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5 Surveilling Landscapes and Seascapes

Compromises on the Greek Aegean Islands

If borders can be considered as mobile infrastructures and as vehicles of politics that transport political ideas and actions, then they can also be regarded as entities that create technopolitical maneuvering spaces. The emergence of infrastructural compromises, as discussed in chapter 4, indicates the presence of such a maneuvering space. Technopolitical maneuvering spaces harbor both political intentions and technological instruments. Whereas the previous chapter discussed the peramorphic mediations among detection, design, and detention at the airport, the peramorphic mediations that figure in this chapter and the next one concern the connections among migration, security, and humanitarian aid at the Greek Aegean Islands during the period of 2014–2016.

The focus here will be on the northern Aegean Islands of Lesbos and Chios. Lesbos, the third-largest island in Greece, is only 5.5 kilometers from Turkey at the narrowest point of the Mytilini Strait. Chios, the fifth-largest Greek island, is situated 7 kilometers from the Turkish coast. The complicated relations among border surveillance, search-and-rescue operations at sea, and the creation of hotspots (which will be discussed in this chapter), and between care and control and the rise of a "humanitarian border" (which will be discussed in chapter 6) can be regarded as the result of an interplay between conflicting yet related concerns. The chapter will also attend to compromises between border infrastructures and various landscapes and seascapes as border control intermingles with different terrains and territories, which affects the relation between vision and action.

The period of 2014–2016 was a landmark in the development of border infrastructures in Europe. The emergence of border infrastructures and their

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movement across landscapes and seascapes is inextricably linked to the growing number of migrants who have entered Europe since 2011, especially from 2014 to 2016. Although many of these border control initiatives grew out of existing programs, systems, and policies—and could even be said to accord with the initial ideas underlying the Schengen Agreement—the "migrant crisis," as it is often called, intensified the technopolitics of Europe's borders. On October 27, 2015, Donald Tusk, the president of the European Council, stated in his address to the European Parliament:

> The crisis, or rather challenge, that we, all of us, as a community, as the European Union, are facing now is perhaps the biggest challenge we have seen for decades. I have no doubt that this challenge has the potential to change the European Union we have built. It has the potential even to destroy achievements such as border-free travel between Schengen countries. And what is even more dangerous, it has the potential to create tectonic changes in the European political landscape. And these are not changing for the better. These are truly extraordinary times that require extraordinary measures, extraordinary sacrifices, and extraordinary solidarity.[1]

The "extraordinary times that require extraordinary measures" largely happened in Greece. Due to the war in Syria, conflicts following the Arab Spring, and the merging of migration routes from various countries in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, Greece—according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM 2017a)—received 1,047,939 undocumented migrants by sea in 2014–2016, which represents about 66 percent of the 1,582,759 arrivals by sea recorded in all of Mediterranean Europe during this period.[2] The Aegean Sea between Turkey and the Greek Aegean Islands became the main entry point to Europe following the closing of the land route between Turkey and Greece. In 2011 alone, around 55,000 migrants were detected crossing the Evros River on the Turkish-Greek border. The Greek government's completion of the controversial Evros fence in December 2012 encouraged many migrants to opt for the overseas route. IOM (2017a) states that the flow began to increase in June 2014 (with 6,214 recorded arrivals) and continued to grow until October 2014 (11,628 arrivals). In October 2015, it reached 217,936 persons—that is, more than 7,000 persons on average per day. Arrivals by sea to Greece decreased significantly after efforts to close the so-called Balkan Route by Hungary and the subsequent deal (known as the "Statement") between the European Union (EU) and Turkey.

This chapter pays particular attention to the emergence of the European Surveillance System (EUROSUR) and the European Union's "hotspot"

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approach. EUROSUR, which became operational in December 2013, is one of the defining programs of European border technopolitics and remains active on Lesbos and Chios and their surrounding waters. The hotspot approach identified the Aegean Islands as experiencing "disproportionate migratory pressure"[3] and intervened accordingly. The analysis will show the connections between EUROSUR and the hotspot approach and describe how peramorphic mediations between border control technologies reshaped the way that borderlands and borderseas are perceived and represented, as well as how it results in a particular relationship among humans, technologies, and the terrain where borders are drawn.

Chapter 4 explained how the internal organization of a specific border configuration (namely, the airport) could be understood as a series of compromises between the spaces of design, detection, and detention. But how do the technopolitics of borders work out when compromises must involve multiple states and organizations spreading across Europe? Compromises are not restricted to negotiating actors like persons, organizations, or state representatives that express their conflicting interests, plans, wishes, and desires. Compromises do not have to be limited to interactions in which the parties involved give and take a little in order to reach an agreement. The notion of a compromise can also be used to point at the innovations that take place to connect various ideas, practices, and techniques. Compromises emerge out of mediations. In such cases, a compromise is a kind of bridge that not only connects two sides, but also installs a new entity.

An effort to arrive at such a bridge is the 2015 European Agenda on Migration (discussed in chapter 2) and the subsequent policies, such as the deployment of the EUROSUR program and the hotspot approach. The argument that will be made here does not say that the EUROSUR program and the hotspot approach originated from the same policy agenda or have a common political source. Instead, it states that the similarity between EUROSUR and the hotspot approach is programmatic. Both contribute to the intermingling of monitoring on land and at sea, as well as to the connection between visuality and action. Further, although the two have different genealogies and were indeed developed separately, the joint mention in the press release is meaningful, in that it precedes the policies that were taken during the migrant crisis, as expressed in the important 2015 European Agenda on Migration, which connected EUROSUR and the hotspot approach. This document expanded border security as it referred to

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border protection, as well as the duty to prevent the further loss of life by migrants and refugees.[4] Saving lives and securing borders became the two key security imperatives. This compromise between security and humanitarianism ought not to be seen solely as a covenant between actors or concepts. A technopolitical compromise is not a contract between citizens and migrants; instead, it is a very material entity.[5]

What are the consequences when this argument is applied to the compromise between security and humanitarianism during the migrant crisis? First and foremost, it means that the compromise ought not to be analyzed solely at the level of policy paradigms or political ideas. Political ideas concerning the security identity of the European Union and the common task to control the external borders on the one hand, and the will to offer humanitarian care and to prevent violations of fundamental rights on the other, are expressed in a particular infrastructural space that offers opportunities for, but also poses restrictions on, the realization of actions and ideas. Conversely, compromises should not be reduced to the creation of concrete objects. Identity cards, for instance, allow people to be registered for border security reasons, but also support the exchange of medical files to provide health care. In a material way, identity cards are a compromise between security and humanitarian aid. This material realization of objects is an important focal point of a morphological view on border infrastructures, but it has to be related to the development and dissemination of political ideas.

To accomplish this, this chapter and chapter 6 will discuss the technopolitical compromises that have generated the European border surveillance system EUROSUR, the hotspot approach, and the humanitarian border on the Greek Aegean Islands. This chapter considers the surveillance of landscapes and seascapes, paying specific attention to the intermingling of various geographies and territories via the construction of compromises. The tensions, compromises, and interactions consist of the merging of surveilling practices on land and sea and a specific intermingling of seeing and acting (i.e., of visualizing events such as the entering of unregistered vessels in territorial waters and intervening in these occurrences). But instead of leading to an all-encompassing surveillance regime, intensified border control and migration management policies developed into a kind of border bricolage of agencies, policies, institutions, technologies, and geographies.

The analysis in this chapter is partly based on a series of interviews that were conducted at Athens, on Chios, and on Lesbos during the period of

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2014–2016. The interviews were geared toward identifying the surveillance practices that were related to EUROSUR and the hotspot approach. Excerpts of these interviews are employed here to illustrate the development of surveillance technologies on land and at sea and the tensions between border control and rescue operations.[6] In what follows, the creation of this border bricolage on the Aegean Islands will be described, focusing on the blending of various surveillance practices.

The Emergence of EUROSUR

At first sight, EUROSUR and the hotspot approach may seem relatively unrelated. Although they were part of the same policy packages and were jointly applied during the migrant crisis, EUROSUR is mainly concerned with surveillance at sea, whereas hotspots are concerned with the identification and registration of migrants on land. However, the two programs are interconnected and share some specific characteristics. Both contribute to the intermingling of monitoring on land and at sea and the infrastructural integration of border security and human security approaches.

The development of the European Border Surveillance System (EUROSUR) is not only an example of an infrastructural compromise, but an example of infrastructural imagination as well. The Mediterranean is one of the main operational areas of EUROSUR. The system's main aims are to achieve interoperability between Europe's surveillance systems and increase situational awareness of critical events, predominantly border crossings. Surveillance at sea is central to border control and migration management in those parts of the Mediterranean that function as gateways between the European mainland, its southern islands, North Africa, and Turkey. Surveillance systems around the Aegean were already moving from a "patrolling driven" to an "intelligence driven" strategy before EUROSUR became operational.[7] The deployment of EUROSUR was supposed to Europeanize surveillance by extending the chains of associations between patrol boats, regional authorities, headquarters, and Frontex officials. Indeed, EUROSUR was introduced as a showcase of infrastructural technopolitics.

As a November 29, 2013, European Commission memo explains, the regulation establishing EUROSUR "provides a common mechanism for near-real time information exchange and interagency cooperation in the field of border surveillance . . . EUROSUR follows an intelligence-driven approach,

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allowing national and EU agencies to better understand what is happening at the external borders and to respond faster to new routes and methods used by, for instance, drug smuggling criminal networks."[8] The expansion of surveillance at the European Union's external borders affects its member-states in a number of ways. European framework programs and policy directives are implemented in national legislation and policy, accompanied by financial resources, technical support, staff, training programs, and technological and logistical infrastructures. But as technological systems are also locally embedded, coordinating existing border infrastructures can give rise to tensions.

EUROSUR is a computerized network for collecting, exchanging, and analyzing information for the surveillance of land and sea borders.[9] It can be seen as a "scopic mode of coordination" that accompanies the "mediatization of face-to-face situations."[10] EUROSUR fits the description of "infrastructural Europeanism."[11] Inspired by the notion of "infrastructural globalism,"[12] infrastructural Europeanism posits, among other things, that "the study of 'connections and circulations that have ceaselessly made and unmade different Europes' provides an entry-point into a new history of Europe that retells it as a genuinely transnational history instead of a collection of national histories."[13]

The transnational history recounted in this chapter is fueled by crises and conflicts and transgresses inter-European transnationalism. The EUROSUR program connects the European headquarters of Frontex in Warsaw with national coordination centers and regional authorities and border guards (in this case, the coast guards based in the Aegean Islands). Information and communication networks, based increasingly on the visualization of events, combine satellite imagining with radar detection and local observation to arrive at a picture of a specific situation, such as an unregistered ship entering national waters. EUROSUR thus brings together surveillance on land, at sea, and in the air.[14]

In 2015, we attended the European Day for Border Guards in Warsaw. When we asked a researcher working for the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (EBCG; then known as Frontex) about EUROSUR, he replied that there was too much buzz about it being a kind of all-seeing apparatus. He described EUROSUR more modestly, as consisting of "coordination, training, and funding."[15] Only later did we realize the import of his answer: monitoring mobility goes beyond technology, and technology goes

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beyond instruments. It requires protocols and personnel to gather, interpret, compare, and apply the information that is uncovered. The key word is "interoperability." But it also requires partnerships and collaboration among various authorities and institutes in many member-states.

This is where diplomacy and funding enter the picture. EUROSUR exemplifies how border infrastructures couple various systems of monitoring and control. From the outset, it was meant to be a combination of systems, a "system of systems," not unlike the Internet. The October 22, 2013, Regulation (EU) No 1052/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council that established EUROSUR describes its aims as follows: "In the context of border surveillance, the ability to monitor, detect, identify, track, and understand irregular cross-border activities in order to find reasoned grounds for reaction measures on the basis of combining new information with existing knowledge, and to be better able to reduce loss of lives of migrants at, along or in the proximity of, the external borders."[16]

Originally a military term, situational awareness concerns "the ability to maintain a constant, clear mental picture of relevant information and the tactical situation including friendly and threat situations as well as terrain."[17] In border surveillance, situational awareness aims to visualize critical situations such as emergencies and irregular border crossings to assess whether intervention is required. In addition to boats, cameras, and radar, EUROSUR has been able to use satellite imagery, obtained through the European Satellite Centre, since 2014. Situational awareness is also an explicit goal of surveillance programs elsewhere, such as the US Secure Border Initiative Network (SBInet), that started in 2006 and was abandoned in 2011, which sought to install a state-of-the-art virtual fence along the US-Mexico border.[18]

EUROSUR is not only a system aimed to stimulate situational awareness in order to achieve real-time interventions. It is also a system designed to gather data about border crossings by migrants to fabricate maps of future migration risk scenarios. In that sense, EUROSUR contributes to the creation of humanitarian visibility. The notion of humanitarian visibility refers to "the regime of visibility shaped by humanitarian actors as one of the pillars of their intervention: that is, the thresholds and the mechanisms defining what must be seen and what can pass undetected or unnoticed."[19]

EUROSUR has a complex genealogy. Growing cooperation in border control and surveillance between national governments and EU institutions led to a greater emphasis on technology and the coupling of extant

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instruments and infrastructures. This development was also fueled by the rise of the European "homeland security market" and the security industry's initiatives to give shape to the technological border. A turning point here was the border package "Providing Europe with the Tools to Bring its Border Management into the 21st Century," presented on March 12, 2008, by Franco Frattini, the European commissioner responsible for justice, freedom, and security. On December 18, 2008, the European Parliament stated that it "welcomes the current discussions in the Council aimed at setting up the Eurosur border surveillance system with a view to optimizing the exploitation of all surveillance systems, essentially by extending their existing cover, which currently reaches only part of the areas where operations need to be carried out."[20] The emergence of EUROSUR can also be seen as the result of various small steps, of learning by doing and of copying successful practices from elsewhere. The emergence of EUROSUR is for instance linked to Spain's experience with SIVE, an "integrated system for external surveillance" that the Spanish government approved in 1999 to control the Strait of Gibraltar.[21] Seen in this way, EUROSUR is not a radical rupture in surveillance history, as it builds on existing technologies and networks. The development of this system is not the result of radical technological breakthroughs; rather, it followed an incremental, controversy-intense process. This does not mean that EUROSUR is "simply a reshuffling of preexisting elements"[22] Rather, it adds another layer to existing information and monitoring systems, knowledge practices, and communication networks.[23]

The Border Surveillance Laboratory in Action

As technopolitical projects, EUROSUR and the hotspot approach share a relationship with monitoring and visualizations. EUROSUR and the hotspot approach both perform monitoring, either by visualizing events (EUROSUR) or by identifying and registering migrants (the hotspot approach). There is even a deeper similarity here. Monitoring and intervening as well as vision and action are intimately related in border surveillance. Seeing is not an isolated activity of the eyes; it is bound up with locomotion with the movement of bodies and vehicles that carry the eyes.[24] Vision is embedded in the environment in which visualization operates—an extended and distributed infrastructure. While it is a precondition for action, vision requires previous actions and imaginations as well.

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One way to emphasize this point is to underline the material basis of visualization, which often remains invisible in itself; we need to "specify the infrastructural work done prior to the possibility of rendering migration visible."[25] EUROSUR conducts a kind of "life governance" and enacts exactly this kind of "participation."[26] By combining interoperability with situational awareness, EUROSUR aims to connect all kinds of relevant information to undertake risk assessments of critical situations and to intervene in the "here and now." In that sense, the relationship between visualization and actual interventions suggests a comparison between the infrastructural setup of EUROSUR and that of a laboratory.[27]

As explained in chapter 2, the notion of a laboratory, particularly in science and technology studies, is much more specific than a test lab. The concept of a laboratory posits that to create a vibrant future for an innovation, the requirements include not only activity in the laboratory, but also activity outside the walls of the laboratory to prepare the outside world so as to shape a social order that will adapt this innovation.[28] As in a laboratory, surveillance systems aim to realize specific interventions by creating large-scale networks in which operations can be conducted to identify critical events. Laboratory practices tend to shift from representations to interventions, a movement that can also be seen in the EUROSUR laboratory.[29] But laboratories in this case are not fixed institutions; they are "centers of calculation" that gather data and information, relying on numerous mobilizations and enrollments to relate their findings to the outside world.[30] For border infrastructures more generally and for EUROSUR in particular, their networking capacity depends on myriad operations and mobilizations. As moving vehicles, borders not only consist of technologies and infrastructures, but they also operate as representations of critical situations and specific interventions.

Creating operability to arrive at situational awareness fits well within the program of virtualizing the border and visualizing critical situations. Nevertheless, at the end of the day, it is members of the coast guard who are sent out on patrol, to board boats and check unregistered vessels. In an interview, the director of Greece's Sea Border Protection Department in the port of Piraeus explained that border surveillance is only one step in the management of mobility.[31] This vision echoes the view that controlling the "means of movement" is part and parcel of modern state legitimacy.[32] There are several ways to actually enforce this control. In its most sophisticated form, surveillance comes close to "the politics of possibility," as Louise Amoore

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puts it. Central to this notion is the idea that the politics of surveillance is moving from a prevention-based paradigm toward a preemption-based one. The "anticipatory logic" of preemption does not seek "to forestall the future via calculation but to incorporate the very unknowability and profound uncertainty of the future into imminent decision." This logic informs what it means to draw boundaries—and to protect them. The sovereign capacity to write the borderline follows this logic by gathering "multiple elements of what is thought to be known about a person—each element, in the singular, a mere possibility . . . in order to give appearance to an emergent subject."[33] Both the border and the subject that aims to cross it take on the shape of a mosaic—the outcome of a process of "piecing together." The resulting "composite image" of the subject and the border line is produced as a kind of "mosaic."[34]

But the director of the Greek Sea Border Protection Department had something more mundane in mind. His proclaimed focus on the management of mobility and the movements of people tended to exclude the reasons why people migrate. The reality of surveillance then runs the risk of becoming a *hic et nunc* (here and now) reality, based on the monitoring of real-time movements to conduct immediate interventions. Under such circumstances, EUROSUR is not only far from a seamless web, it also is replete with tensions. In our interview, the union representative of the Hellenic Coast Guard at Chios sketched a depressing picture, not only of migrants but of coast guard officers as well. Border guards suffer high workloads and stress caused by shortage of personnel, long hours, a heavy emotional burden coupled with lack of psychological support, mounting paperwork, and lack of attention from superiors and authorities in Athens.[35] When the influx of migrants skyrocketed in 2014, coast guards were not prepared for their new tasks. Take, for instance, the simple, yet crucial—and in the end, complex—operation of stopping a boat that turns out to have undocumented migrants on board. The circumstances surrounding such situations were described by a Lesbos coast guard commander as follows:

> The Coast Guard's obligation is to protect and guard the sea borders, as well as the safeguarding of human life, and the respect of human rights. It can use all the available floating and land means, as well as aerial ones. It works in cooperation with Frontex, [nongovernmental organizations (NGOs),] and other international institutions. The Hellenic Coast Guard (HCG) is solely responsible for the coordination . . . The majority of the incidents in which we intervene has to do with

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> rescuing people. In this framework we have to cooperate with the Turkish Coast Guard. The goal is to stop them within Turkish borders . . . HCG's task is also to arrest the smugglers, who are usually on bigger, wooden boats . . . We use modern surveillance means in order to be able to locate such small boats during the night as well . . . In most of the cases the boats are located within Turkish borders and we inform the Turkish Coast Guard (TCG), which observe apathetically. In some cases, TCG even accompanies the refugees' boats.[36]

Proximity to the Turkish mainland, the bordering of Greek and Turkish waters, the "Europeanization" of border surveillance, and the volume of crossings by migrants have complicated the work of the Hellenic Coast Guard (HCG). Migrants, too, pursue strategic behavior, provoking rescue missions so as to be escorted to the Greek islands. Migrants frequently operate as "recalcitrant objects" by turning the means of surveillance back against efforts to "control the border."[37] Because perception requires action, migrants can make themselves visible in order to be subjected to action. When a migrant boat is observed, for instance, people on this boat can become the subjects of some kind of emergency. As such, "emergencies could be provoked by slashing a rubber boat with knives, jumping in the water, [or] capsizing a vessel. In any event, no longer does the patrol boat survey 'illegal migrants' and 'control a border'; it now witnesses an emergency and, as such, is legally obligated according to the same agreements that recognize sovereign territoriality at sea, to initiate a [search-and-rescue] operation."[38]

So how does one actually prevent a boat from entering national waters if it refuses to stop? The union representative provided us with some answers: shining a light, screaming, shooting in the air, or shooting at the boat's engine. But in the end, she told us, it all depends on the attitude of those in the boat. If the boat does not change course, there is hardly any way to make it do so. While EUROSUR may have created a border laboratory, this member of the coast guard felt like the mouse in the laboratory. "But I am not a mouse," she proclaimed.[39]

Hotspotting Greece

The combination of migration management, human security, and border security paves the way for several co-constitutions, such as between surveillance on land and at sea, and between monitoring and intervening. The border surveillance laboratory, a kind of "track and archive gaze," interacts

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and transforms different actors, institutions, technologies, and geographies.[40] The human security/border security nexus also stimulates the intermingling of care and control, a topic to which the next chapter will return in more detail. As argued in the opening of this chapter, the 2015 European Agenda on Migration created a particular infrastructural maneuvering space, which resulted from a compromise between the infrastructures concerned with human security and border security and led to a kind of humanitarian policing task of intercepting and rescuing migrants at sea.[41]

Although EUROSUR and the hotspot approach have different origins, they were jointly deployed by a specific peramorphic interplay. Interoperability and situational awareness are explicit goals of EUROSUR, but they apply to the hotspot approach as well. Whereas the EUROSUR program was to a great extent deployed at sea to combine border surveillance with search-and-rescue operations, the hotspot approach took place on land. However, both programs are connected. Although the origins of both approaches go further back, the deployment of EUROSUR and the hotspot approach was fueled by the conjoint 2015 European agendas on security and migration, in which a specific form of border management was announced to tackle the migrant crisis. The agendas aimed to install a compromise, a combination of monitoring borders and protecting migrants' lives, by connecting policies. The rationalities of the Schengen and Dublin systems encountered each other in a particular form of border management that combined surveillance and search and rescue with the registration of migrants at hotspots to process their asylum requests. The result, the following discussion will argue, was not only a multiplied form of border control, but also a hybrid form that blends the surveillance of landscapes and seascapes.

On October 15 and 16, 2015, Jean Asselborn, the minister of foreign affairs for Luxembourg (the state holding the EU presidency at the time), traveled to Lesbos with Dimitris Avramopoulos, the European commissioner in charge of migration and home affairs. The purpose of their visit was to see "how the hotspot is working as a pilot project in the process of being launched." During the visit, Avramopoulos referred to the efforts made by his country, while conceding that "there are significant shortcomings in the infrastructures."[42] Greece has been called the "gateway to Europe" because the conflicts in the Middle East have spurred an influx of migrants, most notably from Syria.[43] The number of migrants seeking to reach Greece by sea has swelled since 2014. The installment of the Evros

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fence on the Turkish border in 2012 did not stop the flow of migration, but simply redirected it. One of the most traveled routes by migrants from Syria and Afghanistan, as well as from African countries such as Eritrea and Somalia, entails trying to reach one of the larger cities on Turkey's western coast, such as Bodrum or Izmir. From there, they cross the Aegean Sea to one of the Greek Aegean Islands.

Greek migration policy in general, and border surveillance in particular, are often said to be ad hoc. The lack of resources, the difficulties in implementing policy agendas and legislation, and the murky interaction between central and regional authorities (e.g., between the capital Athens and the Aegean islands)—all lead to a provisional policy practice. The sustained economic crisis that has befallen Greece depleted the budgets of the ministries involved in border protection and migration policy. The already-limited resources of the police and coastal patrol officers involved in border control now faced a strict, internationally prescribed fiscal regime. The Greek state not only had to refinance itself and generate economic growth, but it also had to reinvent itself to modernize the governmental apparatus and restore its own legitimacy.

But it is not only the lack of financial and material resources that hampers Greek operational capabilities. Until recently, Greece did not have a detailed asylum policy; restrictive migration legislation allowed only a small number of migrants and refugees each year. Especially lacking were institutional (i.e., legal, social, and humanitarian) frameworks in which migrants saved from sea or detained on land could be cared for. Even before the euro crisis, it was questionable whether the Greek government would be able to receive such a large number of migrants over such a relatively short period of time. The combination of the country's economic decline, its highly porous borders, growing xenophobia, and faltering legal and institutional framework for the integration of migrants have created a fragile environment for the management of immigration.[44] Despite (or perhaps because of) the lack of institutional, professional, and financial means, the European Union has plowed resources into border surveillance in Greece. Especially since the building of the Evros fence, attention has been focused on the Aegean Islands adjacent to Turkey, which increasingly receive migrants from Syria and Afghanistan, as well as a flood of other migrants, mainly from Eritrea and Somalia.

The European Commission and its related intelligence and border control agencies have proclaimed Greek seas and islands, particularly those near the Turkish mainland, as hotspots. The hotspot approach has a different

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genealogy than EUROSUR, but it is programmatically closely related: the European Commission memo of November 29, 2013, that announced EUROSUR's launch also mentioned the option of installing "hotspots." The Commission describes the hotspot approach as follows: "A 'Hotspot' is characterized by specific and disproportionate migratory pressure, consisting of mixed migratory flows, which are largely linked to the smuggling of migrants, and where the Member State concerned might request support and assistance to better cope with the migratory pressure."[45]

The EUROSUR program and the hotspot approach share particular peramorphic mediations. Not only do they affect specific places on land and at sea, they create particular spaces of monitoring and governing. By gathering and analyzing data about migrant's movements and irregular border crossings, they not only execute border management, but also craft future-oriented risk scenarios. As Martina Tazzioli says:

> Hotspots pertain to "risk" levels as they represent the critical sites along the EU borders that are characterized by migratory events. Therefore, the visualization of migration in terms of level of risk contributes to the positing of a nexus between border (sites) and crisis: the term "hotspot" is used to designate critical spaces where there is need to intervene promptly to address a migration crisis.[46]

Just like EUROSUR, the hotspot approach is an infrastructural approach that connects the visualization and creation of a governance of risks with particular places, spots—hotspots. Whereas many analyses of the hotspot approach focus on the concentration and biopolitical governance of people in detention centers, the infrastructural angle emphasizes that hotspots are intimately connected with other programs of Europe's border politics.

As argued in chapter 4, detention centers can be understood as places where the state of exception is at work and where the sovereign power of states is enacted by biopolitically governing the bodies of migrants. However, the hotspot approach also combines a policy of containment and channeling mobility with the construction of data-driven control assemblages. This approach is conducted via a particular form of logistics, consisting of various steps of processing migrants and modes of infrastructuring. This processing and infrastructuring result in a "chain" of identification and registration that "moves not only migrants through containers, produces identities and data, [and] sorts files, cases, and fates into distinct institutional channels but also manages to coordinate different staff of national, European, and nongovernmental agencies."[47] Infrastructural differentiation and variation also create

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novel connections between mobility and containment and between surveillance on land and at sea. An example is the use of local health databases at ports to examine migrants immediately after they were picked up at sea.[48] But the hotspot approach not only concerns migrants, it also functions as a mixing bowl to stimulate cooperation among EU agencies. The hotspot is a mechanism that combines various European agencies to bolster their cooperation and centralize control over the common external border. The hotspot approach aims to unite various EU agencies and policies.[49]

The hotspot policies of the European Union have generated confusion. Are hotspots limited to specific places, such as reception and registration centers where migrants are fingerprinted following the Dublin Regulation? Or does the term more broadly encompass areas experiencing disproportionate migratory pressure? If the latter, the Aegean Islands could be considered a hotspot. Asselborn, Luxembourg's minister of foreign affairs, envisioned four specific tasks for hotspots: screening (to identify an applicant's nationality), debriefing (to analyze the applicant's travel route and identify smuggling networks), digital fingerprinting, and the provision of temporary authorization documents by the Greek authorities. The latter allows Syrian nationals to remain in Greece for six months; it is written in Greek and valid only for Greece. Non-Syrian applicants and those of uncertain nationality receive a document that allows them to leave Greek territory legally within 30 days.[50]

How do these procedures work out in practice? In an interview with the general director of the police in Chios, it became clear that there was a lack of, roughly, everything. Reflecting on the events of 2015, he recalled a lack of infrastructure, staff, and instruments, the most notable of which were Eurodac machines to take fingerprints.[51] Interpreters, staff to support fingerprinting processes, and members of Frontex and Rapid Border Intervention Teams (RABITS) only arrived in 2016.[52] Frontex teams usually consist of members of different nationalities. Apart from frictions caused by cultural differences (such as team members speaking their own national languages to each other), the police director thought that cooperation was relatively good. But then the role of Greece and the Aegean Islands emerged: "On 10 November 2015, an EU evaluation committee was on the island. They were here, in my office; it was like the Holy Inquisition. It was harder than passing the police officer exams. I felt as if we were a country that was in the evaluation process to become a member of the EU."

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The mayor of the municipality of Chios emphasized not only the lack of people and equipment, but also the lack of a plan to anticipate future events:

> Understaffing and underfunding was the framework in which we had to act. The main problems the municipality encountered were the lack of a plan, which should foresee what we should do and the lack of infrastructures. The latter was not something irrational, as we didn't have the logistics to build infrastructures for receiving one thousand people per day. There was also the weakness of anybody to predict till when and how, as well as to give the specifications of what should be done.[53]

The influx of migrants dealt a hammer blow to the already precarious state apparatus. The mayor of Chios recounted:

> A major change that I've noticed is the change of the tasks of the police. Police have stop to care about anything else than the refugee issue on Chios. And this fact has major negative effects on social life. There are not even traffic police. And of course, there is no control on criminality, which fortunately is very low on Chios. This change of the state system has social consequences.[54]

The variety of tasks carried out by the local police and coast guard became apparent in an interview with the deputy head of the Chios coast guard:[55]

> We needed more personnel, for the registration, for locating the refugees on the coasts, for transferring them . . . We had to patrol a very big area. We had to transfer them for registration from very distant areas with the two HCG minibuses. . . . At the beginning of July and as the flows increased, we asked Chios Ktel S.A. to help us with the transportation from the beaches, as the police had already done.

Whereas cooperation with Frontex was considered satisfactory, the mayors of Chios and Lesbos were critical of EU highhandedness. According to the mayor of Chios, "each city has found a way to deal with the refugee issue, but the EU and national policies don't see this . . . I don't think that local societies can prescribe EU or national policy . . . in order to implement EU policy, a better connection has to be built up with the local societies."[56] On the subject of Lesbos, the mayor was more cynical: "We are worried about the way the EU is addressing the issue, which seems that it doesn't want to solve the problem, unfortunately. It wants to provoke problems with Greece."[57]

The picture is one of crisis management under precarious conditions, of responding to emerging events that nobody anticipated. Nor did anyone know for how long the situation would last. As the mayor of the municipality of Lesbos told us:

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> The essential thing is that there is willingness to cooperate in order to manage the situation . . . It should be recognized that this crisis provides opportunities as well. And this opportunity is to restore Greece's dignity. We're not as they [the European Union] presented us, the bad Greeks, and they imposed us the Memorandums; we're people with capacities, maturity, dignity, and we have proven this . . . I think that the way I managed the situation on the island consists of a pattern that other mayors and the central government should adopt. For dealing with the emergency situation, I acted at the limit of legality.[58]

The installment of specific identification and registration centers based on the hotspot approach and the investments in surveillance at sea and support from Frontex and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) vessels in the waters between the Aegean Islands and Turkey were meant to strengthen interoperability and situational awareness during the migrant crisis. These programs combined monitoring and intervening, vision and action, by combining a focus on events at particular places with the creation of informational spaces. However, it remains questionable whether the EUROSUR and hotspot programs have succeeded in connecting the past, present, and future in order to anticipate migration flows. What they did manage to do was merge the surveillance of land and sea in novel ways and create new hybrid forms that fit into the compromise among migration, security, and border control.

The Merging of Land and Sea

Policies deployed by the European Union and its member-states have turned the Mediterranean into a sea under surveillance and the Aegean Islands into hotspots. They have done so by peramorphically creating a kind of border bricolage, in which improvisations, provisional arrangements, and ad hoc decisions are as important as the implementation and extension of European programs. The precarious compromises easily become compromised themselves.[59] The final sections of this chapter describe how this mingling of practices not only affects the practice of surveillance, but also how landscapes and seascapes come to be perceived and represented as ready for intervention.

The sea has become involved in the border politics of Europe as a natural entity that can either provide passage for migrants or be brought under control. "The border as vehicle" concept is shaped by the conflicting strategies of various actors and their attempts to visualize movements at sea, transforming how the sea is represented in maps, media, modeling, and migration management. The sea as a natural entity is increasingly divided

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up and absorbed in different forms of representation and control. Far from providing a seamless web, the monitoring of the Mediterranean manifests a seascape full of anxiety and risk.

The case of EUROSUR speaks to the question of how natural entities become visualized and represented in order to conduct interventions, whether they are humanitarian, aimed at border control, or both. By focusing on the sea as an area under surveillance, border infrastructures and monitoring activities spread to both national and international waters. In doing so, they confront a geographical, historical, cultural, and economic entity—the sea—with a variety of identities that preceded it becoming an area of security emergencies and humanitarian crises. Monitoring and surveillance at sea imply not only drawing pictures of risky and dangerous situations for humans, but also mapping the sea itself.

Unpacking EUROSUR through the study of its institutions and technologies reveals specific aspects of Europe's peramorphic mediations: the tensions among European, national, and regional levels of authority and coordination, as well as conflicts over defining geographical space. The transformation of the Aegean into an area under surveillance cannot be uncoupled from its history as part of the Mediterranean, a transnational zone of economic, cultural, and political exchange in terms of both cooperation and conflict. Studying the transformation of the Aegean under the aegis of EUROSUR highlights the roles that the sea, the islands, and the European mainland play in the politics of mobility, as well as how the actions of migrants, NGOs, international organizations, smugglers, and states transform both the landscape and the seascape into a particular domain of technopolitics.

The aim of creating a surveillance unity on the Aegean faces resistance from the region's multiple histories. While the central authorities in Athens are redefining the Aegean as a border region that functions as a line of defense against irregular migration, the sea and the islands are part of a long tradition of trade and cultural exchange and have more in common with spaces of interaction than places on the periphery now cast as the boundaries of Europe. The Mediterranean has a long history of dividing and connecting people, places, and cultures, but this identity is now interwoven with security policies. According to various historians, today's monitoring of the Mediterranean to manage human mobility and control migration movement fits into a long, verticalist tradition in which "the North" places itself above "the South."[60] Fernand Braudel's famous

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suggestion, supported by the French cartographer Jacques Bertin, to picture the Mediterranean upside down proposes seeing the historical sea as a collection of cultural, economic, and social trajectories and exchanges, a hybrid unity with a multiple history.[61] Over the past centuries, however, the Mediterranean has increasingly come to be seen as a European lake—a particular imagined geography that no longer functions as a middle passage or bridge from the South to the North, but is instead conceived of as a boundary.[62] With dramatic flair, Luigi Cazzato argues that the Mare Nostrum has turned into a Mare Monstrum: the "current militarization of the Mediterranean, which is trying to prevent the horizontal movement of migrants, is precisely a cruel (and probably pointless) attempt to impose 'unity' again, transforming 'bridges' into 'gates' controlled by one side only."[63]

Much of the scholarship on maritime governance and security has followed Braudel, who described the Mediterranean in terms of "the movements of men, the relationships they imply, and the routes they follow," conceiving of the sea as a plane of mobility and risks.[64] But sea should not be understood as the opposite of land, allowing exceptional representations and interventions. Although there is no such thing as *terra continens*—continuous or uninterrupted land—a philosophical understanding of terrestrial globalization is possible only if it is permeated by maritime stories.

One of the threads running through the work of Latour and Sloterdijk is the emphasis on the nonhuman and the posthuman. The networks and spheres they describe not only underline the material aspects of social and political order, but also function as containers of human thought and action. The delegations among social actors, institutions, and technologies contribute to changes in material morphology, as well as in moral and epistemological frameworks. The prefix "post" in "posthuman" does not refer to a period in time like "post–World War II" or a rupture in history like "the coming of postindustrial society." Instead, "post" indicates that the noun that follows it has somehow lost its meaning. Posthumanism does not mean that the end of humanity is imminent; humans will presumably still be here when robots perform our labor and algorithms make our decisions. Nevertheless, we are not uniquely important, and the building blocks of humanism such as autonomy, agency, responsibility, and human dignity may soon lose their meaning as moral and epistemological frameworks.

A similar development may be taking place in the context of border control. In the study of borders, this theme has been addressed in studies of

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border control and terrains at the US-Mexico border, to cite just one example.[65] An interesting example of how a border control landscape can be approached from such a perspective is the study of US Department of Homeland Security surveillance programs in the US-Mexico borderlands, which emphasizes "the quotidian role of a dynamic more-than-human landscape" in frustrating the department's enforcement practices and ambitions.[66] By unpacking the everyday challenges confronted by Homeland Security personnel, such research contributes to a posthumanist theory of terrain, shifting the focus of geographic inquiry to how the qualities of particular spaces, objects, and conditions may resist or impede routine navigation, centralized vision, and administrative practice. Interestingly, the notions of posthumanism and terrain not only sensitize us to the various relations and delegations between humans and nonhumans, but also emphasize how humans and nonhumans often fail to connect due to the resistance of the material or the frictions between them. A posthumanist theory of terrain "attends to the complex, textured dimensions of terrestrial space, and offers withdrawal—rather than association—as an analytic and ontological principle for theorizing a more-than-human political geography."[67] This argument is in line with "a post-humanitarian politics in which people, places, and things are engaged in contestations over mobility."[68] Posthumanism can be understood in these accounts as a notion that stresses the shortcomings of analyses that focus solely on humans, and of moral, ontological, and epistemological frameworks that avoid addressing technological, material, and geographical entities such as landscapes and seascapes in the study of border control. This posthuman perspective on terrain applies not only to landscapes, but to seascapes as well.

Borders are not just instruments that reach across various geographies; they also intertwine with them in spatial and material ways. This intertwinement can be conceptualized by conceiving borders on land, at sea, and in the air as solid, liquid, or gaseous, and distinguishing among three fields of action in border control practices.[69] The first, *solid* form of control is the border as a physical barrier, most often on land. The second, *liquid* form concerns border checks and practices of "policing and surveillance" involving processes of identifying, authenticating and filtering. The third, *gaseous* form is "the universe of the transnational database," connected to "the digital and the virtual, to data doubles and their cohorts, to categorizations resulting from algorithms, to anticipations of unknown behaviors, to

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the prevention of future actions."[70] EUROSUR introduces experiences from elsewhere into its fields of action, transforming control and surveillance by circulating methods, techniques, knowledge, and practices.[71] Surveillance on the Mediterranean "confers a new meaning upon Fernand Braudel's metaphor of the Mediterranean as an 'electro-magnetic field' in terms of its relation to the wider world":[72]

> The coasts of the Mediterranean, as well as state-operated vessels, are equipped with radars that scan the horizon around them by sending out high-frequency radio waves that are bounced back to the source whenever they encounter an object, indicating these "returns" as an illuminated point on a monitor. . . . Optical satellites generate imagery by capturing reflecting energy of different frequencies such as visible and infrared light, while satellites equipped with synthetic-aperture radar (SAR) emit a radio signal and create an image based on variations in the returns. Both "snap" the surface of the sea according to the trajectory of orbiting satellites and are used to detect unidentified vessels.[73]

The crossover between fields of action and control in different border areas merges the border landscape with the border seascape. Although different instruments and techniques are applied on land, the "liquefaction" of the surveillance field continues when migrants disembark from their boats and step onto land.[74] Conversely, the intensified surveillance at sea—particularly operations to prevent boats from entering and pushback operations—echo the solid approach generally associated with the control of land borders. Given the geography of the borders of Chios and Lesbos, nature enters the picture as a material entity.[75] The hybrid role of EUROSUR is not restricted to assemblages between humans and information networks; it also includes a mingling of technologies with different geographies.

The Border Bricolage

The migrant crisis of 2014–2016 revealed the intensity of surveillance projects both on land and at sea. The combination of security, migration, and humanitarian approaches of the European Union resulted in the rise of distinct but related projects, such as EUROSUR and the hotspot approach. Connecting surveillance to search and rescue also resulted in the blending of the geographies of land and sea in unforeseen ways. This chapter followed the peramorphic mediations between elements and situations so as to analyze the mutual transformation of technologies and territories.

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As Latour does with his notions of "association" and "translation," this discussion has identified the points at which these transformations took place. While the EUROSUR program and the hotspot approach predate the so-called migrant crisis, both found timely application and a field of operations in the Aegean Sea and islands. But instead of providing a seamless overview, the surveillance was highly improvised and had to strike all kinds of compromises under often-trying circumstances. Things turned out differently than foreseen in many ways.

The composition of border infrastructures consisted of the intermingling of seeing and acting on land and at sea and the merging of the respective geographies. EUROSUR coupled all kinds of instruments from different member-states to create interoperability and achieve situational awareness, relying on all kinds of ad hoc arrangements and a specific interplay of seeing and acting, representing and intervening. To close the holes, places are required where what Latour calls a "panorama of associations" is created and local activities become a bigger issue.[76] Like the previously described centers of calculation in science, coordination centers in the field of border surveillance "act at a distance" by producing all kinds of forms and standards that allow connecting activities.[77] This mélange of agents, institutes, and technologies not only allows the multiplication of entities in data, information, facts, and representations, but also allows their black-boxing through standardization as a way to close disputes. The hotspot approach connected registration centers, regulations, and instruments with local procedures and provisions in what was commonly referred to as a "crisis." As a result, the border infrastructures at Lesbos and Chios in 2014–2016 saw a multiplication of not only actors and agencies, but also the geographies of land and sea.

Greek migration policies appeared to be chaotic, ad hoc, and mainly based on improvisation and crisis management. But much the same could be said for the European approach to its external borders in the same period. Even the most sophisticated, prudent, and technologically advanced approach would not have prevented the fragmentation of practices at the borders. Border infrastructures travel across landscapes and seascapes, relying on myriad technologies to address various kinds of border events. While the transformative strength of border infrastructures sometimes manages to bridge these differences, technologies do not merge smoothly, and gaps keep appearing, created by frictions that are inseparable from the aims of creating interoperability and situational awareness; by the geographical resistance of

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landscapes and seascapes; and by the migrants themselves, who refuse to be the passive objects of migration policy. A border infrastructure can be seen as a composed complex that comes into existence through various activities, hanging together and rendered actionable through a number of technopolitical compromises.

Compromises are the result of peramorphic mediations. These mediations do not just concern the interactions among actors, institutions, and technologies. Mediations also lead to articulations (or, as Sloterdijk would say, "explications") to the emergence of new configurations because they affect and infect each other. The notion of "peramorphic politics" that was introduced in the beginning of this book emphasizes the expansion and multiplication of borders. Both EUROSUR and the hotspot approach drew attention to particular events at specific places, but they also stimulated the emergence of informational spaces. EUROSUR and the hotspot approach contributed to the building of particular archives of information about the mobility of people, as well as to the constructing of windows of action that allow agencies to examine, identify, and register migrants. The ongoing process of creating borders affects everything it touches. The compromise between migration, security, and border control, as well as the aim to combine the protection of human lives with the protection of borders by putting surveillance on land and at sea together with search-and-rescue efforts and identification and registration, multiplied the variety of border entities. This multiplication of borders not only leads to an expansion of borders, but creates ever more hybrids: it merges land and sea, vision and action, mobility and containment, monitoring and intervening, and, as chapter 6 will show in more detail, care and control.

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Belongings of migrants in a camp in Serbia, May 2015.
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Borders as Infrastructure

The Technopolitics of Border Control

By: Huub Dijstelbloem

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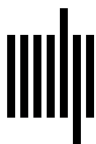

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