera evidence

confirmed the Croatian Ministry of the Interior's Police as consistently participating in push-backs (Border Violence Monitoring, 2018).

Although the Minister of the Interior, Davor Božinović, repeatedly denied that the Croatian police units would be expelling the migrants or using violence against them (Dambach, 2018), he said during the interview for the Aljazeera Balkans (2019) that all three police units (*Temeljna, Specijalna, Interventna policija*) were deployed to protect Croatian and EU's borders. A police whistle-blower also shared with the Croatian press that the specialised border force units, that aim to catch smugglers and migrants out of legal procedures, were often exchanged with ordinary police officers with a reputation for conflict, problems or were deployed due to their acquaintances (Klancir, 2019). Several interviewed migrants also alluded to the international (EU's) police forces when they said that their perpetrators' language sounded like Dutch, German, and Spanish. In line with this, the European Commission (2019) refers to a significant and intensive cooperation with the countries of the Western Balkans, EUROPOL, INTERPOL and the bilateral international police cooperation agreements. For instance, Croatia hosts foreign police officers through joint Frontex operations and the Frontex aircrafts are used for monitoring migration movements on the border with Bosnia (European Commission, 2019). This indicates the international planes and police forces were involved in violent push-backs during the time of my fieldwork, however, more evidence ought to be collected with the border police forces, besides political elites representing these international security organisations, to verify this.

What the data shows are the migrants' experiences of the push-backs that stretched across several EU countries – Croatia, Slovenia and Italy, leading to the migrants' expulsions to Bosnia. Game returnees described being either detected by commandos in the southern Croatian mountains or forests, or handed over to them after being caught further inside Croatia by regular police. Those who were apprehended in Slovenia said they were driven in vans to Croatia by regular police who then transported them to the southern border areas, where a group of commandos was waiting to attack them and push them back to Bosnia. A few men were also returned from Trieste (Italy), where they were apprehended by the local police, who then triggered their chain of push-back: police officers in Italy drove them to Slovenia, where they handed migrants over to the local police, who then drove them to Croatia, resulting in physical violence and push-back to Bosnia.

To this end, the most visible violence against the migrants was when the Croatian and Slovenian state authorities intentionally used physical force to cause them various bodily injuries while pushing them back to Bosnia from EU space. While listening to my participants' stories, seeing their dirty clothes and injured bodies, and recognising their disgust and shame from their own smell and body after the attack, I could encounter the reality of what Galtung (1969) calls direct violence. This most obvious form of

violence, when border forces intentionally hurt migrants somatically or destroyed their possessions (Galtung, 1969) is surprisingly often forgotten in migration analysis of violence but daily taking place at the land borders, such as the Bosnian-Croatian borders, as well as previously examined the Serbian-Croatian borders and the Hungarian-Serbian borders (Arsenijević et al., 2018).

Thus, I found that the direct violence during the push-backs was initially randomly occurring in the spring, seemed to be organised by individual police officers, and driven mainly by the aim to combat human smuggling out of legal procedures. Over time, however, the violence appeared to be taking place more regularly and in more organised manner when net of international (EU) police forces, such as Croatia, Slovenia, Italy took over. The daily attacks involved regular police, who had the role of apprehending the migrants, and the special forces, whose task was to use various strategies to inflict harm as well as destroy their private possessions while pushing them back to Bosnia, as the further data will show in more detail. Thus, the narratives collected across camps uncover a complex structure of police groups, individuals, technologies and weapons employed by them on the ground that stand behind the infliction of the direct attacks within push-backs.

Several participants noted that individual officers told them to follow orders while pushing them back or inflicting violence on them, which also indicates that violence was not triggered by unexpected or random individual police anomalities. This is for instance explicit in the interview with an Afghan family, who pointed out that an individual police officer did not want to push them back to Bosnia but he did so due to the orders from his superiors: 'He (police officer) said to us: 'Please, don't cry. Sorry. I don't want to do this, but I have to follow the orders.' I could see little tears in his eyes.'

What this reveals is that structural violence and direct violence are inherently interconnected and operate in causal relationship at the Bosnian borders with the EU (Galtung's, 1969), despite migration and border studies usually examining only structural violence, as a separated out phenomenon from direct violence. Whilst police operations are organised by state(s) based upon their policies, they use direct and personal actions against migrants (Galtung, 1969). From the testimonies I collected there appears to be international cooperation within push-backs, directed to police departments across Croatia, Slovenia and Italy, and which result in violent attacks of concrete individual police officers against the migrants on the ground. This causal relationship between direct and structural violence, observable in migrants' daily narratives, is fundamental to highlight to avoid seeing border violence as inflicted by an anonymous chain of structural orders (Jones, 2019), but human decisions and humans directly enforcing such decisions (Farmer, 2009). This confirms Vogt's (2018) argument that most violence experienced by migrants are not caused randomly by 'bad guys' - criminal organisations or a 'few bad apples' among corrupt authorities or migrants themselves. Instead, 'violence is routinised

and central to state security and enforcement practices' (Vogt, 2018, p 63). The migrants' regular accounts of being pushed back across several countries and international police cooperation, when the same patterns of violence were used indicate this.

However, even if the narratives here identify concrete human actions at the borders, it is not possible to identify all concrete people involved in structural orders, leading to direct infliction of the harms. Importantly, the violent border management stands upon the international cooperation of numerous EU and non-EU states, diverse political institutions (i.e. EU, NATO, UN), non-governmental and civic organisations, in which endless chains of actors have different political, economic and social interests. To this end, what is considered as 'state security' remains a long and highly ramified causal chains and cycles, which results in no accountability for the attacks and the continuation of the status quo (Galtung & Höivik, 1971). The fundamental question remains how this violence takes place through police strategies during push-backs and how migrants' experience and understand it in their own terms, which the following section aims to discuss.

8.4: Police strategies and traps.

It was almost midnight and I was sitting in the Syrian *heima* and drinking tea after a long day of work. In the night, the camps' ugliness disappeared in the dark and it was time to forget what was happening around. Tahir would mostly cook a dinner, we would then talk, play cards or call families back in Syria. Sometimes, I tried to tell Czech fairy tales in Arabic and others Syrian stories in English, a challenging language practice. When the mood was good, a few people would gather to dance while others would be drumming on a pot or a piece of wood and sang. When the mood was down, everybody was just lying, smoking many cigarettes and scrolling down their Facebook walls on their phone.

This night, the mood was good, at least until five Syrian men uncovered the tarpaulin door and said that they had just arrived from the push-back. The men started asking for cigarettes, food, bandages and blankets from all the others sitting in the tent. 'Here, we are like Bingo (supermarket in Kladuša). Every night, people come from the border and say, please, give me this', said Tahir and laughed. While a few volunteers and the local population were trying to aid people during the day, the help in the night was reliant only upon the camp inhabitants and their own social networks. The returnees sat down with us and recounted how they were driven in vans to the border, were subject to a few blows from police batons, all their possessions were stolen, and finally, they had to walk back to the camp for hours. I asked the men if they wanted to report their incident to our organisation the following day for the purposes of public advocacy and my thesis, and they agreed.

Following this event, I was walking home and thinking that I was going to hear their story again with all little details. Their story still shocked and scared me. However, the violence described by them was accepted as normal within the camps and their experience did not differ to all other stories of push-backs that I was hearing every day, particularly in the terms of strategies that the police used to cause them harm. The only difference was that the lucky ones, like these men, ended with no or only mild injuries or saved their money, hidden in their anus or elsewhere internally , while others could not walk from the border back to the camp without their friends carrying them and lost everything they had.

Entering the police van marked the beginning of the push-back in the men's narratives, when many pointed that they knew their game was lost. People in the camp commonly referred to such police tactics as 'combi', 'closed van', 'deport van', 'containers', 'car for criminals', 'cooking pressure pot', 'fast drive' and 'zik-zak drive'. These names referred to various strategies and suffering involved within the journey to the Bosnian border, when various harms were inflicted without using one's force. Most commonly, the men recounted the struggle to breathe inside of the vans, which were closed with no ventilation, for example Fares (25, Algeria, July 2018) said: 'Me and my friend we had a problem to breath. There was no oxygen in the container. I said to them, please, I don't have oxygen. But they started beating with the batons on the door of the van.'

Some men said that the van drove them to the Bosnian border during the day, and there they had to wait inside with no light and lack of oxygen until the night. More common was being enclosed in vans between one to three hours, and a few were trapped in combis even 24 hours. 'It was like a closed van', Vasim (Afghanistan, 26, August 2018) said to me, 'Everyone started vomiting there because there it was too hot and no air. We told the police: 'Can you please switch on the AC?' (laughing), but no AC. They turned the heater on to torture us.' Like Vasim, others also described that the police were intentionally turning a heater on to extremely high temperatures to cause them breathing problems and malaise. Struggling to breath was often combined with a fast drive when the driver would then break severely, resulting in people falling from one side of the back to another. This happened also to Aazar (19, Afghanistan, October 2018): 'In the van, three other persons were vomiting because they were driving fast and swinging the car like this (showing car driving fast from left to right).' The police stopped to pick up more apprehended men from police station(s) on the way, filling the back with up to thirty individuals.

Police vans drove all the apprehended migrants to secluded areas by the Bosnian border, mostly around Kladuša, Šturlić and Bihać, in forests or fields, and that between 10 pm and 4 am. When the car stopped, those inside were aware what was going to occur next: theft, damage of their phones,

beatings and torture, followed by their expulsion to Bosnia. Many had experienced the same procedures during their many previous push-backs or heard about them across Bosnian camps. People were taken from the boot by 'commandos' either individually or in groups of two, three or four. Those still waiting inside for their turn said to feel fear while hearing insults, baton sounds and loud screams. Ibrahim (34, Iran, August 2018), who was being pushed back with his friend, said that his friend was the first one taken outside: 'I could not see through the door as there were no windows, but I could hear how they were beating him. This took around 5 minutes. After, they told me to go out of the car and I knew I was going to be beaten.' Particularly young boys recounted feelings of fear and confusion, like Yezen (17 years, Syria), said to me and other volunteers during our conversation of hearing batons cracking a bone and shouts of an older Algerian man, who was being deported with him. Despite previously living in a war zone in Syria, he said: 'In my life, I have never heard screaming voices so mad, they screamed like this. In my life.'

While some received a few blows or slaps to their faces and were shouted at to run back to Bosnia, most said they were subjected to behaviour which they called 'beating', 'punishment' or 'torture'. These stemmed from organised police violence strategies, which the participants referred to as 'walls', 'lines', 'circle', and 'tunnel', based on diverse positions that the Croatian commandos undertook during the attacks: 'There were four commandos at the border. And they said three persons to come out of combi. Ok, we came out and they created a circle. They put us in the middle of that circle and fought us all with batons' (Ali, 20, Afghanistan, September 2018). The other common attack strategy was a 'tunnel trick' when a few officers were standing on the left and others on the right, making a 'tunnel' leading from the back of the van to a forest, marking the Bosnian border: 'Two of us had to walk through this tunnel and they were beating us by batons from both sides, while we were passing through their tunnel' (Aazar, 19, Afghanistan, October 2018). Some also referred to 'traps' and explained that the police commonly used the natural landscape as a 'trap', when chasing them or forcing them to fall into a cold river (in autumn and winter) or downhill. In other cases, 'commandos' set various obstacles around the area, most commonly ropes, over which participants described to fall and caused themselves an injury. Amin (Bangladesh, 30, October 2018) experienced several push-backs when each time, he said that the police was using new trap: 'They put a rope on a way and when people were running outside of the hill, they fell because there was a rope. And when we fell, the police came with big sticks (batons) and started beating us. The last time, there was a wall and they were beating us behind that wall.'

To make the way from the vans more difficult to navigate and easier for the officer to target a victim, men said that the commando either firstly pointed a strong light into their eyes or used a pepper spray

while still sitting in a van, which blinded them: 'One person was torturing us by the light into our eyes and other five were beating … They were beating us by batons on the shoulders, back, head. I did not know where they hit and to my private parts. We all never know where they hit, in the dark night, they can hit hard' (Ejaz, 45, Pakistan, August 2018).

Commandos were mostly using plastic or metal batons, kicks, slaps and punches. In some cases, the men recounted experiences of police officers stepping with their boots on their head, neck or back, pouring water on them, and several demonstrated how electric shocks had been applied to their body: 'When I was on the floor and the policeman with black suit gave me electric shocks into my neck, I told him that I had heart problems. But he kept beating me' (Hakim, 26, Tunisia, September 2018). However, when the winter approached, participants more commonly stressed that the police took their clothes off or took their shoes and told them to walk in the snow back to Bosnia. In a few cases, I was also told that the police were taking photos and videos of the attacks. Taking photographs may be seen as a particularly cruel form of violence, in which the act of exposure multiply the feelings of shame, as observed on more extreme form of violence in the Abu Ghraib prison (Laustsen, 2008).

Several participants had experienced the police using guns to threaten them. For example, Amin (21, Bangladesh, October 2018) said: 'I was really scared when the (Croatian) police caught us. They pointed the gun against me and told me to not to move. I was very scared. They told us: 'If anyone runs from here, we shoot them'.' Similarly, others said that the 'commandos' pointed a gun to their heads to force them to run downhill and fall in the summer or enter a freezing river in the winter.

Others described the police shooting live ammunition under their legs or around their body, while shouting at them to run back to Bosnia: 'They were shouting at us: 'Go Bosnia, go Bosnia!', and shooting with a gun under our legs' (Mohammad, 26, Syria, August 2018). These men were threatened by guns but were not physically injured by firearms. However, after my physical withdrawal from the fieldwork two young 'game players' were seriously wounded after being intentionally shot at by Croatian border patrols on two separate occasions in November 2019, followed by more similar incidents.

Among other common violent strategies during pushbacks were also robberies and damage to private possessions. The men described how police units told them to get naked and body frisked them, either during apprehensions inside of Slovenia or Croatia, or before being pushed back, in southern Croatian border locations. For example, Jalal (22, Syria, November 2018) said: 'They told us to sit down, searched our bodies and stole our stuff, my phone, money, passport, clothes. They got us naked and were kicking us from the back'. Police officers particularly stole individuals' money, sometimes taking

from one apprehended group even 2000 euros, as well as their expensive phones. The officers regularly damaged older models of phones and other private possessions by using their boots, batons or driving over them with a car (see Figure 7). Many also said that the officers cut their charging cables, threw away their bags, tore up their identification documents, or burned their sleeping bags and clothes. The individuals were perpetually subjected to these systematic thefts and destructions during pushbacks, when for instance Hussein (27, Morocco, August 2018) pointed out that he lost five phones and 2500 euros at the Bosnian-Croatian border, as he had been financially supported by his family who can no longer send him money.
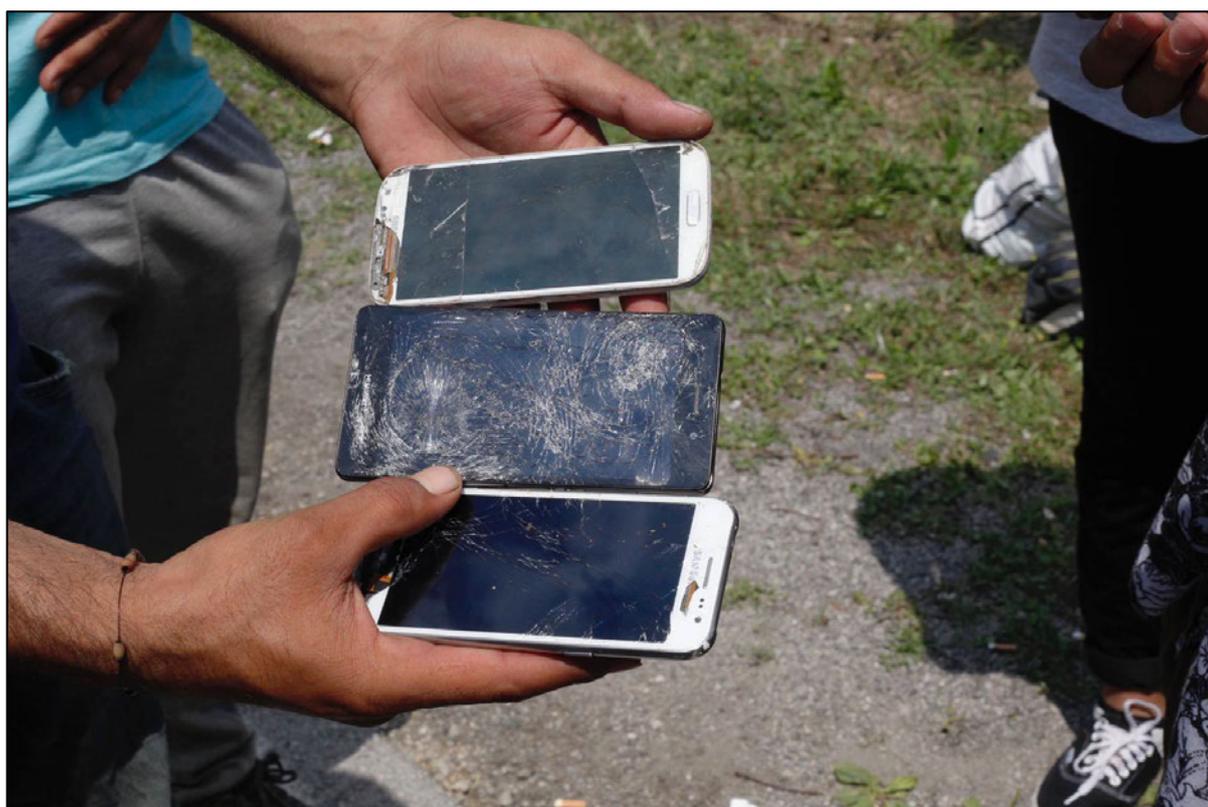
Figure 7   Men showing their broken phones after the push-back from Croatia to Bosnia (photo by author).

While the destruction and theft of private possessions may seem to be a more subtle form of direct violence than the physical aggression against the body, deprivation of the only private belongings that the people possessed often led to infliction of bodily harms later. Firstly, when police stole an individuals' money, and his family could not financially support him, he then struggled to buy food and clothes and suffered from hunger and cold in squats and makeshift camps, where aid was limited. Similarly, mobile phones functioned for the migrants as their most crucial tool to navigate their journey and increase their safety. Loss of a phone led to even more dangerous border crossings without GPS or losing contact with a human smuggler and his help, and no ability to collect evidence of human

rights violation (i.e. photos of injuries or videos of attacks). Men without phones often pointed to the loss of contact with their family members. This was particularly stressed by the men, whose families lived in war zones: 'I don't know if my family is alive. I hear about bombs in the city but have no contact with them. Every day, I am scared because I have no contact', Abdel (34, Syria) told me during our conversation.

I also observed that individuals without phones often struggled to call for quick assistance from activists, legal advisers, medics or NGOs when needed. In January 2019, a young Algerian man died in front of the formal camp Miral after he had been hit by a car late at night and neither he nor his friend had a phone to call an ambulance, resulting in no immediate help. People also said they had saved in their mobile phones evidence that would help them claim international protection in their final destinations, such as photos of the ruins of their house or a bombed car and videos of fighting in their hometowns. This was reported particularly by individuals from Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan, where only certain areas and groups of population were considered as at risk of life in their home countries and deserving of international protection in host states with a high level of competition for European asylum. Damage of a phone or/and theft of identification documents led to the loss of this evidence and threatened an individual's successful asylum claim, increasing his possibility to be deported back to a dangerous void. Indeed, as Galtung (1969) argues, destruction of one's things is considered as direct violence as the consequence of these destructions may be harm to a person across time, which proves to be the case at the borders. In line with this, I argue that direct violence against those things that the migrants hold dear is akin to violence against their person.

While I have so far pointed out the direct violence as taking place *at borders*, the border violence also functioned beyond the locations of the EU's borders, in the places of apprehensions and detentions in Slovenia or Croatia, in addition to border zones. In the inner state territories, the interviewed men described being threatened by guns during their apprehensions or attacked by batons and kicks, like at border areas. In police stations, violence consisted of detention in cells or containers with a lack of oxygen, like in the combis, or attacked by regular police officers, besides being deprived of food and water. Several participants said they were subjected to various physical harms up to four times within one push-back procedure; when they were apprehended and held in the police station by regular police, and then, in combis and at the borders by the 'commandos'. This shows that the border violence also takes place in the inner states, dozens or even hundreds of kilometres away from Bosnian borders and 'the Balkans'. Hence, the border violence is geographically expanded to non-border areas as both the direct political violence *inside* and *at the borders* of states (1) are managed and perpetrated by the same (EU) authorities, (2) use the same patterns and violent strategies (detention in places with lack

of oxygen and physical attacks by police using batons, kicks, punches, guns), and (3) are driven by the same purpose, to push individuals out of EU territory and dissuade their further movements or in Galtung's (1969) term to 'lock the person out' of the state(s).

Thus, I argue that the location of the direct border violence, therefore, does not depend on the mere geographical location of borders, but on a complex set of political and violent patterns that are managed by the same decision makers and enforced by the same police units. Albeit, the participants' narratives show that direct violence is used as a border deterrent *in* the EU rather than *out* of the EU. This location is fundamental to stress as migration studies commonly investigate more crude and brutal forms of violence against migrants in An-Other places (Taussig, 2004), where it is conventionally assumed to belong, such as Africa (Malkki, 1996; Newhouse, 2015; Onoma, 2013), Asia (Akhter & Kusakabe, 2014; Cuéllar, 2005), the Middle East (Khalili, 2008; Shahid, 2002) or Mexico (Vogt, 2018) – far away from European liberal and humanitarian shores and lands. When direct violence or torture against migrants are acknowledged within the EU's border management context, it is associated with security externalisation policies and financial initiatives in 'buffer zones, such as Libya, Nigeria, Turkey and the Mediterranean (Andersson & Keen, 2019; Mafu, 2019; Panico & Prestt, 2019), and now, Bosnia. As it has been argued in the previous chapter, the discourse of migration and violence in Bosnia, as an historically construed violent and criminal Balkan Route (El-Shaarawi & Razsa, 2019) and badlands (Bird et al., 2020) provides cultural and political camouflage to the true location, organisation, and objectives of the direct violence that migrants experience during 'games' and 'push-backs' inside of EU territory – Croatia and Slovenia.

The people across the informal camps commonly stressed having limited or no possibility to protect themselves or resist the direct violence and push-backs, as they feared that this would either lead to another violent attacks or result in inactions due to having no power against the status quo. When some tried to negotiate with border authorities or asked them for help, this mostly led to further violence to silence their requests. 'If we ask or say anything (to commandos), ask for asylum or give me back my phone, they would start beating us again.' (Farhan, 37, Iraq, September 2018).

While the interview narratives provide only a partial insight into the violence that takes place along the Bosnian-Croatian borders, exhaustive material about push-backs has also been published by activist groups (Border Violence Monitoring Network, 2020; Forensic Architecture, 2019; No Name Kitchen, 2020), various NGOs (Amnesty International, 2019; UNHCR, 2019a), and state authorities, who attempted to investigate push-backs. Among many others, this includes the Croatian Ombudswoman for Human rights who had requested police camera footage from places of push-backs and

documentations in Croatian police stations to interrogate the push-backs, told activists that these were rejected by the police as 'non-existent'.

Croatian state authorities nevertheless continue to deny the testimonies of migrants. For instance, the Croatian President Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic said during an interview for Swiss TV: 'I have spoken with the interior minister, the chief of police and officers on the ground, and they assured me they have not been using excessive force … Of course, a little bit of force is needed' (Grabar-Kitarovic in SRF, 2019). The evidence of injuries and destroyed mobile phones has been also rejected by the Croatian Ministry of the Interior, Davor Bozinovic, who explained the injuries as migrants' own fault when walking via forest terrain when illegally crossing borders, or caused during inter-communal fights, or are mere lies that migrants were instructed to say by activists (Valdec, 2018). This matches the previous findings from the Mediterranean, where state authorities consider harms and deaths as 'natural causes' during hazardous sea-crossings or as self-afflicted (Doty, 2011; Isakjee et al., 2020). While no investigations of push-backs have been conducted, in 2019, the European Commission gave a green light to Croatia to become part of the Schengen Zone as fulfilling the 'highest standards' of police behaviour guarding the EU's external borders (Miner, 2019). This indicates that Croatia is only enforcing a broader border approach on the ground, for which it is not only encouraged by financial and technological support but also rewarded. This confirms how tight the border is between 'direct' and 'structural' violence: the question remains whether there is even a real distinction between them, although the two use two different means (Galtung, 1969).

8.5: Conclusion.

This chapter set out the process of the 'push-backs', which embed experiences of direct violence that are pervasive in the men's narratives - it is the rule rather than an exception while attempting border 'games'. Indeed, almost every person in the Bosnian camps said they had observed or experienced the most crude and direct forms of violence during 'push-backs', which differed to the forms of violence observed along seas and deserts, where migrants are commonly harmed or die following a decision not to provide aid rather than through direct attacks (Cuttitta, 2018; Squire, 2017; Vaughan-Williams, 2015) and hazardous natural environments substitute direct force. While the existing migration studies tend to treat border violence only in its structural forms, in contrast, the data here reveals that the direct attacks were called into action when structural violence (closed legal and safe border crossings), crumbled (Galtung, 1969). To this end, I argue that the direct violence construes an essential form of border violence at the Bosnian-Croatian borders, which cannot be side-lined in the academic research examining the nexus of migration and violence.

The data offers insight into the evolution of the direct border violence on the ground across the four seasons of the year, and simultaneously sheds light on the background of the EU's border internalisation and externalisation trends, which generate such outbursts. The migrants' narratives show that the rationale of the attacks was primarily related to the official rhetoric of border agencies 'to combat cross-border crime', particularly human smuggling. However, these 'combats' often violently target migrants rather than criminal organisations, outside of legal procedures. The increasing attempts at games in the summer resulted in the higher deployment of smart and military border and specialised border patrols, whom migrants called 'commandos'. These special police units often consisted of regular officers, which resulted in more crude attacks and mistreatments of migrants during the clandestine push-back operations. This suggests that internationally coordinated smart border technologies and military welfare, which are deemed as structural violence, construe concrete decisions and violent tools rather than an anonymous chain of structural violence. Thus, these structural forms of violence are deeply intertwined with the direct inflictions of harms and function in symbiosis, when they presuppose and reinforce each other at the land borders (Galtung, 1969). Direct acts of violence are fundamental to explore at the borders to understand human experience of the push-backs but also, as Jones (2019) argues, to seek responsibility for such acts.

When exploring the police strategies and traps used by 'commandos' during the push-backs, the chapter provided insight into the detailed practices of the direct violence, which construed systematic tools of border measures against the migrants. These vary from enclosure in small places with a lack of oxygen – 'combi' and 'closed van' - fear when waiting for the attacks, the moments of being blinded by a pepper spray or light, and being exposed to 'punishments' and 'tortures' by batons and electronic devices, to severe beatings within the 'tunnel trick' and 'traps', and shootings. In the winter, cold weather and snow proved just as violent tools when migrants were forced to walk naked to Bosnia or enter freezing rivers. Also, it was argued that the destruction of mobile phones, IDs and thefts of the only finances that the migrants possessed, also construed direct violence as consequently having a significant impact on the people's health and (non) survival. This shows that the direct violence is not bounded in time or body as the destructions and theft have power to result in bodily injuries across time, as pointed to by Galtung (1969).

Finally, the interview-narratives showed that the direct violence took place in the EU; Croatia particularly, but also Slovenia, with the cooperation of Italy. This is a fundamental point in the data, which shows that despite violence being attributed to the migratory journeys along the 'Balkan Route' in reality, the most crude and damaging forms of border violence take place in countries that are politically and culturally self-represented as EUrope – deviated from 'Balkans' and violence, and thus,

often neglected in academic research on violence (in migration). This calls for direct violence to be placed at the centre of the analysis of border violence (in Europe) when seeking its complex forms, despite some scholars considering direct attacks as not being fundamental to scrutinise (Jeandesboz, 2014; Žižek, 2009). Instead, I argue that direct violence is not merely dramatic events but it functions as a proccess by the side of structural (state) orders and (military, smart) border technologies and thus, significantly nuances our understanding of migrants' journeys across European borders.

I further encountered that border violence went beyond the second of a blow from a baton or damage of a phone as it entered the displaced men's lives earlier and continued after their push-backs to Bosnia. Moving on from here, the question remains how other, at first sight less crude and less direct forms of violence, take place besides the border attacks. The following chapter will seek to answer this question, when focusing on what has been named previously by scholars as 'structural violence', construing of rules and laws that impede people's legal and safe transit, protection, and withdrawal of aid in Bosnian transit camps.

Chapter 9: Structural violence of administrations and makeshift camps

9.1: Introduction.

While the last chapter discussed brutal and direct attacks used by police and military groups, it was pointed out that these attacks would not exist without myriad ways of structural organisation, financial and technological support. Thus, it was argued that direct force functions in a causal relationships with political decisions to close the 'Balkan Route', deploy smart technologies and military welfare, all of which are part of the EU's broader internal and external border operations across Bosnia, Croatia, Slovenia and Italy. This chapter will continue to explore the forms violence takes at the borders, but by turning the focus away from crude attacks on the migrants' bodies, identities and possessions to structural violence.

Whereas there are certainly many aspects that create structural violence against migrants at borders and beyond them, this chapter examines how the long chains of decision-making translate into everyday experiences at the borders. These construe particularly diverse administrative procedures within the push-backs, as well as life in makeshift camps, where the withdrawal of state organised aid takes place alongside of solidarities and rich social life.

The first section will trace the rules and laws that the participants recognised as hindering their movement and subsequently giving rise to or even justifying the direct violence against them. While focusing on visas, family reunifications, asylum applications, and various paper documents that migrants have been navigating after their decision to move from their home countries, it will be asked what these administrative procedures and paperwork mean in terms of everyday violence and its forms at the Bosnian-Croatian borders, while playing games and being subjected to push-backs.

Then, the chapter will shift its focus to a different form of structural violence that commonly takes place at European borders – the withdrawal of aid in camps. To do so, the chapter will give particular importance to the data from participant observation in and around the Trnovi camp. Although the camps might seem to be intentionally abandoned by the state, the chapter will explore the various decisions to intervene or ignore the camps by diverse (non)state actors, who are constantly present on the ground and whose decisions result in the atrocious conditions of the camp and injury to its inhabitants. Furthermore, when looking at everyday routines in the camps, it will ask how this violence takes place alongside a community, fun, laughter, and care. By exploring in detail observational data from the camp, it will be explored how everyday life there interconnects with direct violence.

9.2: 'No asylum for you!': violent rules and administrations.

As Žižek (2009) argues, it is vital to step back from the direct violence and perceive the background contours that generate such outbursts, to understand what Galtung (1969) calls structural violence. While following this theoretical remark, what is apparent within the migrants' narratives is that the direct violence was closely interconnected with broader migration rules and laws, which were not as dramatic and recognised as violent from first sight, but which significantly led to harm, including exposure to the direct attacks later on. These structural forms of violence, or 'legal violence' (Menjívar & Abrego, 2012), were prevalent for the migrants already in their home countries. The men commonly talked about their struggles to obtain a visas or travelling documents, which had triggered the chain of unauthorised border crossing attempts. Since these rules, laws, and administrative procedures later affected the men's violent experiences along the EU's external borders, which are at the centre of this study, I wish to briefly explore them here.

Samir (42, Afghanistan, July 2018) told me that he used to be a solider in Afghanistan, deployed in the U.S.-led operations against the Taliban, like many other Afghan men stranded in Bosnia. When the Taliban started threatening him, Samir said that his army superior offered him international protection in the U.S. but only in two years, a period that he felt could be fatal for him. 'I had to leave without protection and visa because otherwise they (the Taliban) would kill me', said Samir. Similarly, those escaping war zones, for instance in Yemen or Syria, talked about lacking the ability to move onwards via legal channels. Syrian participants reported how they had to flee first to neighbouring Lebanon, where they lacked basic rights and aid, as well as legal documents to continue seeking protection and safety elsewhere. One of them was Mustafa (19, Syria), who said that he had difficult time in Lebanon as he struggled to obtain asylum, or any identification documents, which would have allowed him to rent a flat, work or study.

During my three months internship in Lebanon, I met the former UNHCR worker Anita, who was interviewing the Syrian displaced population to assess their right to be relocated to western states within family reunification programmes. Anita told me that only 1% of the interviewed could be legally relocated, which excluded particularly single adult men as they were not perceived as vulnerable. Also, men from Algeria, Morocco, Pakistan and Bangladesh, whose lives were scared by economic and political inequalities, told me about their impossibility of obtaining travel permissions. It has been argued elsewhere (Bigo, 2011; Jones, 2016) that administrative rules and smart border controls subject people to control after their decision to move, which the data here confirms. These restricted rules and regulations meant the participants had no other option other than to walk in groups or travel

with the help of human smugglers in cars, trucks and boats, without authorisation for months or years, until they arrived in Bosnia.

However, all those arriving in Bosnia continued navigating closed legal transits, although they were now moving to 'more open' EU and Schengen borders (Jones & Johnson, 2016). IOM and Red Cross staff said during our conversations that asylum claims in the EU from Bosnia were non-existent and the family reunification programmes were dysfunctional. Those asking to be relocated from Bosnia to the EU states, where they had families, were told to walk back to Greece where such procedures were legally possible, but that it would take years and were likely to be declined due to high competition, which confirms research in Greece by Iliadou (2019).

A few who wished to claim asylum in Bosnia and stay in the country (which others considered only as a transit point due to its poor economy) were trapped in difficulty to navigate administrative procedures. Participants described being told by UNHCR, IOM or Vaša prava[26] to travel to the Service for Foreigner's Affairs in Bihać/Sarajevo or to border police to firstly register in Bosnia, which would allow them to move freely in the country. However, many struggled to travel across Bosnia to obtain this document in the first place as public transport drivers were not allowed to drive undocumented migrants and the local population feared that transporting displaced people would open them to accusations of human smuggling. When people walked to obtain such documents, they said that the registration was in Bosnian or in English which they did not understand. When a migrant managed to register in the office, he was supposed to then register at a Bosnian address, but many failed to do so as they were residing in informal makeshift camps and squats due to limited capacities in formal camps. Because of this it was practically impossible to navigate the administrative system in everyday life, as evidenced by the fact that I met only two men who had tried to apply for asylum in Bosnia during the eight months my fieldwork but neither ever finished the process. Hence, the dysfunctional bureaucratic rules and procedures, which as Schneider et al. (2017) argue construe structural violence, led migrants to play the 'games' with the hope of obtaining international protection upon their arrival in the EU.

'The game is the only solution to cross and get legal and protected', I was often told by the people living in camps. However, their unauthorised movement across the border was framed within the EU's border laws as illegal and a crime (European Commission, 2019; Frontex, 2020a), to which end migrants' game attempts were viewed from the state perspective as danger and conflict (Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017; Hess & Kasparek, 2017). Although the same member states' law of the Dublin

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[26] Vaša prava (Your rights in Bosnian) is a Bosnian, non-governmental and non-profitable legal aid network for the displaced population and refugees (Vaša prava, 2019).

Regulation simultaneously referred to the right to obtain legal status upon arrival in the first EU's member state, where a person is registered, finger-printed and his asylum application is lodged (European Commission, 2020a). Hence, if a person (without authorisation) enters Croatia and expresses his wish to seek asylum there, Croatian state authorities have a responsibility to examine his asylum claims. In contrast, if a person manages to move undetected by member state authorities until arriving in Germany and seeks asylum there, Germany than has the responsibility to deal with his case.

Since the majority of people reported that they had family in western or northern Europe or/and wished to migrate there due to the better economic options and social integration than to stay in the first EU state they entered (Greece, Bulgaria, Croatia, Slovenia), they hoped to cross undetected until arriving in their final destination. But when individuals were apprehended in Croatia or Slovenia, they commonly said to the state authorities (police) that they wished to claim asylum there to prevent their return to Bosnia to precarious makeshift camps. Only a few interviewed said that they had walked directly to police stations in Croatia or Slovenia to seek asylum in the country.

However, nearly all those who expressed their wish to claim asylum in Croatia or Slovenia, said they were denied the opportunity to do so or their asylum claims were undermined. These asylum requests were either ignored by police officers, or shut down by words such as, 'No asylum for you, go back to Bosnia!', 'No asylum in whole Europe', 'Shut your mouth and go back', 'No place for you here' or 'Asylum is closed'. Others described that the officers reacted to their requests with threats, insults, physical attacks or simply laughed at them: 'The police just said: 'You need asylum?' and laughed' (Isaak, 28, Palestine, September 2018). Similarly, Samir (42, Afghanistan, July 2018) told me: 'They (Croatian police) did not beat some people but took their money. But because I asked for azyl (asylum), they beat me. I said that I needed azyl azyl, azyl, and after police started beating me and saying: 'Why are you asking for azyl?' (Samir). Others reported feeling 'tricked' by state authorities, who had firstly promised to transport them to a state-run accommodation centre and open their asylum procedures, but instead they were pushed back to Bosnia: 'I told them that I wanted azyl (asylum) and go to the camp. And they said ok, and that they were going to take us to the camp. But they took us to the Bosnian border and said to me: 'This is the camp, go, go!'' (Fajsan, 29, Iran, October 2018).

The police were not the only actors who were deployed to hinder the men's asylum procedures and stay in the country. Participants also often referred to other actors present in Croatian and Slovenian police stations, particularly translators who were supposed to help the men to articulate their asylum claims. Instead, they would often ask for bribes to translate accurately or together with the police officers made them sign documents resulting in their expulsions back to Bosnia. For instance, Mahad (45, Iran, August 2018) explained how he was detained in a Slovenian police station, where he

repeatedly asked for asylum when cooperating with a translator. Instead, he was forced to sign a paper document in a language he did not understand, after the translator left, leading to direct attacks and push-back to Bosnia:

> I told them that I wanted asyl (asylum) but police denied and made jokes with us when we asked for asyl. They told us to sleep on the ground and said that if we woke up, they would beat us. I kept telling: 'Please brother, I want asyl.' But police said no, no. Police gave us paper and told us to sign it, but we did not want this. But one Nigerian got beaten because he did not want to sign this paper. And when I supposed to sign that paper, I wrote on the paper that I wanted asyl in Slovenia. And they ripped up the paper and forced me to sign the new paper. I did not have an option … The paper was in English, but we did not have a translator. We had Persian translator but not for this paper. We had to sign it by force. Persian translator was not a good man, I did not trust him. He told us that we could stay in Slovenia and would not be sent back, but we were sent back. They just told me to sign that paper (Mahad).

While most did not obtain a copy of the documents signed in police stations, a few men managed to save the copy and brought it back to the camps in Kladuša (see Figures 8 and 9, below). The documents were invoices (*Placilni Nalog*) to pay between 200 to 500 euros for committing the 'crime of unauthorised entry to the country' under the law about 'aliens', which the men were made to sign. In these documents, the men were labelled as unauthorised border crossers and no information about their intention to seek asylum in the country was included. Some said they had been duped by a translator who had not translated accurately, as described above. Others struggled to understand the document that they were signing because of lack of translation, although in the document it was stated that the men obtained a brochure explaining the matter of the committed crime and the payment order in their mother tongue. This denial of translation feeds into the cycle of violence at the borders as it withdraws legal support needed for one's survival.

Minors also said that police officers commonly wrote in the documents that they were adults (18 years old) to avoid providing them special assistance or having to pay more attention to their asylum claim due to their vulnerability. Hence, these administrative procedures did not only hinder the men and boys to seek asylum, but treated them as 'aliens' and 'criminals', as stated in the paper documents, which allowed for their transportations in 'combis' to Bosnian border areas, direct attacks and thefts, and push-backs to Bosnia.
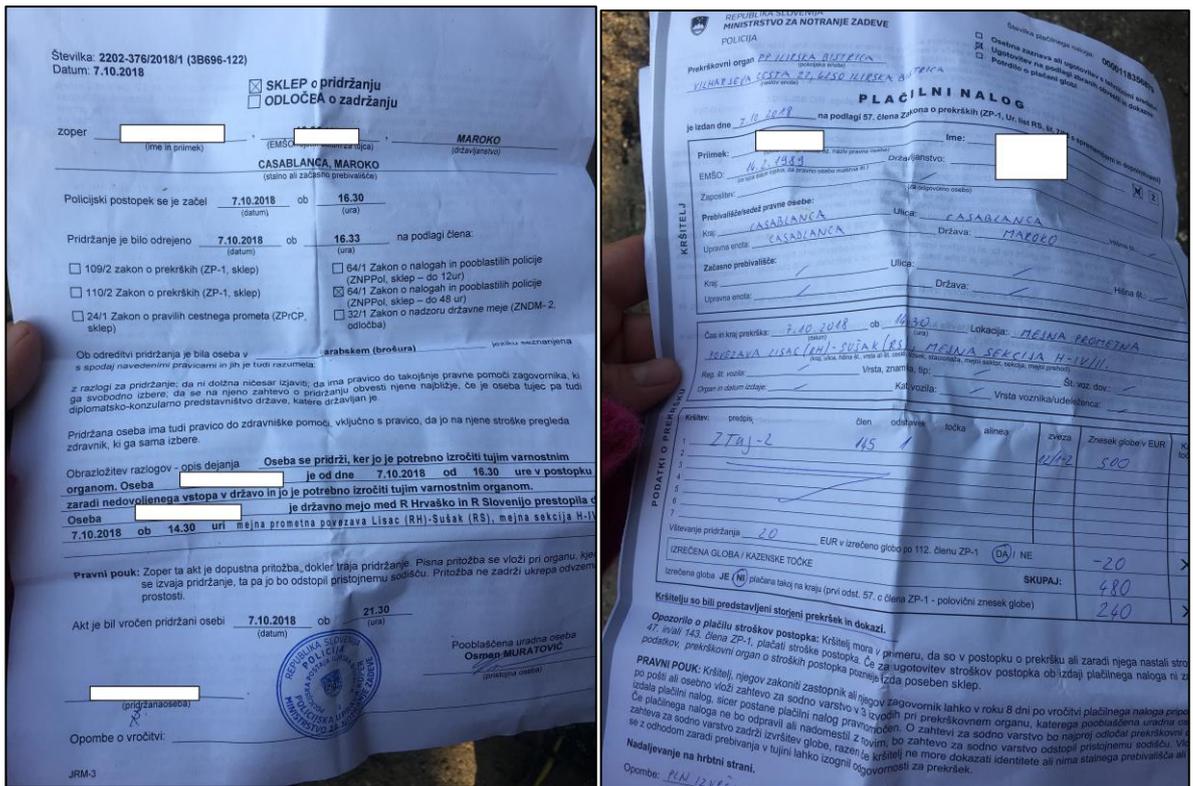
Figures 8 and **9** *Placilni Nalog* (an invoice in Slovenian) for fine 500 euros for unauthorised entry from Lisac (Croatia) to Susak (Slovenia), which one participant was forced to sign in a Slovenian police station.

From the data it is apparent that there is a significant pattern in the denial of the right to seek asylum, which serves as justification for the direct attacks of migrants and their push-backs to Bosnia. Thus, as laws in migration constitute structural violence (Schneider et al., 2017), the denial of access to the law also does so as it frames the migrants as 'criminals'. The migrants are intentionally denied access to asylum claims when they could speak about their individual story, under which they would have the right to be protected. Thus, this denial to be heard leaves the men stranded in the narrative of mere unauthorised border crossers and positions them to be perceived as committing a crime and be treated as criminals. As Žižek (2009, p 39) aptly points out, 'an enemy is someone whose story you have not heard'. This also matches the argument by Menjívar and Abrego (2012) that laws and rules give people the power to violate human rights and make others suspects in their eyes, which proves to be the case at European borders.

Importantly, rejecting or undermining asylum procedures through forced signatures on documents, no or inaccurate translation, and incorrect documentation of individuals' age directly led to the people's push-backs to Bosnia, during which the police systematically used physical attacks. Although the men's narratives show that the direct attacks also regularly took place during the denial of asylum in Croatia

and Slovenia, when the state authorities used physical aggression against them to enforce the border administrations. In this way, the administration not only withheld from the men the possibility of protection and gave rise to push-backs and attacks, but also used direct attacks as the 'right' way to treat individuals they regarded as 'criminals'.

It is my argument that the border administrations are necessary components of push-backs and direct violence, and need to be understood in this way rather than separated out from the structural violence phenomenon. Hence, the administrative violence embedded in the state rules is not as invisible, abstract and indirect, as structural violence is often considered to be (Galtung, 1969). Instead, I argue that there is a direct subject-object relationship between state authorities, who appeared to be at the end of the chain to enforce rules and laws, and migrants. This means that the migrants were denied asylum by direct decisions made by concrete state authorities, although, these decisions are embedded in more structural border rules. This goes in line with ethnographic analysis of violence (Farmer, 2009), which aims to blur the division between violence as mysterious chains of structures (Galtung, 1969) and direct and concrete decisions, such as to ignore migrants' asylum claims and allow the push-backs and violence to be experienced on the ground.

What the data here further indicates is that the structural violence encountered in the men's experiences is embedded in the parallel sphere of law and order. At first, migrants are disabled to claim asylum in the country upon their arrival, and thus, they are given no other option than to cross without authorisation. At second, Law about Aliens together with unofficial administrative tactics obfuscate and circumvent their obligation towards processing the men's asylum claims upon their arrival in the state and using direct violence against them. This suggests a significant integration of violence into the states' laws and rules. The parallel law system firstly formally recognised the migrants as justifiable targets of harm during their cross-border journeys from Bosnia onwards and then subjected them to beatings. Therefore, systematic administrative procedures made legal movements *out* from violence (home countries) for the displaced men almost impossible, but instead, managed their movement *into* violence (Bank et al., 2017).

However, structural violence was not limited to administrative procedures, which together with the direct attacks were impacting on the men's everyday lives. As a result of the perpetual push-backs, the men found themselves stranded in a 'forced circular mobility' (Stojić-Mitrović & Vilenica, 2019, p 541), which forced them to return to Bosnian camps, where they temporarily lived before attempting new games. This shifts the attention back to Bosnia, to the Trnovi makeshift camp, where the men lived, and where I further explored the forms violence took place at the borders.

I found structural violence to take place in the camps in the form of the withdrawal of state-run aid, which intentionally turned the camp into a more an inhospitable landscape, where its inhabitants often lived in hunger and illness. This withdrawal of basic material aid, similar to the withdrawal of legal aid discussed in this chapter, construes less brutal and less direct forms of violence, yet it adds to the complex forms of violence aiming to ensure the migrants' enclosure out of EU territory. In line with this, the following section will outline the landscapes of makeshift camps and discuss how they are intentionally sustained in poor living conditions to keep migrants in a permanent state of injury after the push-backs on the one hand, while also give rise to voluntary efforts, friendships and a sense of community on the other. The discussion on camps adds another layer to understanding structural violence, which takes place at the border alongside direct attacks and significantly impacts the migrants' everyday life.

9.3: Trnovi camp: building a home by the side of conflict.

To access the Trnovi camp, where initially around 800 people lived, one must walk to the edge of the town to an abandoned field. After rain, it is especially difficult to enter or exit the camp. A beaten pathway leads through a field that is slippery and where people often fall. Since people lack daily access to clean clothes and water, one slip can result in days of being and feeling dirty. Rubbish and rotting food remain lay around, which the communal services refused to collect, such often marked the whole pathway. Just before entering the big field in which the camp is situated, there is a football playground from where shouts of people in the summer acknowledge every goal scored. These happy screams were often louder than the sounds of a flying helicopter over the camp, surveying the movement around the border zones. Next to the playground are two containers that became temporary homes for a few men who wanted to have more privacy from the camp and later in the winter to be better protected from the cold. The other building is a former slaughterhouse with broken windows, where activists, with whom I volunteered, established a clothes exchange and showers that operated often with the help of migrants (see Figure 10, below).

The ugly looking building of showers was the object of the constant efforts of migrants and volunteers to turn it into a space for communal life. In the spring, the provisional showers consisted of four wooden structures with plastic tarps over them, to which water pipes were leading from a small gas heater and water tanks placed in a car's boot. After a few months, Medicines Sans Frontiers (MSF) provided a shower trailer, which could accommodate around forty to fifty people to shower per day. Despite the provisional structures of the showers and the environment of the nearby border, volunteers and migrants put efforts together to make these sites welcoming, safe and relaxing. Besides

the need for a shower, the men came here to play chess, listen to music and dance in the circle, or just smoke a cigarette and chat with friends, as they would do in places far away from borders.

Figure 10   Cleaning the shower trailer at the end of the day (photo by Jack Sapoch[27]).

However, the limited space in the showers was not enough to fight against poor hygiene, skin infections and illness. Priority for these makeshift hygiene services was given to those people suffering with scabies, who made up the first several customers daily. While those who had scabies needed to stay clean to treat their skin diseases properly, this simultaneously neglected the prevention of scabies

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[27] Published with the consent of the author of the photograph.

amongst the camp's other inhabitants. Secondary priority was given to game returnees, who were injured and needed to clean their wounds and change their muddy clothes before seeing MSF and medical volunteers, after not showering for days or weeks in the game. However, there were regular disagreements among activists about priority places. When I gave priority to an older Moroccan man with a bruised torso and muddy clothes, Emma (27, volunteer) objected: 'Everyone is coming from the games, everyone is injured all the time. We cannot give priority to everyone!'.

As seeing people in an emergency turned into the norm, priorities got tighter. Similar disagreements resulted in the priority selection of only the 'most injured' men to enter the showers, straight after the scabies patients. Those whom volunteers saw as not as injured as others often ended up washing their scratches and wounds in polluted water in the camp. The remaining hundreds of people, who simply needed to shower and clean their clothes, had to wait in the line for hours or wait for another day(s). Many gave up waiting and did not shower, causing skin diseases and respiratory infections. It was common to see bleeding or leaking scabs on men's legs and arms. Across the makeshift camp, hepatitis also occurred and resulted in at least one death. Others washed themselves in front of their *heimas* by pouring freezing water from plastic bottles, even when the temperatures dropped below zero. Hence, the daily effort to maintain basic hygiene was a struggle, which could be fatal in the insanitary camp environment.

The medical treatment of injuries from push-backs or diseases was problematic in the camps due to a highly restricted medical system in the country. Residents in Bosnia themselves remarked that they had often struggled to access medical aid, which fully excluded migrants from hospital care. For example, hospitals regularly refused to treat migrants, stating that they had 'limited finances' due to the destabilised system from the recent war. When I called an ambulance for a man whose body was paralyzed and in pain, I was told: 'We don't treat people in the camp'. While MSF and a few medical volunteers were present in the camp, they only arrived three times per week for three hours, which was not enough for the high numbers of people in need of medical attention. For this reason, many people were treating themselves, like Usama, a young man in his twenties from Morocco: 'Doctor here can give me only pain killer and hospital does not want to treat me. If I get injured, I treat myself. I take tramadol to not feel pain, clean injury with water and use bandage'. Self-medication was, however, provisional and sometimes dangerous, using the same bandages without cleaning them or old pieces of textile to cover injuries and overdosing on medications, leading to more severe health conditions and prolonging the recovery period.

After passing the showers and getting closer to the end of the field, one can hear hundreds of voices shouting and laughing and often smell the smoke from burning plastic, coming from the fires set

around the camp. In late October, I was standing by a high fire made of a car tyre, which warmed up around twenty people sitting and chatting around. Next to me was a five year old Iranian boy who had just returned with his family back to the camp after trying the game. His cheeks were red and the warmth and comfort of the fire made him fall asleep on his mother's lap. I asked Hamid, a tall Iraqi guy in his late twenties, why they did not burn wood from the forest instead of tyres and plastic. 'Because tyre burns for very, very long time and it makes big fire to keep us warm. Wood is wet. Also, lots of rubbish is around and we need to get rid of it'. Open fires in front and inside *heimas* and squats, that had served as the only source of warmth, however, created heavy and poisonous air. Fire also served as the only light in the night, besides smartphones that people struggled to charge due to the limited electricity. The electricity was for a short period available in the camp for two hours per day, when hundreds of people were fighting over the few spots to charge their phones. In another act of violence, the electricity was cut off completely in the Trnovi camp with no warning or explanation from the municipality.

However, fire also marked out small outdoor kitchens in the camp, when those relying on their own financial resources or those sent by families, were cooking food and often shared it with others in their next-door *heima*. The smell of food in the night, coming from different tents, spread around the camp. A few people said they were proud to be able to cook their own food and share it among themselves to show respect and care, like they had done before coming to the border. 'Stop it! Breakfast!', I could hear Sajid shouting holding plates with fried eggs and coffee, when inviting all volunteers cleaning the camp to his tent. I was standing by, but Sajid placed his blanket on the floor: 'You know that in Arab culture, the most important is the guest. We give him the best things that we have. Here, this blanket is the cleanest thing that we have, so, please, sit on it.' These small acts of solidarity and moments of fun, such as cooking in the camp, playing football or listening to loud music and dancing in the showers, were fundamental daily routines that could help obfuscate the reality of border and violence. In the previous studies on makeshift camps in the Calais 'Jungle' (Mould, 2017) and 'City Plaza' in Athens (Koptyaeva, 2017), this process is named '(collective) home-making', where similarly to the Trnovi camp, social richness is lived alongside conflict.

When people managed to eat their own food in the circle of friends, they escaped from being a continuous subject of violence. 'If you come to the camp for food, you see that police is always there, pushing people in the line as if we were animals', explained one of my closest participants, Mohammed. Similarly, others told me that they felt like animals who could be always pushed, attacked or insulted when receiving food from NGOs. For instance, Aman, a Pakistani young man, told me that while he was waiting for food a woman working for IOM was standing by and saw two street dogs fighting. She looked at the dogs and said: 'They are just like you'. Aman threw away his plate on the

ground and left: 'You know if she said this in a different situation, but when we were in that line, waiting for the food in the camp, I felt it in my stomach and heart. Just like dogs, not humans.' This signifies what Vaughan-Williams (2015) calls animalisation, when migrants are surrounded by the prominence of animal metaphors and imaginary in their representations, or live in zoological places. It has been argued that animalisation of migrants takes place globally (Vaughan-Williams, 2015), from the U.S.-Mexico border, where migrants are called chickens (Coutin, 2005) to the Jungle camp in Calais, named as a place for wild animals (Davies et al., 2019).

What also made the migrants feel like 'animals' or 'dirty' was the struggle to keep the camp clean. While the dirt or poor hygiene does not appear in ways as dramatic to the direct attacks, it constitutes a process of slow deterioration which can be debilitating and sometimes fatal, as demonstrated in the hepatitis death case. The municipality sent six portable toilets to the camp, which were not enough and therefore, were mostly full and always dirty. When I was helping two young boys to set their tent in an empty spot one night, after they had arrived tired from the game, four men started shouting at us: 'No, not here! This whole area is a toilet!'. The edge areas of the camp were often filled with human excrement. Since they lacked access to toilets, others decided to use the shower trailers as a toilet and often they were filthy and polluted. Besides human excrement, the muddy camp was also polluted by large amounts of rubbish and plastic. The food provided occasionally by NGOs was served on plastic plates, which were later dumped in between the *heimas* with food scraps and left to rot for days or weeks until burned. The camp would often attract dogs from a nearby animal shelter and the street in search of food. The camp was a visible site of pollution with a strong smell that intensified after the rain, when all the rubbish, human excrement and mud mixed together and floated from the top of the camp to the buttom (see Figure 11, below). The men were walking here mostly barefoot with sandals as they had no other shoes or wanted to save their only good shoes for the game.

Figure 11   Children playing in a puddle after the camp was destroyed by the rain (photo by author).

While the volunteers suggested to the municipality to lay gravel at the camp to prevent the floods, pollution and damage to shelters, the mayor rejected this by saying that no proper living structures were supposed be constructed in the Trnovi camp as all makeshift settlement were temporary and not a long-term solution. Deriving from the research by Ahmetašević and Mlinarević (2018), the decisions not to build a safer living environment and not to provide formal and regular aid was also directed by the EU authorities, who requested that no accommodation should be build or placed within a 30 km radius of the border. However, the Trnovi camp was sited only few kilometres from the Croatian border and thus was excluded from state-run support and perceived as not obliging by these rules and being problematic. Thus, while the camp's pollution was avoidable through voluntary aid, the international rules sustained the camp's polluted nature. Consequently, the Trnovi camp comprised of mere shelters made of wood, tarpaulins and tents and other makeshift *heimas*. When looking at the structures of *heimas*, one could recognise how long its inhabitants had lived in the camp. People who arrived in the camp recently often slept outside around fires due to the limited donations available or shared a small *heima* with five to ten people. In contrast those who stayed in the camp for several months accessed more and better material over time and built stronger structures, like my Syrian participants.

'I need to show you something, *yallah*! (quickly in Arabic), come, come!', Mohammed was shouting at me and leading me to the 'Syrian' centre of the camp. When I entered his *heima*, there was a wooden bed frame and little wooden chair. 'I made this today! Martin (activist) gave me wood, nails, hammer, and everything. But no one has mattress. So, I will sleep just on wood. *Alhamdulillah* (thanks God in Arabic) for this bed. You can sit on the chair when you come to visit', said Mohammed. However, even the strongest shelters were mostly damaged after heavy rain or storm. When I was sleeping in the night in my car in the autumn and could hear the rain on the bonnet, I could not sleep anymore as I was imagining the catastrophe in the camp the next day. Broken wood, ripped tarpaulins and everything floating in water, and the camp had to be rebuilt once again by the communal forces among the migrants, the local people and the volunteers, who put their efforts together to 'make and remake the site of their home place' (Mould, 2017, p 396). While the volunteers were trying to change all the soaked and muddy blankets, limited resources kept their distribution tight so they could be given only to the groups of two or three people, with the embarrassed words, 'sorry, but we have only few'. With the upcoming autumn and cold, I asked the MSF staff whether they were going to distribute blankets in the camp as they had been doing in Serbian squats. But the answer was no and that the blankets could be distributed only in an emergency situation, which meant that someone would have to die of cold first.

This shows that while during the push-backs the migrants' private possessions were destroyed directly by police attacks, in the camps their shelters and possessions were damaged by natural forces. Yet, these too could be traced back to the direct consequence of their lack of protection. Sleeping rough or under broken shelters, falling ill with skin infections or hepatitis, or feeling hungry or cold, were no accidents of nature, but rather the consequences of strategic decisions made by state authorities, and as pointed out previously by Davies et al. (2019) regulated by international treaties and agreements, such as the prohibition of any state-run aid within 30 km from the border. Although there is a complex chain of actors who are involved in policies and decision-making, which intentionally or as a side-effect contain makeshift camps' pollution and their inhabitants' wounds and illness. These range from the local authorities and local police to national governments and supra-national policy (Mould, 2017).

When discussing life and violence in the camps, one must also mention the role of non-state actors (Maestri, 2017). Some international NGOs' and their European Commission funded aid in the camp went in the lines of the broader EU's external border approach, further locking migrants out of the EU's territories. For instance, IOM - the major NGO managing accommodation facilities for migrants in Bosnia - was present in the Trnovi camp only to offer migrants the so called assisted voluntary return to their home countries. As part of this service, 412 individuals returned home from Bosnia in 2018 (IOM, 2019). A few men, with whom I spoke before their return to Afghanistan, Iraq and Algeria,

explained that they could no longer stand the pressure of push-backs and poor living conditions in the camps, struggling to get food, some had suffered somatic injuries after push-backs and could not access medical care, some were emotionally distressed and said to 'have had enough'.

Assisted voluntary return was therefore available alongside the perpetual inflictions of harms on the men, NGOs standing by and observing their slow deprivation, not stepping in until the migrants' wasted away or 'had enough' and wished to leave. The men were taken to their home countries, free of charge, where their lock-out from EU territory became even more secure. As Crane (2020) points out, the migrants' survival is maintained in exchange for their exclusion from the EU. Indeed, stepping into support migrants is deeply selective. Both decisions to intervene and ignore the camps occur with the intention to coerce migrants to go away – the same objective that gives rise to the direct attacks on the other side of the border, in Croatia and Slovenia. The denial of aid thus adds to the 'politics of exhaustion', marked by fractured mobility not only from an endless chain of push-backs (de Vries & Guild, 2019, p 2162), but also by migrant's enclosure in poor living conditions in the camps.

These decisions and withdrawal of aid also positioned the Trnovi camp as an unofficial site that was not obliged to follow international rules. This turned the camp into what Bird et al. (2020) aptly call a 'badland', making the camp also a justifiable place for interventions, most fundamentally including its demolition (Altin & Minca, 2017; Davies et al., 2019). In December 2018, soon after the first snow fell, the Trnovi camp disappeared under the wheels of bulldozers (see Figure 12, below). The demolition was justified by the newly established Miral camp offering 'safer' accommodation, managed by IOM, who were allocated €7 million from the EU. However, the Miral camp consisted of a mere former factory hall, where only bunk beds were provided with no mattresses. The new makeshift camps thus re-emerged in abandoned buildings, where hundreds of men wanted to have privacy and autonomy, before starting their new games.

Figure 12   Trnovi camp after its demolition in December 2018 (phot by Jack Sapoch[28]).

The living conditions in makeshift camps, as argued here, could be at first sight referred to as what migration scholars describe as violent abandonment or violent inaction (Bhagat, 2020; Davies et al., 2019; Isakjee et al., 2020). However, I want to argue that these terms are still too passive to capture the process fully and that direct actions and decisions are put in place to create limited and obscured aid in Bosnia that inflicts more harms in polluted, restricted and surveyed makeshift camps. National authorities and various aid providers do not abandon the camps. They are often present through the enforcement of international rules that hinder aid close to the EU's borders, through police officers pushing people while waiting in line for food or coming to demolish the informal camps, or through NGOs providing assisted voluntary returns to their home countries, which aim to lock out migrants out of the EU territory like push-backs. This form of structural violence thus concentrates direct and personal action of human beings, like the direct border attacks, although they use different means and the time of wounding differs (Galtung, 1969). This again shows the close interplay between direct and structural violence, which both reinforce each other at the borders.

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[28] Published with the consent of the author of the photograph.

Finally, it needs to be said that this interplay does not only matter for the theoretical analysis in this thesis. Importantly, it is fundamental for migrants at the borders, who commonly discussed the border attacks and living conditions in the camps as symbiotically inflicting pain in their everyday life. 'I am not worried of the pain if they (Croatian commandos) break my leg (during the push-back). I don't care. But I am worried that if they break my leg, I will be stuck here (in the Trnovi camp) for more months or the whole winter. This is what I worry about', Emir, an Algerian man in his late twenties, said to me while he was sitting in the camp surrounded by snow, only a few days before the camp's demolition.

9.4: Conclusion.

Accounts of structural violence (Galtung, 1969) present it as the system of administration, international rules or aid provision in the camp that comprises long and highly ramified causal chains and cycles. Andersson and Keen (2019) are therefore correct when they argue that structural violence is omnipresent in migration through the withholding from migrants' possibilities of support during border crossings and transit camps, and thus need to be scrutinised in the analysis of diverse forms of violence at the border. While many migration and border studies discuss structural violence (Altin & Minca, 2017; Andersson & Keen, 2019; Bank et al., 2017; Davies et al., 2019; Davies et al., 2017; Igonin, 2016), they mostly perceive this form of violence as 'indirect', operating through the 'inaction' and 'abandonment' of migrants. These studies also commonly analyse structural violence as separated out from direct violence. In doing so, I argue that they miss how structural forms of violence use direct decisions and actions and operate in symbiosis with direct violence, although they use different means. This interplay between direct and structural violence is focal, as although violence is used in diverse means at the borders, it follows the same objective: to lock out migrants from EU territory.

I have argued here that these connections can be traced through the men's everyday lives. It is apparent in the various administrative procedures and paper documents that the men had been navigating throughout their cross-border journeys, and which gave rise to the direct attacks or even justified them. This administration is designed to achieve violent results, when giving the men no other option than to play dangerous games due to no possibility to obtain legal transit across borders or seek protection in Bosnia. However, the participants often experienced the parallel legal system (Dublin Regulation/Law about Aliens and unofficial administrative tactics) which denied them the ability to claim asylum, and often portrayed them in legal language as 'criminals' and 'aliens', under verbal attacks, threats or/and beatings. These administrative procedures triggered (more) direct violence and the men's push-back to Bosnia, which were legally framed as the legitimate combatting of unauthorised border crossings. However, the men's narratives show that the administration and push-backs were in fact involuntary expulsions of asylum seekers with the common use of physical attacks,

which violates the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Art. 14), the EU Directive on Asylum Procedures (2005/85/EC) (Vaughan-Williams, 2015) and cruel treatments or torture (United Nations, 1975), among other relevant documents.

While tracing other forms of structural violence, the chapter moved on to the discussion of the withdrawal of material aid in the camps, which similar to the withdrawal of legal aid at the borders undermines the migrants' survival at the borders. To encompass this form of structural violence, I described in detail the Trnovi camp, its landscape and various daily events taking place there that were significantly inflicting harms, and ultimately death, on the men's often injured bodies from the push-backs. Thus, such structural violence enabled the harm inflicted by the direct attacks to continue in the everyday in the camps. This evidence was outlined by discussing the migrants' daily struggles to maintain bodily hygiene and prevent skin diseases, keep the camp clean, access medical care, live in protected and warm shelter and prevent hunger. By doing so, the chapter has argued that structural violence operates within international and national decisions, is implemented by concrete state actors (police, NGOs) on the ground and that this keeps migrants in a permanent state of injury and debilitation. These actors turn structural violence into a subjective experience when strategically deciding when to ignore migrants' needs and when to step in at the site of direct violence, and that under the condition to secure the migrants' exclusion from the EU.

These encounters empirically contribute to the literature discussing violence in camps, when showing that the violence in the makeshift camp functions differently than through 'humanitarian' and 'biopolitical logics' of state-run camps, which control migrants through their containment and physical enclosure (Agier, 2011; Iliadou, 2019; Jeandesboz, 2014; Nieminen, 2019; Peteet, 2005; Umek et al., 2018). However, it was not mere state-abandonment that was inflicting harm in makeshift camps but to confirm Martin et al. (2019), the makeshift camps are in constant interplay between strategic abandonment and intervention, as well as the establishment of state-run camps which then triggered the destruction of makeshift camps. These all sustained the migrants' injuries in the camps and complicated their cross-border movement or led to their exhaustion that forced them to leave back home. Thus, I argue that the direct decisions to act and not to act construe violence in the camps.

However, the camp was not only marked by widespread violence. The camp was also a place where people helped each other, joked, laughed, ate together, prayed, sang, and shared their stories and hoped for a better future. By these small acts of care and respect, the men wished to escape from being a continuous subject of violence. Even in the middle of widespread political terror, fear and moral panic, solidarities and daily life go on, although, it is impacted by violence (Ferrándiz, 2004a). The data here thus contributes to the literature on makeshift living places, which argues that camps

are neither just managed by care and control (Foucault, 1975) or are fully abandoned exceptional places of homo-sacer (Agamben, 1998), but are also places of solidarity and social co-existence (Koptyaeva, 2017; Mudu & Chattopadhyay, 2017; Sigona, 2014), where people ultimately live (Rygiel, 2011). Hence, Bosnian migrant makeshift camps reveal how solidarities and daily life grow along side of conflict in rural border and urban places around the whole of Europe, from Greece and Serbia to Italy, Spain and France.

While living at the border for months and years, violence becomes woven into the social fabric of the everyday, when slowly shifting one's routines and relations. In these small daily acts, migrants make meaning of the broader patterns of structural and direct violence that surrounds them. Yet, the everyday is often side-lined in the research examining the nexus of migration and violence, which this thesis aims to address in the following section, while questioning the significance of the everyday at the Bosnian-Croatian border.

Chapter 10: Tracing border violence through the everyday.

10.1: Introduction.

The previous chapters focused on push-backs and direct violence as well as more structural border violence operating via border administration procedures and makeshift living places, which I argued function in the causal relationship. However, violence cannot be understood solely in terms of physical force, assault, or the infliction of pain alone (Scheper-Hughes & Bourgois, 2004). This shifts our attention to the impact and meaning of violence in everyday life while questioning violence at work where it is at least apparent (Fernández et al., 2017), in migrants' taken-for-granted routines, rituals and relations at the border. This chapter thus details how the experiences of violence are woven into the fabric of migrants' everyday lives while navigating friendship, love and conflict with others, rebuilding shelters, showering, eating, praying, waiting and being bored, getting ready for games, and developing drug and alcohol addiction. By doing so, it explores what these unremarkable and at first sight non-violent events tell us about remarkable and visible violence at the border and how the everyday things and practices became objects and sites of border violence on micro level.

However, violence entangled in mundane and ordinary things and practices often leaves no visible traces of harm, even on ones' dead body, as the data will show. The invisibility makes it not only problematic to recognise the day-to-day experiences of violence, but it also constitutes its real efficiency (Scheper-Hughes & Bourgois, 2004). To this end, I wish to trace harms that seem invisible of the everyday at the borders as taken for granted and thus highlight the significance of understanding violence as an everyday process, which construes an academic blind spot in understanding violence and migration in Europe.

The chapter firstly presents a detailed narrative of Youssef, a young man who died at the border with no traces of violence on his body. Whilst presenting his story, I want to explore what the everyday in Kladuša looked like, as permeated by diverse episodes of violence discussed in the previous chapters, but also filled with love for family, memories from home, and hope for a better life. By doing so, I want to question how these impact the men's daily routines and how the everyday matters in making sense of violence at the border, even in its most grim consequence, death.

The chapter then explores the routinisation of violence, questioning how the accumulation of violence across time shift individual and collective understanding of violence in the makeshift camps. To do so, the chapter will present the men's understanding of what violence is and what it is not across the time

spent at the Bosnian border, while also considering the men's personal memories from home and humour, giving the violence social meaning in their day-to-day lives.

The discussion then shifts the focus to the men's inter-subjective experiences of violence, when questioning how they perceive themselves across the perpetual exposure to violence and how violence impacts their personhood, sense of value and relationships with others. Following that, the pervasive presence of violence will be questioned in the migrants' daily choices, when they wait and while they experience boredom in the camps where often the only sign of change comes with violence. Moreover, the chapter will elucidate how day-to-day life at the borders gives rise to new forms of harms, those that seem as 'one own's fault' in the first sight, such as alcohol and drug abuse, self-harm, and inter-communal fights. It will be explored how these 'self-harms', which prove to be the most efficient killing force, are interconnected to the broader cycle of border violence.

The chapter ends with drawing empirical conclusions from this chapter, before moving to the final part of this thesis that discusses the final conclusions from the all empirical chapters and how they inform us about border violence as everyday against migrant men of colour at the Bosnian-Croatian borders.

10.2: A dead body with no traces of violence.

> The body of Youssef is now lying in the morgue in Drmaljevo. The police investigated an abandoned house in Velika Kladuša, where the young man was temporarily living with other migrants… The police stated that there were no traces of violence on his body, adding that the death occurred during a sleep.
>
> *Excerpts from the Facebook group 'Migranti BiH' (19/05/2019).*

I met Youssef the first week I arrived in Kladuša. He was a tall young man in his early 20's, very skinny with dark black hair and gentle contours on his face. I saw him walking in the main square looking tired and with each step his chin was falling. When we started talking, he occasionally closed his eyes for few seconds, but when I touched his shoulder to ensure he was fine he opened them and continued in conversation like nothing happened. He said that he had just returned from the Croatian border and showed me bruises and scratches around his chin, arms and belly. After seeing a doctor, we went for a coffee. Slowly pulling from his cigarette, he described how the Croatian authorities had caught him and violently brought him back to Bosnia: smashing his phone, stealing his money, and laughing at him when he asked for asylum, followed by beatings and push-back. His story contained the same police strategies already explored in detail, however, his expression, eyes and emotions indicated how diverse and subjective suffering and pain at the border are.

Youssef then told me that he was born in Benghazi (Libya), where his father was killed during the civil war. After his father's death, Youssef's mother took him to her home country, Morocco, where he occasionally worked as a waiter but struggled to find a stable job. He recalled playing football tirelessly in order to avoid thinking about a life which he described as unemployment and misery. Youssef wanted to provide for his family, not for pleasure or fun, but for survival. He said that at the age of 17 he decided to travel to Spain and find work. He borrowed 100 euros from his relatives and travelled partly with smugglers by boats or hidden in trucks and partly alone by foot through Turkey, Greece, Macedonia, Montenegro, Kosovo, Serbia, and then to Bosnia, hoping to cross to Croatia, Slovenia, Italy and then to Spain by bus.

In the months that passed after first meeting Youssef in Kladuša, he told me about his 16 other unsuccessful games and how they had left him with more marks of police force and pushing him back to life in abandoned houses. However, Youssef did not complain about them anymore as these became routinised. One day, we went out for a coffee to the same restaurant as always, however, this time a waiter stopped us before we found our seats: 'Sorry, you have to leave. Boss said no migrants here.' Youssef responded: 'Yes, I understand, me problem,' and told me to not to try negotiating and rather leave. The next months, we did not even try to enter a café or restaurant together as Youssef, like many others, feared the same reaction.

Youssef's face was marked by other signs of violence than the ones caused by border guards: bruises and scratches from inter-communal fights. As time passed, I saw Youssef's body becoming skinnier. His eyes became watery and tired and his speech became slower as well. He mumbled more. He told me one day that he was regularly using tramadol, an opioid pain-killer, to forget the reality for a moment. I was often seeing him either begging for money around the town or just sitting and looking into nowhere or arguing with his friends over money or food in the main square. As his use of the drug developed, we began seeing less and less of each other.

The week after my arrival back in the U.K. from Bosnia, I called a friend who informed me that a man in Kladuša had died. She sent me Youssef's photo, explaining that he had overdosed in a squat. Youssef's friends said that he felt severe pain in his body while fasting during Ramadan and took an extensive amount of pain killers that killed him. Local radio and news announced that Youssef had died by natural causes as 'police found no traces of violence on his body'.

I was thinking of Youssef's daily experiences of diverse forms of violence that had made his life at the borders painful and questioned how this quotidian at the border was significant in these violent episodes, leading to his death. Youssef was waking up daily to the same reality, circulation between these different violent events and difficult moments. I came to realise that violence became for Youssef

the daily way of life rather than diverse episodes of physical aggression that came and passed. This large-scale cycle of violence met and crystallised into the sharp, hard surface of routinised suffering, which Nordstrom and Robben (1996) described as contests marred by inescapable harms. Violence blurred in the ordinary moments of the day, eventually impacting Youssef's daily routines, social relations and religious rituals. What eventually was the most harming (and killing) force in Youssef's life was, therefore, ordinary life at the border, when what passed normal would be abnormal elsewhere (Ginty, 2014).

However, this everyday violence left no visible traces on the dead body as no spectacular event of aggression or unnatural cause of death was recognised, as well as no perpetrator was there to see or blame, but Youssef. In line with this, various questions arose when reading the news about Youssef's death and discussing his story with other migrants, volunteers, my family and friends: Was his death random? Did he die of his own irresponsible (intimate, ritual, routinised) behaviour at the border? Or did the diverse routinised forms of border violence lead to his death that occurred during his daily existence at the border? And most importantly, are the day-to-day lives of other migrants turned into painful or fatal experiences by border enforcements?

Since Youssef's life was scored by an exemplary fashion of border violence, as are those of most men whom I was meeting in Kladuša, any of them were/are exposed to similar risks and fates. Throughout my fieldwork, I saw an increasing physical and mental degradation of other men living in the same conditions as Youssef. I found a deadly monotony in their everyday at the border, within which physical and psychological harms impacted their social realm. Fortunately, most men eventually managed to cross the border and moved to their destinations or to my knowledge keep surviving at the borders until today. Although death was not daily expected in Kladuša, messages and photos of migrants' faces, who had just faded away, shared in camps spread gloom and fear. Death was thus present in the camps in its potentiality when the migrants' desire to avoid it was being threatened (Mladenova, 2019). Almost every month, names and photos of dead or missing people in the games, dying in inter-communal fights or hepatitis circulated on diverse WhatsApp and Facebook groups. All these deaths posed the same questions, listed above after Youssef's story. Although Youssef's death was not a singular case, I found that physically dying along the South-Eastern European routes is rare rather than common. This differs to the sea routes leading to the EU, passages though the US-Mexico border, or the coasts of Indonesia and Miami known as the corridors of deaths (Doty, 2011; Squire, 2017; Vogt, 2018), where migrants' physical deaths are registered almost daily. For instance, almost 20,000 persons were reported drowned or missing in the Mediterranean Sea since 2014 (IOM, 2020a).

However, although Youssef's story does not match to large numbers of corpses and South-Eastern Europe is excluded from the narratives of migrants' corridors of death, I believe that his story signifies something fundamental: how truly harming and devastating the force of border violence is embedded in moments when at first sight nothing special is happening at the borders. Feminist calls for investigation of personal - private sites and concrete and local practices - as political underline this (Enloe, 2011). Indeed, Youssef's story shows how the men's ordinary events, which are not noticeable as violent – daily decisions, relations, routines, and rituals at the borders, can result in the extraordinary – severe harms and death. Hence, I open this chapter with Youssef's story because it shows the most powerful efficiency of border violence that stems from its saturation of daily worlds (Scheper-Hughes & Bourgois, 2004); for both surviving and dying migrants. In line with this, the following section will question how the everyday violence is constructed and experienced through the routinisation of diverse forms of harms, before moving onto the discussion of how it affects the men's daily relations, rituals, and routines.

10.3: 'Today no beatings, only slaps to my face': Routinisation of violence

What is firstly vital to discuss is how violence passes as normal from abnormal and consequently permeates the everyday practices and things. It is not surprising that violence for many of my participants had entered their lives long before coming to the border, during wars and persecutions in their home countries. As a consequence of their daily circulation within attacks, conflicts, and struggles, the men did not only exhibit injuries, diseases and physical pain, but also the symptoms of stress and psychological disorders. Some were seen to shake and expressed that they felt fear and anxiety. The men also regularly complained that they could not sleep, had nightmares, urinated themselves while sleeping, or hallucinated. These problems had little ease due to non-existent access to psychological aid, although migrants often developed strong support networks amongst themselves, together with various aid providers.

The men commonly lived in such emotional distress and physical pain for months or years that their long-term exposure to various harms was impacting not only their bodies and minds, but also their social realities as positioned in violence and its understanding. The accumulation of harms in their daily lives particularly shifted their individual and collective understanding of violence. I noticed that many were slowly reconstructing and reframing how they perceived the world around them at the border. The line was shifting for many between what was violent and what was not, what was worthy of complain about or whether to remain in silence, and what to reject and what to accept in life at the border.

The individual's subjective perception and experiences of (border) violence were particularly dependent on their time spent in Kladuša, in Bosnia, on their migratory journey, and their previous life in conflicts in home countries. Those who had just met with oppression and physical aggression and who lived for short periods in the deprivation of the camps were shocked and considered such experiences as unacceptable. They mostly wished to stand against violence by speaking about it, when seeking the attention of other camp inhabitants or volunteers. In contrast, the men who had been living at the border for months or years mostly understood violence as unavoidable and not anymore worth paying any special attention to. They treated various episodes of harms as normal, which resulted in their passivity and acceptance of violence and their reluctance to report a push-back or speak about it. This idea of how (border) violence becomes, after some time, routinised is illustrated by the following conversation between Vasid, a man from Pakistan, who approached me to report his first push-back, and two Afghani boys, Nouman and Musa, for whom (border) violence had become ordinary:

'Good morning. My name is Vasid. I came from Pakistan. I am a teacher and yesterday I was pushed back, which was horrible because I walked for three days in the jungle (forest).' Vasim was almost out of his breath and looked terrified, while standing in front of me and firing off his story. But before I was able to answer anything and tell him to sit down, Nouman and Musa, who were standing by, jumped in: 'Three days? We walked for twelve days to Italy and were pushed back. This is normal my friend!' I saw a bored expression in their faces. They were possibly hearing such stories every day in their squat and around the town and therefore struggled to understand Vasim's surprise and shock that the first push-back had brought to his life. But Vasim was hurt by their reaction and started shouting and slowly weeping: 'No, this is not normal. This is not normal! I am not animal. I am a human and this is not normal!' Nevertheless, the conversation continued in the same manner, when Nouman in a passive voice insisted on his perception of the world at the border as violent as usual and continued trivialising Vasim's experience: 'No, my friend you are here and this is normal - beatings, push-backs. Look around. This is normal!' But for Vasim, who just arrived in Kladuša and had never been subjected to police violence and life in a makeshift camp before, this was not normality: 'I refuse to take this as normal. It will never be normal!'

The brief exchanges between those adjusted to violence and one shocked by it, offers an insight into various narratives that I was hearing across several months. It is important to expand on this and point out that Nouman and Musa came from Kandahar (Afghanistan), a province under the control of the Taliban. Furthermore, at the time of this conversation, they had been living in squats at various border locations in Serbia and Bosnia for two years. Both Musa and Nouman told me about seeing bomb explosions and deaths in their home countries, which had now transformed into less dramatic forms

of violence for them at the border. Similarly, a different Afghani boy, who was observing an inter-communal fight between two men with knives in the camp, turned around and said: 'This is not problem. Knives are not problem. (In) Afghanistan, bombs are problem', and smiled.

Indeed, many other men came from countries and geopolitical areas that have/had been stroked by bombings, wars, religious and political persecutions, such as Syria, Palestine, Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen, Pakistan, Libya, and Iran. They were daily in touch with their home environments, following the news about new explosions, reading messages about people arrested by governments, and following videos of corpses being pulled out from ruins in their towns, hoping not to recognise any of their relatives. Furthermore, many pointed out during conversations that they had been abused or attacked by state authorities or human smugglers while travelling before reaching Bosnia. Hence, (border) violence was not a new phenomenon for many migrants as noted by Vogt (2018) in her research with Central American migrants crossing Mexico. Hence, migration journeys are embedded in the movement from violence to violence (Bank et al., 2017). Migrants' past subjection to various harms cannot be omitted in an understanding of border violence as this shapes their experiences of it, routinisation and normalisation in daily life at the borders. As showed here, long-lasting exposure to violence became for many part of normal habitus, which defines violence as everyday phenomenon (Ginty, 2014). This violence is unexceptional (Enloe, 2011), it does not surprise anymore as it is expected in any minute of the day. For this reason, reaction to such violence are marked with rejection or even boredom, framing this violence as unimportant, as remarks by Nouman and Musa indicate.

Yet the men's intersubjective understanding of border violence and its saturation of daily life at the border also depended on their intimate histories, for example of their childhood. I began to understand the significance of this after I met Milan, a skinny man in his early forties. Milan was a father of two daughters, who with their mother were waiting for him in Bangladesh. Milan was sitting on a mattress in his tent, with knees under his chin when telling me about his push-back. He was so polite and kept calling me madam in his quiet voice. He explained to me that the reason why the baton blows to his head had been so terrifying for him was not due to the physical pain these were causing, but the shock and the sudden disorder that had come to his life he'd associated with them. He had no previous experience with such or any other physical aggression before. Milan broke into tears when he said: 'My father and my mother, they never hit me. They never touched me.' His distress, so clearly evident in this uttered sentence, showed that the line between what is terrifying does not depend on mere pain or somatic experience of violence, bounded in time and place. Instead, it depends on an individual's socio-politico-economic situation(s) in their world (dis)order (Scheper-Hughes & Bourgois,

2004), more precisely in this case, the transformation of the line between order and disorder that is bounded in intimate relationships.

While the men's previous lives had an impact on their experiences at the borders, I encountered that the line between the men's perceptions of violence as shocking and normal was slowly shifting throughout their time spent in Kladuša. Since Vasim left a few weeks after our first interaction and I lost contact with him, I never found out if he fulfilled his promise that 'violence was never going to be normal for him'. I hope that he did not have to test his promise anymore and escaped to peace. Similarly, Milan left after a few months to a camp in Bihać to seek the help of a smuggler and I lack knowledge of the continuation of his journey. However, I observed the transition of understanding, experiencing and narrating violence, particularly with my closest participants. When I first met Mohammed, Rashid, Tahir, and Sajid in the summer, I saw they were angry. They were shouting while complaining about the attacks, the loss of their passports and phones during the push-back, their return to the Trnovi camp, and the lack of medical attention. 'Fuck Croatian police! Fuck them! Fuck them!' At the end, Mohammed said: 'I want to go back to Syria. There, maybe a bomb will fall on my house one day. But here, the war is every day. Every day, I am beaten at the border and live in the war.'

However, as the time passed, I noticed how all became adjusted to the world where they had become stranded. Six months later I got a call from Tahir after one week of not knowing where he had been: 'Karolina, deport! I am walking back (laughing). No beating, everything is good. Only (the police) stole my money and broke phones. Everything is ok.' This time, Tahir did not perceive the robbery and destruction of his phone as violent. His voice was calm, indicating acceptance or even expectation that violence was going to occur. If any physical aggression had not been used against him, he would have considered it as luck or an exception rather than the norm. I routinely observed this process of movement of the line between what these men held to be violent and what was not during my fieldwork. As Mishra (2018) points out, the dichotomy between the mundane and extraordinary; and the normal and disturbed seem blurred in prolonged violence.

This also illustrates the remark by an Afghani boy, whom I met briefly in the camp while he was arriving back from his twentieth attempt at the games: 'Today, no violence, only slaps into my face.' Avoiding perceiving the direct infliction of injuries within the structural oppression of border policies and rules as harming also impacted on the men's reluctance to be medically treated. When injuries and diseases occurred in the camps some men refused to search for medical attention as being not worthy and

unimportant, but rather supressed their pain. The trivialisation or suppression of violence was also commonly accompanied by humour and laughter incorporated in the men's stories about various struggles, attacks and tortures. For instance, Mahmoud said when describing his experience of the push-back[29] that 'he was laughing to him and his friends to make his tragedy (attack and push-back) easier.' Others stopped acknowledging violence against them and around them, as not worth anymore being repeatedly talked about, trying to report or resist. Instead, they preferred silence and the invisibility of their own difficulties and traumas rather than complaints and attention.

For me, this is evidence of how the men's norms and rules sedimented over time after they had been taken out of their everyday context into a new one, in which violence became routinised and needed to be taken less seriously to make these harms easier to cope with and survive. Previous studies (Das et al., 2000; Green, 1994; Henriksen & Bengtsson, 2018; Hume, 2009; Nordstrom & Robben, 1996) also found that the verbal techniques of minimization within testimonies of abuse or silence suggest that violence has become internalised and normalised to cope with violence and be self-protected. Therefore, using trivialisation, acceptance, normalisation, suppression of violence and humour in everyday routinised life at the border functioned for men as coping mechanisms.

When focusing on the routinisation of the direct and structural violence in an individual's daily life, the division between these two overlaps and blurs (Scheper-Hughes & Bourgois, 2004), and the assumption of a new level of normality appears (Žižek, 2009). In this new normality, the men stop tirelessly keeping track of diverse forms of violence, their beginning and end, space and perpetrator(s). Violence stops being temporal as counted in separated events, which Arendt (1970) defines as random and unexpectable occurrences that interrupt routine processes and procedures. Instead, violence permeates daily life as insignificant and unavoidable (Scheper-Hughes, 1992). This new level of normality enabled the men to prevent their (physical and psychological) exhaustion, to stand up and try to cross the border again.

However, this does not mean that the men stopped being aware of the imminence of violence or that fear in their lives disappeared. It is vice versa, as Green (1994, p 231) argues: 'Routinisation of violence is what it fuels its power. Such routinisation allows people to live in a chronic state of fear with a façade of normality.' Indeed, violence is at work where it is at least apparent (Enloe, 2011). This means that within the routinisation of violence, the men re-constructed and re-interpreted their understanding of violence from shocking to ordinary. Importantly, I observed that this transformation of violence into

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[29] Ibid, Chapter 8.2, p 110.

everyday life also shifted the men's perception of themselves in the world, affecting their relations and daily routines, as the following sections outline further.

10.4: 'Who am I?': Change of subjectivities, relations and routines within border violence.

10.4.1: Change of subjectivities.

Transformation of the line between what is violent and what is not also affects one's social realities, shifting a man's understanding of himself as well as his position in the world. When the assumptions of violence become routinised and normalised, the questions of 'Who am I?' commonly appears together with the confusion whether this 'new me' is compatible with the original me and my values, as the following data will show.

Firstly, I noticed how living with everyday violence affected the men's understanding of their physical bodies. They often showed me their portrait photos on phones, capturing their physical appearance before violence had been triggered in their lives, pointing to various bodily changes that violence had caused; loss of weight and muscles, change of skin colour, visible injuries, long nails, oily or grey hair, and dirty clothes. Due to these changes, the different participants described themselves as 'less manly', 'ugly', 'like animal', 'not human', 'like some criminal', 'fighter', 'Other'. Even in the cases when I could not see any change in their looks, the men were persuaded about their physical transformation due to their encounters with violence. This is for example underpinned by the conversation with Ali, a 20 year old journalist from Pakistan. Ali was sipping his coffee in his tent while showing me photos of him in Pakistan: 'Look at me at this photo (showing a photo of him standing with his father in a restaurant, both dressed in suits) and look at me now. I was strong and looked good. But now, everything is gone. I am just animal for everyone.'

This shows how violence becomes embodied through the ordinary and everyday encounters in the camps (Acuto, 2014). The chaos, fear and violence infused throughout the men's physical bodies (Nordstrom & Robben, 1996) or deformed their understanding of their own bodies, even when no visible changes appeared. Thus, the day-to-day experiences of violence made the men to learn a new truth about themselves, the one embedded in the ideology of border enforcements that framed the displaced men as 'threat', 'criminals' and 'Other' (Fanon, 1961; Nieminen, 2019), which the insights into the men's everyday understanding of themselves at the border allow us to trace. It shows us that violence does no only withhold migrants' life giving items, but also withholds their self-identity (Farmer, 2009). I further observed how this transformation impacted the men's understanding of themselves in the world around them, particularly their relations with others, which the following section aims to explore.

10.4.2: Shared realities and (intimate) relations.

The somatic and/or mental transformation by violence had an impact on the men's shared realities with families, friends, and other social and intimate relations. The men commonly explained how they would feel embarrassed at their appearance and for this reason, they wanted to avoid any contact with their families and friends in their home countries. 'If my family sees me like this, I will feel shame', Zamir an 18 years old boy from Iraq told me. 'Look at my face, I am so skinny. Look at my clothes. I look horrible. The last time I called my mother, she was crying because I lost weight.' In this way, Zamir explained why he had cut contact with his mother. Many other men interrupted their communication with their loved ones for the same reason, besides often having either a damaged or no phone. Previous research in the Calais camp found similar findings when displaced people commonly said 'I don't want my mother to see me like this' when journalists tried to take photos of them (Davies et al., 2017, p 1271).

However, the new understanding of their bodies, as re-constructed within their life in violence, also impacted the men's social relations at the borders. On the one hand, the men often established the strong bonds amongst themselves necessary for cooperation during the games and survival in camps. On the other hand, I noticed how some struggled to begin communicating with or establishing relations with the non-displaced population based on the assumption that the men's worlds deviated from their normality. Particularly, these men recounted that they were scared to make new friendships or romantic relationships due to their appearance, which they believed carried visible signs of violence. For instance, Hamed, a young Tunisian man, told me that he had been invited by volunteers and local people to come to their private house for a dinner. When I asked him why he had decided not to go, he said that he was scared of feeling discomfort: 'I am not like them. I look bad and my situation is bad. I would not feel comfortable.' On another occasion, the same participant told me: 'I would never invite any woman even for a coffee like this. I look horrible.' Other men also mentioned their reluctance to leave the camp and squats and try to establish new relations. They mainly worried about their 'bad' physical appearance, upon which they could be recognised as 'migrants' and rejected, besides being harassed by police and refused in public spaces.

There was one more intimate relation that was violated by border violence, perhaps, the most important for many: their relationship with God. Most of the men were Muslims, and many struggled to follow their religion in the living conditions of the camps. The vast majority of the men across camps were not seen to pray and remarked that they could not follow their religion due to the dirty environment they lived in and disruption of their minds by stress and violence. Violation of religious practices within daily life at the border was particularly visible in the time of Ramadan. The men were

supposed to give up water, food and cigarettes during the hours of daylight for thirty days. Many refused to fast as Islam allows exceptions for people, who were physically or mentally unwell: 'I am very sad that I cannot fast. This makes me feel like not me. Every year, I say, hopefully, I will be safe next year, and I can do Ramadan. But I can't.' Farhan told me. Other men pointed that they had limited access to food and needed to get strong for the games, and hence, refused to fast. Those, who decided to fast, sometimes spoke of the nausea as their bodies were too weak to cope with the absence of food that was already limited. Proliferation of violence into religious practices became not only linked to health problems but also death, as indicated in the story of Youseff[30], who was fasting, but his body was in pain from following the religious ritual. To be able to continue to fast, Youssef took a large amount of medication, that he was addicted to, and died. This shows that the men's religious practices were disrupted, disabled or turned into harm within the everyday cycle of border violence. While in one case the consequence was death, in most cases the consequence was the absence of religion in the men's lives. Not being able to practice religion led to the absence of their core traditions and values, which the religion carried, as well as the 'absence of oneself', as Farhan stated.

The men often considered these diverse absences of intimate relations as the main issue when they were comparing their lives in the time of peace versus the one struck by (border) violence. One night, I was sitting with Rosalinde in the Helicopter Place near to a fire and drinking chai prepared by the Afghan men, who had been living in this empty plane hangar. The men were discussing various issues related to their life at the border and I was surprised when they concluded that 'they did not mind having no house, no money and feeling pain but they mind having no love, which they had in the past.' Although a lack of intimacies may seem to be less important than acts of physical aggression, this shows that communication and relations with other people and God are what made the men attached to their original values, norms and life in peace.

The data here thus confirms the argument by Lazreg, (2008) and Nieminen (2019), who suggest that the aim of violence is not simply to cause pain but to destroy the person's world as he knows it, damage his capacity to create shared realities, and end their values. In line with this, I argue that the damage of self-perception, the absence of shared realities and (intimate) relations and religious rituals are truly harming rather than visible episodes of aggressions or state oppression. This has been previously also observed by Latif (2012), who argued that violation of the production of everyday life in Palestinian camps (distorted family values and daily habits), caused by diverse manifestations of violence, inflicted more harms for the refugees than their previous experiences of war (direct violence and killing). The founder of the concept of everyday violence, Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois (2004) similarly argue that

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[30] Ibid, Chapter 10.2, p 147-148.

such everyday social processes have power to destroy humans with even greater frequency than painfully graphic and transparent state repressions. This is indeed a powerful argument, which however, needs further exploration. For this reason, the following section will delve further into how the destruction of the everyday impacts not only on one's intimate relations and shared realities, but also daily practices that people are not allowed to pursue due to the violence happening in the background of the everyday.

10.4.3: Decisions and routines.

Violence also impacts individual's decisions and routines when the new level of normality is established, the one that deviates from what a person used to know. Seemingly, normality was restored during the time of solidarities in camps, when people shared food, drank coffee, told each other stories, joked, and played football. While these moments seemed calm, they did not diminish violence that was pervasively present but hidden under these routines, as Acuto (2014) suggest there are pieces of peace in violent times. Various mundane moments, conversations, plans, routines and times of fun seemed to carry the weight of border violence. Even children's games carried violence, when one group was pretending to be Croatian police and another refugees in the game, fighting each other with guns made of wood. Similarly, in an English class an eleven years old girl, Arika, from Iran started by asking a question on how to translate 'injury'. These children's games show us that violence is also quotidian yet carry dramatic and visible experiences of violence that translate into these ordinary games and times of fun, and thus cannot be side-lined in the analysis of violence (Mishra, 2018).

Moreover, when people seemed to forget about violence, they were quickly reminded by the sound of a gunshot from the nearby border or new injuries to see in the camp. These delivered the message that if one crosses the arbitrary line (of the border), the consequences are well known (Green, 1994). Such scenes generalised violence in the daily life of people through an atmosphere of fear and worry, which were omnipresent. Fear became the reality in which the men lived in a hidden state of emergency' and that was factored into the choices they made daily (Nordstrom & Robben, 1996), as shown in the following field diary excerpt.

I was standing in the showers, picking up used razors from the ground after the men had shaved, and throwing them into a bin. Suddenly, I could hear a bike being ridden very fast behind the fence. It was Sajid on a child's bicycle, which he had found by rubbish bins in the town. The bike was tiny, its tyres had almost no air and Sajid's large body riding it was something funny to see. He was cycling so fast, screaming and laughing: 'Vaaaaaaah! Look at me!' When he stopped, I asked him what he was doing the whole day: 'Nothing. (Went to) *medina* (town in Arabic), smoke, eat. Waiting for call, but nothing'.

It was one week on from the departure of his three friends to the game. Sajid did not only worry about his friends, but also about his own plans, which were dependent on their success or failure. If they were able to pass the game to Italy, Sajid was going to follow the same trail. If they were caught and pushed back, they all had to start planning from scratch, search for a new smuggler, get more money, and spend more time in the Trnovi camp. While talking to me, Sajid kept holding his phone. He pressed a button to check if someone had called. But there was nothing.

Through the description of Sajid's day, I wish to illustrate how the mundane lives at the borders were usually permeated by violence and fear. It may seem that Sajid was not doing more than playing around and being bored. However, all these activities were managed by waiting for violence. Although violence was routinised, Sajid was waiting to find out whether the events of police attacks and push-backs were going to appear again and destroy his plans. All his limited choices, plans and routines were dependent on the uncertain and unpredictable nature of this violence. This left him no option other than to wait for a call, a message, a sign, or a rumour. It is this mixture of fear, unpredictability and the ordinariness of ruptured routines, which Mishra (2018) considers as violence emerging in the everyday and which is also illustrated at the border.

Similarly, other men often said they had to spend their days waiting, before departing for games. 'I was planning to go tomorrow (to the game)', Hamed told me when meeting him in the main square. 'But I was waiting to see how many people were going to be pushed back. Today, I saw a man with broken skull. It was horrible, so much blood. It really scared me. I will wait longer.' This shows that waiting was a fundamental part of the life at the borders when planning out future days. A previous study in the Lesvos Islands (Iliadou, 2017) found that waiting in perilous conditions of camps with little resources and certainty became a fundamental feature of border violence, as the time moves slowly and inflicts enduring pain to people. However, waiting at the borders for extended periods became routinised and perceived as ordinary rather than shocking, albeit, managed by fear, rumours, and signs of violence around.

10.4.4: Re-production of violence against oneself or others in informal camps.

The routinised and daily violence presented in the previous sections allows us to re-think the effects of the diverse forms of more visible direct and structural violence. The men's enclosure in the daily violent processes, events, and landscapes affected their (intimate) relations, routines and waiting in an atmosphere of fear. I also encountered that the machinery of violence during the days spent at the borders slowly eroded the men's identities by shifting their behavioural patterns into new harming ones. I particularly observed that border regimes gave rise to new types of harms, such as alcohol and drug abuse, self-harm, and inter-communal fights. Harms or deaths resulting from this violence are

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however often considered as random, one's own fault, non-violent or natural, as Youssef's story showed, and thus are excluded from the discussion on border violence. These harms excluded any external perpetrators, only the men themselves were to see and blame as perpetrators of their own or others' displaced bodies, when using excessive amount of medications, cutting their own veins or fighting in the camps. However, Galtung argues (1969) that violence breeds violence. In line with this, I argue that the actions and rules of border regimes had bred the new types of violence that occurred in the migrants' community, as illustrated in the following and the last section.

It was a day of hot summer weather, and I was driving water to the Helicopter Place. When I arrived, I saw Ahmed with an axe in his hand cutting wood after which he fell. He stood up but looked like he was struggling to keep his balance. He was just standing there with is eyes fully focused on the wood. I called his name, but it seems like he was in a different world. 'Too much tramadol and diazepam today,' his friend Pasha told me. A few hours later I again saw Ahmed but this time he was vomiting near the showers and then lying on the ground. I walked to him and asked if he needed any help. We had a short conversation when I asked him why he was taking drugs every day. 'Life on diazepam is better than the real one that is fucked', he responded. Ahmed was not alone in this respect and I began to notice how many other men started using drugs after months of living in Kladuša. A few minors and young adults explained that this was their first time separated from their families, culture and control. For this reason, they wanted to try marijuana or alcohol as an experiment. However, extensive and long-term drug and alcohol abuses were mostly interconnected with the cycle of border violence, as Abbih, a 17 year old boy from Syria, explained: 'Many people take pills, mostly strong anti-depressants. It is easy, one pill costs 10 euros and you don't need any prescription. I think it is dangerous, but we take it because if you take it, you can forget about where you are.'

When the weather was getting colder and the chances of crossing the border decreased, I noticed that drug abuse escalated. Sometimes it seemed that the majority of those entering the restaurant to have food and change their clothes were moving slowly and struggling to keep their balance. Their eyes were half-closed, and they mumbled when someone attempted to communicate with them. Others acted aggressively or tried to self-harm, while admitting that they had used opioids or large amounts of anti-depressants. When the misuse of medications and drugs increased, so did the inter-communal fights and attempts at suicide. Men also said they took drugs in the games to avoid feeling pain in their muscles while walking for days or weeks or if the police attacked them. This shows that the men mostly used drugs to 'forget', as Abbih described, or escaped to a 'better world' pointed to by Ahmed, or 'not to feel pain' in the games, which indicates the complex chain effects of the day-to-day subjection to border violence. In a precarious life, one only has limited choices to escape, cope with violence and

survive. This, however, led to an even more complicated assemblage of violence, although with no external perpetrator were to see or blame.

Amongst these new patterns of violence, as re-produced within the life in violence, there is also the use of aggression against others as the means of protection of one's self, friends or family. In many cases, aggressive behaviour – whether attacking someone, fighting or in one case a murder - were related to drug abuse. However, the men also wanted or used violence against another person - migrant, smuggler, or police officer, if they felt in danger, based on the assumption that this was the only means of self-protection or justice. One night, I was teaching Amira, Jamal and their older brother Ali English in their tent. They all came from Deir ez-Zor, a city in Syria controlled for three years by ISIS. Suddenly, they all stopped repeating words written in their notebooks, when hearing shouts from the nearby tents. Ali and Amira stood up and ran there. Jamal took my hand and started pulling me close to the place, from where the shouts were coming. We saw a man lying on the ground with blood pouring from his belly. He had been stabbed by another person who had accused him of stealing his money and phone. When other men separated the fight and the injured man was transported to a hospital, we went back to the tent. We started reflecting upon what had just happened and I remarked that it was horrible this man was stabbed. But Jajama, 17 years old and younger than her siblings, disagreed with me: 'In Deir ez-Zor, my father always said to Ali: 'You have to go and fight if you feel in danger and no one else is there to protect you'.

What this reveals is an absence of state protection, which Davies et al. (2017) itself describes as violence against migrants. This is accompanied by fear and a lack of belief in the police as the main security organ that impacts individuals' and the collective's means of gaining safety, when the only option to respond to violence is violence. As a result, the people's solution to robberies, threats, conflicts, financial exploitation, and attacks was not to call the police but to fight for themselves. To be protected, the men also relied on their friends or national groups, with whom they travelled or lived in the camps. They were looking after each other and guarding each other, particularly the women, children and minors. Within this new social network of protection throughout the journey, violence functioned as the last but sometimes the only option to stay safe. Similarly, few men said that they tried to stand against a smuggler who stole their money: 'We want to search for him and get our money back and we beat him if necessary. We cannot call police as they do nothing because we are migrants, and he is smuggler.' This signifies that migrants used violence to re-establish social order and their environment, which had been violated or destroyed by border enforcements in the first place. However, such protection often had minimal effects or led to a continuation of violence, when the other side also responded with force and brutality. At the end of this violent cycle, migrants mostly ended up harmed. As Stanley and Jackson (2016) suggest, mundane rhythms in the camps can be

reconfigured as sites where violence is not only produced but also reproduced, as showed in alcohol and drug addictions, self-harm and inter-communal violence.

10.5: Conclusion.

The analysis pursued in this chapter discussed how the experience of violence is woven into the fabric of migrants' everyday lives while living at the border. In doing so, this chapter revealed the scale and nature of border violence beyond the direct physical aggression and the withdrawal of state support and unwraps the last, and the most crucial, angle of border violence presented in this thesis – the everyday violence, which presents an academic blind spot on violence, borders, and migration in Europe.

I began this chapter by detailing the story of Youssef and his everyday life in Kladuša across eight months of our contact, until his death. It was highlighted that Youssef died in a moment when 'nothing special' was happening at the border, and thus state authorities proclaimed his death as non-violent. Yet his life was scored by extraordinary violent events, as is the case with most migrant men in Kladuša. I then turned to trace how diverse forms of violence blurred into the ordinary moments of the day and eventually caused severe harms and death.

This evidence was set out by the discussion of how the migrants collectively constructed and experienced the border violence through routinisation of diverse forms of harms at the borders. By spending a longer time at the borders and conflict zones, the men were more likely to accept violence as the part of their everyday. As the result of this, the men were supressing or minimising violence, which allowed them to better cope with the violence, yet, these also normalised violence and erased its marks. In agreement with Beck (2011), it is the routinisation of violence which fuels its power to re-establish order and transform the social environment of borders rather than as a means to pursue particular ends. It is this taken-for-granted dimension of violence that turns it into phenomenon that goes without saying and makes border violence unnoticeable and depoliticised (Acuto, 2014).

As another important aspect of violence being woven into the everyday, I observed that the men were shifting their understanding of themselves over time. Violence significantly deformed their understanding of their own bodies, even when no visible changes appeared. As a result of this, the men struggled to maintain their (intimate, family, religious) relations or were reluctant to establish new ones. Consequently, many interrupted contacts with their loved ones, stopped practising their religion and socially isolated themselves. Finally, the significance of violence to the everyday was outlined by the focus on migrants' daily decisions and routines. I argued that the fear and worries of

violence were factored into the men's daily choices, whether to wait or go in the game. Moreover, new types of violence against oneself or others had occurred in the camps, such as taking drugs to escape the physical and real world of violence or fighting with others as the last and the only option be protected at the borders.

To draw conclusions from these empirical encounters, I argue that Youssef's death was not random or resulting merely from his irresponsible behaviour. Instead, he and other migrant men died of living a daily life stranded in circulation between the countless violent episodes taking place over time, which were defined as truly harming and devastating, rather than singular events of extraordinary physical direct attacks or more structural violence, such as withdrawal of state support. To this end, I suggest that we can illuminate central practices at the heart of violence through the everyday, as also argued by feminist literature that points out that personal is political and international (Enloe, 2011; Guillaume, 2011).

This chapter thus revealed that the everyday matters in understanding violence for several reasons. Firstly, considering social dimensions and the everyday, the men assign to diverse violent episodes painful and terrifying meanings rather than the somatic experiences of pain alone, as argued by Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois (2004). Border violence becomes truly harming upon the destruction of the person's world as he knows it, values it and relates to it through social contacts. These findings thus provide ethnographic insights into border violence in Europe, which has not yet been examined before, but various ethnographers highlighted it in conflict zones (Das et al., 2000; Ferrándiz, 2004b; Green, 1994; Lazreg, 2008; Morar-Vulcu, 2015; Nieminen, 2019; Nordstrom & Robben, 1996; Quesada, 2004; Vigh, 2011). Secondly, the focus on the everyday captured the violence and its transformation across months and years as a process. This brings new insights on border violence and contributes to the literature on violence and migration in the European border context, where most studies tend to treat violence as events that come and pass. Thirdly, it is the everyday that turns to be the most harmful when leaving marks of violence that are not physical marks (Laurie & Shaw, 2018), and are thus not considered as border violence at all, as proclaimed by state authorities over Youssef's death. This violence is everywhere but nowhere, affecting the migrants' daily decisions and actions that harm, but no perpetrator is there to see or blame except the migrants themselves. The everyday, destroyed by violence yet not being considered as violent, thus allows migrants to disappear without a trace.

Chapter 11: Conclusion.

11.1. Introduction.

I have argued throughout this thesis that violence is at work in everyday practices, where violence is the last expected; in private sites, where violence is routinised and leaves no visible marks. This engagement with migrants' encounters of violence in their day-to-day realities at the border allows me to explore border violence as an everyday phenomenon, while considering both direct and structural harms experienced by gendered and racialized migrants. By doing so, the study investigates border violence along the second major transit route for migrants to the EU - the so-called Balkan Route - with the focus on Velika Kladuša, the town sitting on the most north westerly point of the Bosnian border with Croatia. This concluding chapter draws together the major arguments from the thesis and discusses what we can learn about border violence here, its conceptualisation and empirical encounters.

Since violence constitutes a key dimension of the migratory routes to the EU, this thesis shows that it is essential to understand this violence comprehensively by capturing its diverse forms and how these function as everyday processes and experiences across time. Such analytical approach has been undertaken predominantly by ethnographers (Nordstrom & Robben, 1996; N. Scheper-Hughes, 1992) in war zones and far-away non-European places, where crude attacks and killings take place by the side of structural violence. This research expands this ethnographic to violence against migrants at EU borders, where migration scholars predominantly examines violence against migrants as structural, indirect or frame this violence as state abandonment (Cuttitta, 2018; Murray, 2006; Squire, 2017; Stierl, 2018). Such understanding invites us to imagine border violence as a passive and separated out phenomenon from direct and crude attacks and concrete daily experiences violence. This also goes in line with a commonly held understanding that direct and concrete forms of vioence are not part of democratic and liberal territories, as the EU presents itself (Elias, 2001; Isakjee et al., 2020).

This research also sheds light on border places where violence against migrants takes places, yet has not been researched but in this thesis, and poses a crucial question who is subjected to this violence, moving beyond a homogenous label 'migrants'. The vast academic attention in migration and violence studies was gathered around sea routes to the EU, side-lining land routes. To address this research lacunae, this study was conducted at the latest transit at the Bosnian-Croatian border. Finally, there is almost not attention to race and gender as factors in tandem organising violence in European border, with the focus here on racialized migrant men, whom I found to be the most common victims of border violence in the context examined here.

This study is thus among the first to explore how both direct and structural forms of violence function in symbiosis at the Bosnian-Croatian borders, asking whom it specifically targets based on one's race and gender, and seeks to what extent this violence organises their everyday life at the border.

11.2. The methodology used in this research.

To explore border violence at work in migrants' private sites and everyday practices, I conducted eight-month of militant ethnography research. This means that I was using participant observations together with direct political actions at the borders, employed in my role as a volunteer in makeshift camps. Firstly, these methods allowed me to access the migratory routes from inside the migrants' community and map their evolution in the SEE region as dependent on unpredictable border violence, leading me to the latest transit spot at the Bosnian-Croatian border. My role as a volunteer proved a most suitable method to be daily present at the border with the migrants and learn about their diverse forms of violent experiences and the ways they culturally construct and experience them.

As a second line of the research, I conducted 68 interviews with the migrants, questioning their experiences of games and push-backs to collect testimonies on direct violence, which I could not otherwise observe due to their unexpectable, clandestine and dangerous nature. The purpose of the interviews was however two-fold: academic and activist (evidence collection of police violence and public advocacy of victims), which is in line with militant research, when trying to make my research relevant to the migrants' community (Apoifis, 2016; Juris, 2007).

On the one hand, being a volunteer-researcher led to a strong rapport between me and my closest participants, our mutual support at the border, and my increase of safety while being in the field. This methodological approach thus mitigated my positionality as it allowed me to adjust my different gendered and cultural roles. Importantly, learning the basics of Arabic with my participants and reflecting with them on both extraordinary and ordinary events at the border also nuanced my knowledge on their experiences of violence, from their role as 'men' and 'Arab Sunni Muslims', across their past memories of wars and on to their plans for a better future.

Nevertheless, I researched from a position of relative power, as on the other hand, I was able to leave the border without playing the 'games' and experiencing the push-backs, making our political locations unchangeable. Also, while my daily movement in the camp resulted in trust for some, it triggered suspicion for others. Finally, I argue that trying to 'help' with the research discovery is often on the edge of 'doing harm' in the quickly evolving violent fields, as demonstrated on the struggle to protect my participants' privacy after publicly disseminating the evidence on border violence. Yet uncertain research practices and failures are part of knowledge production (Bøås & Bliesemann de Guevara, 2020). By conceding these dilemmas of research in violent fields, I call for a transparent research

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practice that keeps questioning with our participants and other practitioners what truly ethically committed research practice is, beyond ticking boxes of ethical approval.

In the following part, I will move onto the thesis' summary and discussion of its academic contributions in the existing literature. In the following section, I will closely draw a number of conclusions upon the migrants' experiences of violence encountered at the Bosnian-Croatian borders. It will also point to unexplored avenues in this study to draw the basis for further research that could elaborate on this work.

11.3. The summary of findings and the final discussion.

The first conclusion to be drawn from this research relates to how violence against migrants is bounded in the micro context of Kladuša, lying at the border between Bosnia and Croatia. In Chapter 6 I argue that migratory journeys across Kladuša are framed along the Western popular imagination as journeys across a symbolic line between the Balkans and Europe, Islam and Christianity, violence and peace (Mishkova, 2008; Razsa & Lindstrom, 2004; Rexhepi, 2018). For instance, Frontex and EU policy makers commonly framed the migrants' precarious living conditions in Bosnia as placed in the 'Balkan Route'. The term 'Balkans', as Bird et al. (2020) and von der Brelie and Salfiti (2018) argue, is useful policy tool to designate the migratory journeys with chaos and criminal activity and offer subtle yet violent tools to fix it, which proved to be the case along the Bosnian-Croatian border. This thesis further shows that some European actors, such as a few volunteers, linked even more direct and devastating violence to a region-specific predicament, when seeing migrants' injuries from border attacks in Bosnian camps. This Western popular perception of violence as something 'inherently Balkan' are not new (Hatzopoulos, 2003) and push the narratives about direct violence against migrants from the so considered liberal European states to Other places with wild and violent order (Bird et al., 2020; El-Shaarawi & Razsa, 2019).

The case of Bosnia particularly demonstrates this as the country is commonly 'Balkanised' within the EU political discourse, which echoes historians' examination of the Balkans as barbarian and the opposite of the (self-)presentation of Europe (Todorova, 2009). For instance, Bosnia as the Balkan state has been accused as the home for militant Islam (Sarajevo Times, 2019), the local government(s) are considered as dysfunctional and in need of controlled by Brussels (Ahmetašević & Mlinarević, 2018; Rexhepi, 2018), and policy makers has called the country as the latest spot of the 'Balkan Route', when occupied by thousands of injured migrants residing in makeshift camps. This means that using the term Balkan is not only a policy strategy to displace migrants' precarious living spaces out of the EU (Bird et al., 2020; El-Shaarawi & Razsa, 2019) . Instead, I suggest that the dominant EU policy narratives using

the 'Balkan' terminology invite us to imagine violence against migrants, including direct and crude attacks, as not surprising or even normally occurring in Bosnia (research data, p 80).

Yet I problematise these assumptions about where Balkan and violence end and Europe and peace start by shedding light on how those living and migrating through this location make sense of this place. I show that the migrants phrased their journeys as games and *rehla*, the terms entangled in their experiences of violence when trying to move from Bosnia to Croatia, Slovenia and Italy, which merged into 'one border between hell and heaven' (research data, p 78). This violence in Croatia was surprising for many migrants and difficult to grasp due to its membership in the EU, which itself portrays as a humanitarian and democratic; language that proved to have power to conceal Croatia's far-right tendencies (MacDowall, 2018) in a commonly held understanding. The migrants' terminologies and experiences are thus distant from the dominant assumptions about Balkans and Europe and where violence takes place. By showing these examples, I excavate violence as being inflicted by the EU police guards in the EU, when injured bodies are then pushed out of the EU to its neighbourhood, such as Kladuša.

Thus, the migrants' language used at this border allows us to re-think where to locate violence in migration and call to shift our attention to states that represent themselves as liberal, and thus, culturally incompatible with such violence. Drawing upon Galtung (1990), I argue that it is Europe's assumed incompatibility to use violence (i.e. the official rhetoric of transnational justice and humanitarian values) in contrast to the Balkan's assumed common use of violence (i.e. recent Yugoslav wars), that are naturalised in the language, which legitimises the violence against migrants and allows it to continue with impunity. For this reason, I agree with scholars who recently called for need to consider 'Balkans' ambiguous position in Europe while understanding (violent) responses to migration (Bird et al., 2020; Isakjee et al., 2020; Trakilović, 2020).

Whilst violence against migrants can be seen as part of Croatia's struggle to find its rightful place in Europe (aspiring to join the Schengen Zone) (Razsa & Lindstrom, 2004), the data here shows that this is however also the case in Bosnia. I demonstrated this by narrating the closure of public services for the migrants, evictions of the makeshift camps, and harassments of migrants by the local police. Such practices have been also observed in other former-Yugoslav states, which scholars explain by the states' aspiration to join the EU (Rexhepi, 2018). This means that on the one hand, SEE countries, such as Bosnia, are vulnerable to the vagaries of the changing social and political map of Europe (Razsa and Lindstrom, 2004), which are managed by violence against migrants handled by EU state authorities (i.e. Croatia). On the other hand, Bosnian authorities soon employed themselves violence against migrants. Yet this research does not examine whether and how this approach is managed by the EU

external border management (Andersson & Keen, 2019) or the country's integration process in the EU, which calls for further examination. This research however contributes to the literature on migration in SEE region by portraying the migrants' experiences of violence taking place alongside solidarities, as embedded in the local dynamics between migrants and the local residents and the historic-political context of this border. By doing so, this study is one of the first that examined the Bosnian-Croatian borders in today's migration movements.

The second conclusion that can be drawn from this thesis is that violence is not only legitimised upon geographical locations and its symbolic meanings. Instead, violence is also legitimised against specific group of populations upon racialized and gendered ideologies (Galtung, 1990; Said, 1978) when those attacked by border police by batons and remained enclosed in makeshift camps were particularly Arab Muslim migrant men. Although browned-skinned women are considered to be the genuine victims of violence (Malkki, 1996; Razack, 2004) and refugees in need of protection and empowerment (Milivojević, 2018; Zavratnik & Krilić, 2018), such assumptions turned to be flawed in the border migration context examined here. Whilst women also experience violence (particularly sexual harassment) and they certainly need protection this does not mean that the men should be side-lined in migration policies as incapable of vulnerability or as always powerful agents, especially in times of violent conflict from which many had escaped, as it is generally expected from masculine roles (Myrttinen et al., 2017; Schulz, 2018). This critique was the point of departure for my analysis, when I argue that these commonly held understandings of gender and race proved to be dangerous at the border context examined here, racializing the men as Other migrants and a threat in need of violent interventions.

For instance, in Chapter 7, I show that the 'single' men (travelling without women and children) are perceived by state authorities, humanitarian workers, the local residents as strong and independent upon the dominant assumption about masculine agency, which rendered them as invisible and side-lined them from diverse forms of aid, as also pointed by Charsley and Wray (2015) elsewhere. Yet masculinity and virility together with racialized assumptions about Arab and Muslim male bodies as dangerous made the men as a visible threat during the 'games' and triggered the direct police attacks against them. Violence in the makeshift camps and 'games' was thus mainly experienced by racialized and gendered migrant men, who had set on these dangerous journeys to protect their families (women and children), as in line with their own assumptions of masculinity and for some, the notion that 'men have to feel pain to be men' (research data, p 94).

To make sense of these tensions between collective and individual expectations to be a man and vulnerabilities in migration and violence, I follow the notion of racialization (Carr & Haynes, 2015). I

argue that the migrants' skin colour, nationality and religion together with male gender presented a package to be a (terrorist, ex-combatant, sexual, backward) threat at the border and legitimised the use of violence against them. This signifies how border violence against Arab Muslim men is embedded in the local context of racism and gendered hierarchies. Assumptions such as, Christianity over Islam, Europeans over Arabs, white men over brown men, sanitise and legitimise this violence (Galtung, 1990; Said, 1978) when a Croatian border guard remarked to one of my participants: 'we have orders to beat you all' (research data, p 106). Yet I also take inspiration from the feminist literature on gendered and racialized violence (Butler, 2004a; Crenshaw, 1991; Harris, 2000; Yuval-Davis, 2006) to understand how 'all' who the EU border guards have orders to beat is constructed from different social categories (Arab, Muslim, men, migrant). I suggest that cultural fantasies on race, gender and others social locations organise violence against specific groups of migrants in tandem, which proves to be the case in the context of border violence against men.

By analysing the men's gendered and racialized experiences of violence here, I contribute to the literature on race in migration (Bhui, 2018; Fanon, 1961; Kaya, 2016; Isakjee et al., 2020; Milivojević, 2018; Pajnik, 2019; Razack, 2004; Turner, 2015), which shows that racial violence against migrants is inherent across Europe, as embedded in broader political projects across past and present day, such as colonialism and the war on terror. Yet I also argue that the men's experiences of violence should not be peripheral in academic analysis of this racial violence to encounter both women's and men's experiences of violence and call for policies to pay attention to all migrants across their differences. By doing so, I contribute to an emerging literature on male migration (Charsley & Wray, 2015; Griffiths, 2015; Turner, 2019). Importantly, I suggest that bringing the two streams of literature on race and gender into a dialogue has much to offer to engage with diversity of the migrants' experiences of violence and understand racialized and gendered ideologies triggering this violence in the first place. Yet to do so, there is need to also encounter migrants' ethnic, language, and cultural differences or class differences, as suggested by Harris (2000), which this research has omitted. This calls for future examination of how different (national, socio-economic, …) sub-groups of migrants experience violence and make meaning of it, which would elaborate on this work.

A third conclusion is that violence against the migrants takes in both direct and structural forms, which I recognise while drawing upon Galtung (1969), who argues that structural violence takes place alongside direct violence and these two forms of violence needs symbiotic analysis. This point of departure is crucial here not only because I observed both direct and structural violence to take place at the Bosnian-Croatian border. Importantly, such analysis remains curiously absent in migration research, which predominantly analyses structural and indirect violence, examining border externalisation politics (Andersson & Keen, 2019) and smart border technologies (Bigo, 2014), or focus

on withdrawal of legal border crossing channels or aid in transit (Davies et al., 2017; Squire, 2017). Yet I argue that understanding of violence only through structural means is only partial response of what is happening at the EU's borders, overlooking complexity of various harms at the Bosnian-Croatian border.

For instance, whilst engaging with the migrants' narratives of 'games' and push-backs in Chapter 8, I map the instances of perpetual direct and concrete police attacks against migrants and their possessions in Croatia and also, in Slovenia. This violence consists of extensive direct violent strategies, which in the migrants' terms ranged from 'combis' when being left with lack of oxygen in closed police vans, to severe beatings by batons while crossing a 'tunnel' made of police officers, 'tortures' by electronic devices and shootings. These police strategies develop across time, in line with the official rhetoric of the EU's combat of human smuggling operations and alongside the deployment of visible smart border and military technologies (drones, helicopters) at the border and new 'commando' border units. Yet, this violence also transformed across the season of the year, when police used weather to substitute their weapons (i.e. forcing migrants to walk naked in snow or enter freezing rivers), as it is in the Mediterranean, where dangerous sea environment (Schindel, 2019) substitutes direct attacks. Among the most common strategy also belonged the destructions of the migrants' phones and theft of their possessions which they needed for survival, thus, inflicting harms on their bodies across time.

Majority of migrants whom I met in Bosnian camps told me to experience or observe these strategies of the direct violence, which shows that this violence is not random, anomalous, or an unintended, as pointed in study on direct violence along the U.S.-Mexico border (Vogt, 2018). Neither direct violence against migrants are mere dramatic occurrences that do not need academic attention, as suggested by some scholars (Jeandesboz, 2014; Žižek, 2009). Instead, the destructions of migrants' possessions, beatings by batons or even incidents that portray practices of torture construe intended and organised military border tactics that articulate the policing spaces of land borders *in* the EU. Yet the direct infliction of pain is allowed to happen due to structural organisation (military and smart border techniques and cross-national combat of smuggling) and deployment of concrete perpetrators by the state (commandos), which highlights how direct violence is symbiotic with structural violence. The case of the Bosnian-Croatian border especially shows that direct attacks are called into an action when structural violence (closed legal and safe border crossings), crumbles (Galtung, 1969). This distinguishes the migratory routes along land borders from sea borders, where closed legal channels resulted in unauthorised border crossing through dangerous space of water (Schindel, 2019), where migrants get harmed or die with no need of direct police violence.

Yet the interplay between direct and structural violence is not bounded only in police attacks, but also in administrations in police stations during the push-backs and then, the ongoing life in the makeshift camps, as I showed in Chapter 9. This structural violence was illustrated on state authorities withdrawing the migrants' possibilities of legal and material support – while denying them the right to claim asylum in EU (Croatia and Slovenia) and restricting their basic support (medical aid, shelter, hygiene, food, …) in the Trnovi camp in Bosnia. This violence did not appear to me as 'indirect' or managed by mere 'abandonment' of the state, as commonly conceptualised in the existing literature. Instead, I argue that this structural violence uses direct actions. For instance, police enforced administrative procedures on the men with the use of direct attacks. Also, diverse state authorities were present in the camps to enforce the ban of aid or directly destroy the camps, as observed in other migrants' camps around Europe (Martin et al., 2019). This means that although the structural violence consists of highly ramified and anonymous chain (Andersson & Keen, 2019), I found concrete people (police/humanitarian workers) to appear at the end of this chain, who used direct actions. This highlights Galtung's (1969) question whether there is even difference between direct and structural violence, when I suggest that these different manifestations of violence need relational analysis.

To this end, I argue that political decisions, military and humanitarian technologies generate direct and concrete outburst of violence, which presuppose and reinforce each other in the migrants' everyday at the border (Galtung, 1969). This is a conceptualisation that rejects border violence as a passive, subtle, or anonymous chain of *structural* decisions, which invites us to imagine this violence as accidents of EU's border management. Instead, I suggest that border violence uses *direct* decisions and actions with the aim to lock migrants out of the EU territory (Galtung, 1969), but sometimes it uses crude and immediately harming means, and other times, it uses administrations, international rules and humanitarian actions that inflict pain across time. This full conceptual and empirical picture of border violence has been neglected in the existing literature (except Isakjee et al., 2020), which marks academic contribution of this study.

A final and the most crucial argument of this thesis is that violence is often situated and made meanings of within the quotidian at the border, hidden in the migrants' seemingly mundane situations of daily life. Following feminist scholars (Acuto, 2014; Crane-seeber, 2011; Enloe, 2011; Fernández et al., 2017; Ginty, 2014; Mishra, 2018; Stanley & Jackson, 2016), this thesis traces violence where it is at least apparent – in migrants' private and concrete practices; while deciding whether to go in the game or wait in the camp, having fun, experiencing boredom, (not) socialising with others or praying. This thesis shows how these and more migrants' personal encounters are political, and matter in understanding of violence, although they mostly leave no marks of violence. I engage with these migrants' taken-for-granted interactions, rituals and routines at the borders and problematise them to show how

seemingly innocent situations have power to harm and kill, as affected by direct and structural forms of violence taking place in the background. By doing so, this thesis has sought to engage with how personal matters in understanding violence (Acuto, 2014) and how violence is experienced in everyday life (Scheper-Hughes & Bourgois, 2004), which makes anonymous chains of structural violence and clandestine border attacks operations concrete and intimate experiences. In this way, this thesis contributes to the literature on politics of the everyday life, which is puzzling in migration and violence research (Iliadou, 2019; Obradović-Wochnik & Bird, 2020; Vogt, 2018).

In Chapter 10, I show that border violence has serious impacts on the migrants beyond their physical and psychological health by focusing on their day-to-day life. I demonstrate this on the migrants' routinisation of violence across time spent in violent conflicts and at the border, which shifted their collective understanding of violence as 'usual and normal' (research data, p 150). I further observed that border violence significantly deformed the migrants' understanding of their own bodies, even when no visible changes appeared. As the result of this, the men struggled to maintain their relations or were reluctant to establish new once, when violence was slowly destroying their intimate, family and spiritual connections to the world around them. The omnipresent fear was also woven to the men's daily choices, such as daily thinking whether to go in the game or stay in the Trnovi camp longer as dependent upon rumours about new police attacks or new injured bodies to see around. As the result of this daily cycle in between attacks and struggles in the camps, many began taking drugs and inter-communal fights were common as the last and the only option be protected at the borders. These situations often ended in severe harms or deaths, yet 'left no traces of violence' (research data, p 147).

By outlining these observations, I excavate violence at work in private sites, which would otherwise stay unnoticeable or deemed as unimportant in understanding of violence and depoliticised (Acuto, 2014). For this reason, I attempt to track violence as taking place when 'nothing special is happening at the border', outside of dramatic events, when no perpetrators are to see but migrants. The everyday realities at the border make this violence as an ongoing social process in between direct attacks against migrants and their withdrawal of legal support in makeshift camps. If we consider these examples of violence in everyday life more broadly, as embedded in direct and structural violence taking place within the EU border protections, I argue that they are no accidents, no causalities, nor self-afflicting harms. Instead, I observed how migrants ended up in these daily situations as the result of intentional and systematic direct and structural forms of violence. Migrants' private sites thus shed a new light on border violence that challenges a common academic understanding of violence, which mostly start with state and structural forms of violence.

Illuminating everyday life at the border also allows us to learn about how migrants make meaning of border violence across time. I agree with ethnographers scrutinising violence in conflict zones (Nordstrom & Robben, 1996; Scheper-Hughes, 1992) and argue that it is not the horrifying bleeding wound or physical pain alone that gives violence its meaning and destroys a person. It is rather routinisation and domestication of this violence that matters for migrants as it maintains diverse forms of violence as an ongoing process, which slowly destroys what the migrants value and what connects them with the social world (family, friends, the local community, religious practices). In this way, violence becomes present during peaceful and playful moments, for instance when children re-play the 'games' and border attacks with humour in the camps (research data, p 158). Violence thus goes on without saying and with no visible marks, by the side of friendship, love and solidarities, which is crucial to highlight given that most migrants make their life at the border and experience violence there for months or years.

Despite trying to unwrap the subjective and cultural meaning of the border violence, the conceptualisation here remains limited in the word 'violence' itself. While I have examined the 'forms' or 'means' how this violence takes places and is manifested in the day-to-day life, the root meaning of this word has not been in depth explored here. With a simple question 'what is violence?' to my participants, instead of immediately asking 'in which forms does this violence take place?' and 'how is it lived?', we could go into more detailed understanding of violence and consider the participants' different expressions and phrasing for this phenomenon. Thus, more rigour could be assigned to the definition of 'border violence' for various sub-categories of migrants in future research when trying to conceptualise violence as a complex social phenomenon.

When drawing conclusions from the empirical findings, let me lastly point out the most obvious point of this thesis: systematic use of diverse forms of violence against migrants at the EU's land borders mapped in this thesis shows that violence does not stop migration movements, it does not save migrants' lives, nor it effectively fights cross-border crime of human smuggling. These claims often made by Frontex, Croatian state authorities or the prominent EU Commission members thus proves to be wrong by the extensive evidence outlined in this thesis. This argument confirms that the violent border techniques are dysfunctional and harming and fatal for the humans in need of protection as mapped across borders stretching from the desert between the U.S. and Mexico (Doty, 2011; Martínez et al., 2014), passages through Africa (Mafu, 2019), the Middle East (Panico & Prestt, 2019), sea routes leading to Europe (Squire, 2017; Vaughan-Williams, 2015), and land routes leading from Bosnia to Croatia examined here.

Whilst I have pointed out that contributions to the academic literature, these findings were also disseminated in media and in the form of policy reports to numerous policy makers and humanitarian organisations in the EU Parliament and Croatia and other EU states, where violence sits uncomfortably and is deeply problematic. It is impossible for me to search for the real impact of this policy and public outreach. However, I hope that it also marked this thesis' contribution beyond academia when working in activist collectives to provide in-depth insights to border violence and proposing ways forward. Having information about border violence in its all forms and long-lasting impact on the migrants' everyday life at the border could highlight how violence uses brutal force, which is directed by concrete people, decisions and state-technologies and how the EU-centred narratives about 'Balkans' and racialized and gendered migrants legitimise such violent outbursts. Importantly, the impacts of violence go beyond physical pain as it destroys one's social world as he knows it. These all information about border violence needs to be considered when finding the ways how to stop and prevent violence at EU's borders and protect the migrants' lives.

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