Between Refugees' Rights and State's Interests

Securitization of Migration in Greece during the Refugee 'Crisis' in Europe

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Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the ongoing refugee 'crisis' in the EU, arguing that the EU's approach towards the refugee issue largely speaks for the establishment of a new phase of migration in Europe. As opposed to the previous phase in the aftermath of the Cold War where a common European refugee policy was evident, today, each of the Union's member-states seems to emphasize on its own migration policy in order to protect its national interests and security. Such trend therefore indicates the influence of securitization of migration on the migration policymaking. Under the prism of securitization, the purpose of the thesis is studied via the example of Greece, and in particular how the Greek state (in cooperation with the EU) regulates the refugee arrivals in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea. Combining the methods of case-study and speech-act theory discourse analysis, this research attempts to answer the following two research questions: *(1)* How does Greece (in communication with the EU) regulate the refugee arrivals and *(2)* whether securitization of migration by Greece complies with human rights standards, specifically with the principle of non-refoulement as enshrined in the 1951 Geneva Convention. The thesis' results illustrate that the Greek migration policy has entered a securitization trajectory and this generates a profound negative impact onto human rights. Thus, eventually, the study engages into presenting an alternative, more humanitarian management of the refugee matter.

Keywords: *Migration, human rights, EU, Greece, securitization, refugees, non-refoulement principle*

List of Abbreviations

AIDA = Asylum Information Database

BENELUX = Belgium Netherlands Luxembourg

CoE = Council of Europe

CW = Cold War

EASO = European Asylum Support Office

EC = European Commission

ECB = European Central Bank

ECRE = European Council on Refugees and Exiles

EMR = Eastern Mediterranean Route

EU = European Union

FRA = European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights

FRONTEX = European Border and Coast Guard Agency

GC = Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees

GCR = Greek Council for Refugees

HP = Hellenic Parliament

HRW = Human Rights Watch

ICCPR = International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

ICESCR = International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights

ILO = International Labor Organization

IMF = International Monetary Fund

IOM = International Organization for Migration

ISF = Internal Security Fund

LAOS = Popular Orthodox Rally

MP(s) = Member(s) of Parliament

MSF = Medicines Sans Frontières [Doctors Without Borders]

ND = New Democracy

NGO(s) = Non-Governmental Organization(s)

OAPEC = Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries

ot = own translation

PASOK = Panhellenic Socialist Movement

PM = Prime Minister

RQ(s) = Research Question(s)

SAR = Search and Rescue

ST = Securitization Theory

SYRIZA = Coalition of the Radical Left

UDHR = Universal Declaration of Human Rights

UNHCR = United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

USSR = Union of Soviet Socialistic Republics

WWII = Second World War

Table of Contents

1)   Introduction

International migration has been one of the most complex phenomena in world politics. While it is true that the vast majority of global population lives in the country of birth with only 3,5% of the world population being migrants,[1] international migration has nevertheless noted a rapid growth over the past five decades. According to recent research (in 2019), it is estimated that approximately 272 million people worldwide are living in a country other than their countries of birth.[2] Unfortunately however, not all migrations occur on a positive premise. In recent years, an increase in forced migration has been observed due to armed conflicts, persecution, human rights infractions, environmental disasters, rising inequalities, poverty etc.[3] As such, while international migration takes place mostly legally and orderly, it has increasingly acquired nowadays a more irregular form too, with large and frequently uncontrolled population movements towards destination countries being observed.

In this framework, this thesis is about the current, huge, refugee arrivals that are observed in the EU and Greece. What in particular is examined in the thesis is how the EU (represented by Greece) designs the migration policy in order to regulate the refugee arrivals, and whether such regulation takes place in agreement with human rights standards. Following the flashpoint of conflict and persecution in the Middle East in 2015, Europe has witnessed large-scale, asylum-seeking and refugee flows; only in 2015, over a million of asylum-seekers (and eventually refugees) arrived in the EU.[4]

This reality has led several (if not all) EU member – states to reconsider their approach towards refugees and asylum seekers, by viewing their arrivals as a top-priority, security issue.[5] Essentially, what is happening in Europe is what Hammerstadt[6] in general has argued for: That the mass concentration and settlement of forced migrants in one place (whether a specific state like Greece or the whole continent) is depicted as a direct threat

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[1] Castles et al, *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World,* 2020, p. 5
[2] IOM, 'World Migration Report', 2020, p. 21
[3] Castles 2003, IOM 2018, UNHCR 2019, EASO 2020
[4] FRA, 'Asylum and migration into the European Union in 2015', 2016, p. 5
[5] Bank, 'Forced Migration in Europe', 2014, p. 691
[6] 2014, p. 266

to the demographic, political, cultural, socioeconomic character of that place, therefore extreme measures must be employed to counter the depicted threat. And as it becomes obvious, obstacles to such draconian measures such as the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms can be kept aside in the name of security. Forced migration, in other words, has nowadays entered a securitization trajectory. Hence, to conduct this research, the theory of securitization (of migration) is used to illustrate the change of politics (and rhetoric) with regards to the refugee issue and present the effect of such change onto the refugees' and asylum seekers' lives and rights.

1.1 Refugee 'Crisis' and State Factor – Greece

The mass arrivals of refugees and asylum seekers in the EU have been still an ongoing process, resulting to what has been coined as refugee 'crisis' in Europe. On one level - and in line with the general pattern of a huge increase in asylum applications worldwide[7]-, the EU has seen a spike in asylum requests since 2015; the vast majority of those who have come are from Syria and Afghanistan.[8] On the other level, the continuous arrivals of refugees in the EU via the Mediterranean routes in conjunction with the gross scale of loss of life in the Mediterranean Sea have raised significant questions regarding the function of the EU migration policy, or even as some authors claim the absence of such policy.[9]

Somewhere in the second level of the 'crisis' lies Greece and its agency. As the term implies, the Mediterranean routes refer to the three main gateways that connect the countries of origin of irregular mostly migrants with the EU, which is the destination point, via the Mediterranean Sea[10]: The Western Mediterranean Route to Spain, the Central Mediterranean Route to Italy, and the Eastern Medditeranean Route to Greece.[11] Of these courses and for the purpose of this research, the EMR towards Greece comprises the most relevant one. Since the commence of the mass arrivals of refugees, Greece has

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[7] UNHCR, 'Global Trend: Forced Displacement in 2019', 2019, p. 36
[8] Geddes and Scholten 2016, UNHCR 2019
[9] Geddes and Scholten, *Politics of migration and immigration in Europe,* 2016, p. 144
[10] Afouxenidis et al, 'Dealing with a humanitarian crisis: Refugees on the Eastern EU border on the island of Lesvos', *Journal of Applied Security Research,* 2017, p. 12
[11] https://frontex.europa.eu/along-eu-borders/migratory-map/ (Last accessed: February 2021)

been positioned at the epicenter of the refugee 'crisis', linking irregular migrants from Middle-Eastern countries to Europe via the Eastern Mediterranean corridor.[12][13]

Greece is a country that is located in the most south-eastern point of the EU, hence the Greek borders function as the southeast EU external borders too. As such, one of Greece's main responsibilities as an EU entry point has been to regulate the entry of non-European persons in the Greek plus European territory. To meet this task, Greece fares as what Teitelbaum[14] has described as an 'entry-regulator' state by undertaking a series of actions ranging from police controls at the borders and rescue operations at sea to intelligence gathering and prosecution of migrant smugglers, either alone or in coordination with FRONTEX. Unfortunately, for Greece, this duty has been anything but easy, having to undertake the burden of numerous and constant arrivals alone. From 2015 onwards, Greece has become the destination of more than a million refugees and asylum seekers through the Mediterranean route. Table 1 below provides the exact numbers:

Table 1: Arrivals by Sea and Land in Greece between 2015 – 2020[15]

Previous years	Sea arrivals	Land arrivals	Dead and missing
2020	9,687	5,982	102
2019	59,726	14,887	71
2018	32,494	18,014	174
2017	29,718	6,592	59
2016	173,450	3,784	441
2015	856,723	4,907	799

As Table 1 depicts and will be subtly discussed later on, most of the arrivals in Greece take place via the sea creating thus an unprecedent situation for many islands in the Eastern Aegean Sea. Thousands of people remained trapped for long periods of time in islands whose capacity to host people is much below than the actual number of those

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[12] Geddes and Scholten, 2016, p. 216

[13] At this point it is fair to acknowledge that Turkey (even though not an EU country) consists of another core destination country for refugees and asylum seekers in the EMR. The significant agency of Turkey will be discussed later, in the Analysis Chapter with the example of the common EU – Turkey Statement.

[14] 2002, p. 162

[15] https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean/location/5179 (Last accessed: February 2021)

residing in the islands. The main explanation behind this reality lies withing the EU Asylum System, specifically due to the Dublin principle. The Dublin Regulation will of course be discussed again in the next chapters. For now, what is important to mention is that according to the Dublin, an asylum application is made in the EU country that an applicant first enters. This surely has been deeply controversial and unfair for EU member-states like Greece where thousands of asylum seekers upon entering the country are restrained to access asylum in the country of their choice,[16] consequently they are to remain in the islands for as long as their asylum applications have been processed.

1.2 Research Problem – Questions

Having outlined the general background of the so called 'refugee crisis' in Europe and referred briefly to important aspects and focus areas of the thesis it is time now to present the general research problem behind my study, as well as the specific research questions based on which my thesis shall be expanded. The *general research* problem is: What are the effects of adopting a migration policy that views refugees coming to Europe as a security concern? Emanating from this, the *research questions* are the following two:

1. *How does Greece (in communication with the EU policymakers) regulate the refugee arrivals?* The goal behind this question is to empirically flesh out and discuss the Greek migration policy under the prism of Securitization Theory (ST).

2. *Does securitization of migration -resulting from the Greek regulation of the refugee issue- meet human rights standards*? The aim here is to evaluate the Greek migration policymaking on whether it complies with or refrains from human rights standards. This question embodies both empirical (what actions are adopted and what is their relevance to human rights) and normative elements (how an alternative approach to regulate the refugee flows should look like). Since the concept of human rights is very broad, it is presented in the next sub-section (1.3) to which right specifically this question cognates.

1.3 Research Aim and Plan

The *goal* of this research is to discuss the regulation of the refugee flows in Greece and Europe as a security concern as well as the produced consequences of such regulation.

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[16] Geddes and Scholten, 2016, p. 158

Having presented the broader context of this research, as well as the specific questions that this study will attempt to answer, this section demonstrates how this research is designed. Following the **Introduction**, the second chapter is comprised by the **Literature Review** and is divided in three parts: Part one examines the relationship between migration and human rights. After that, part two and three attempt to present and discuss critically the different patterns of migration in Europe and Greece respectively, during the previous century. Due to existing limitations in time and length of the study, the discussion in these two parts will take place only within selected time periods. Moving on, chapter three presents the **Theoretical Framework** of the study which as its title implies is the ST. The theoretical perspective of the study is very useful as it will fuel the main discussions of the analysis and conclusion chapters.

Drawing from the theoretical basis, the next chapter will reflect on the **Research Design,** which is broken down in three components: (1) epistemological position, (2) collected study material and (3) employed methods for carrying out the research. The results and findings of the thesis as well as the answers to the research questions are presented in the **Analysis** chapter. The time frame of this chapter departs from 2015 where the first enormous refugee arrivals occur until nowadays. Considering this spectrum, the chapter is divided in three segments. Section one commences with the first phase of securitization of the refugee issue in EU and Greece, under the SYRIZA government. In respect, section 2 displays the most contemporary shreds of securitization in the region, where the new Greek government by ND was formed. Both these sections are affiliated with answering the first RQ.

By contrast, section 3, concerns the second RQ which essentially is to measure and evaluate the impact of the Greek (and European) security agenda onto human rights. Does the Greek and European policymaking adhere to human rights principles? And if not, what can an alternative formula be in response to irregular immigration? As mentioned towards the end of section 1.2, owing to the fact that human rights as a concept is too vague, it is imperative to specify in which human right this research will refer to. This is the *non-refoulment principle*, which as laid down in Article 33 of the 1951 Refugee Convention, prohibits the return of refugees and asylum applicants to countries where

they would risk persecution.[17] Yet despite this prohibition, the Greek state seems to have taken actions that oppose international law.

Having completed all the necessary features of the Analysis, the text ends with the **Conclusion**, which will restate the RQs and the central problem and sum up the main points of the previous chapters. Moreover, this chapter will serve to display the possible limitations of the research, the study's contribution to human rights as a field of study, as well as the breeding ground for future similar research.

1.4 Definitions

Prior to the commence of the second chapter, I believe it is useful to provide some important definitions regarding certain terms and concepts that largely inform this research. These are migration/migrant, refugee, asylum seeker, irregular migration.

A) *Migration/Migrant* = While there is no universally accepted terminology, **migration** can be defined as the change of residency across administrative borders, whether such borders are local, regional or (inter)national.[18] In turn, a **migrant** is the person who leaves one country or region to settle in another.[19] Migration can be either short or long – term. Similarly, a migrant can be anyone who moves on voluntary basis (like studying abroad) or on economic grounds to find better employment opportunities. Yet a person can also be a forced migrant which leads us to the second definition.

B) *Refugee* = Drawing from Article 1 of the 1951 Geneva Convention, a **refugee** is someone who has been forced to flee his/her country due to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion.[20] And because of such fears, this person is additionally not to be returned in his/her country. Therefore, a refugee can be counted as a special category of migrant; someone who has been forced to leave his/her country and settle in another.

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[17] UNHCR (n/d)b, 'Convention and Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees', Art 33(a)
[18] Castles et al, 2020, p. 21
[19] UNHCR, 2019, p. 6
[20] UNHCR 2019, EASO 2020

C) *Asylum Seeker* = **Asylum Seekers** are individuals who have sought international protection and whose claims for refugee status have not yet been determined.[21] Not every asylum seeker will ultimately be recognized as a refugee, but every refugee was initially an asylum seeker.[22]

D) *Irregular Migration* = While a plethora of states and politicians insist on coining the movement of persons that takes place outside the laws, regulations, or international agreements as 'illegal', I believe such term is unethical and should be avoided as it tends to criminalize the persons on the move. Instead, this study adopts the term **irregular migration** to refer to "the movement of persons that occurs outside the laws and conventions governing the entry into or exit from the country of origin, transit or destination".[23]

1.5 Ethics

Performing research comes with ethical responsibilities. This section serves to demonstrate those ethical concerns that must be followed in my thesis. To begin with, besides its methods, a good research expanding on human rights requires *validity* and *reliability*.[24] Validity refers to accomplishing correspondence between the theory, method(s) of analysis, conclusions and the data.[25] Reliability on the other hand refers to consistency, that if the research was to be repeated it would produce the same results.[26] Both of them, I am tackling by using data to advance my arguments that falls within the same research topic as mine, is closely related to my thoughts and has been used in credible published research works.

Concerning the *data bias*, this shall be dealt with by verifying an argument with as many sources possible, critically reflecting that the selected data corresponds to reality. Apposite to the data bias is the *personal bias*. Considering that to some extent every research is biased, the question is not if but how knowledge in my study is biased. The answer to that can be retrieved from the notion of 'organized skepticism', meaning that I

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[21] UNHCR, 2019, p. 64
[22] Amnesty International, WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A REFUGEE AND AN ASYLUM SEEKER?', 2019
[23] IOM n/d, 'Key Migration Terms'
[24] Andreassen et al, 2017, p. 5
[25] Pierce 2008, Halperin and Heath 2017
[26] Roselle and Spray 2016, Halperin and Heath 2017

will try to constantly question and scrutinize my arguments, but I shall also refrain from expressing an assessment until I have sufficient evidence to ground it.[27] The personal bias issue is mostly evident in the 5.3.3 section, wherein I provide my personal opinion regarding the alleged violations of the non-refoulement principle only after a sufficient and illustrative presentation of the dispute from both parties.

Moving on, other ethical matters such as *plagiarism, fabrication* and *falsification* are prevented with consistent, correct, and continuous referencing of all the sources and material, based on which I do my research. Moreover, another ethical matter that needs to be addressed is the *exact translation* by me of the politicians' speeches and statements to securitize migration. Although I commit myself to an as much accurate translation as possible, for the purpose of transparency I additionally include the abbreviation 'ot' in brackets in those parts of the text that are made up of my personal translation. Finally, another ethical concern relates to the *integrity of the research subjects,* in my case the people migrating to the EU and how I refer to them. To meet this duty, I created the previous section (1.4) inside this first chapter where I included some core definitions to ensure how and when it is appropriate to use the terms *migrant*, *refugee*, *asylum seeker*. And of course, as part of respecting the integrity of the study subjects, I have chosen to adopt the term 'irregular' migration, instead of 'illegal', when discussing the migratory flows occurring outside the legal framework.

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[27] Swedish Research Council, 2017, p. 13

2)   Literature review

This chapter has a dual function: First to set the stage regarding how different scholars have addressed previously the subject of this research and second to identify potential strengths, gaps, or weaknesses within the existing studies upon which this research shall be built.[28] As said in the presentation of the thesis structure in section 1.3, this chapter is mapped out in three components.

2.1 Migration and Human Rights: A Perplexed Relationship

If one could trace at least one common feature that migration and human rights possess, that would probably be their long existence in History. Regarding migration, as Bridget Anderson puts it:

> "The history of the world is unavoidably a history of mobility".[29]

Considering the early humans leaving Africa and spreading throughout the world,[30] even the ancient petroglyphs in Azerbaijan depicting humans on the move,[31] migration has arguably always been a fundamental ingredient of human history. Under no circumstances have of course the mobilities of the past been similar to contemporary movements. The ancient movements have mainly been conceived as wars, conquests, trade or exploring expeditions,[32] whereas the modern mobilities have been forced or encouraged, to flee conflict-persecution or on voluntary grounds. Thinking historically simply allows us to link migration to other political, social, and economic processes;[33] to think of and explain migration not as a unilateral, standalone action but rather as a process rooted in an abundance of factors.

Drawing from existing literature there is generally an agreement that the main driving force of international migration currently is pursuing higher economic prospects and better employment opportunities abroad.[34] In addition to these determinants, a broader list of factors can be included such as the social dimension of migration due to family

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[28] Halperin and Heath, *Political Research: Methods and Practical Skills*, 2017, p. 103
[29] 2015, p. 12
[30] ibid
[31] IOM, 2018, p. 192
[32] Ibid
[33] ibid
[34] Kolb and Egbert 2008, OECD 2014, Geddes and Scholten 2014, Wong and Guney-Celbis 2019

reunification,[35] the geographical aspect of migration owing to climate change[36] or the educational form of migration as a means to study abroad. And surely this set of factors extends to the political level, with the inclusion of this study's topic, namely the refugees fleeing from their lands in order to save themselves from violent conflicts.[37] Hence it can be seen that, historically, migration is affiliated to different processes and can thus acquire various characters.

Turning towards human rights, as a matter of law all people enjoy human rights, which are given to them by a variety of (inter)national and regional instruments.[38]At the same time, particular rights are underscored for particular groups, like women, children and persons with disability.[39] Donnelly conceives human rights as rights:

> "One has because one is human".[40]

Similarly like Donnelly[41], other scholars too have highlighted human rights as being universal.[42] Yet the true universality of human rights remains overly contested, especially if (similarly to migration above) we attempt to investigate their evolution throughout history. Prior to the seventeenth century, the idea that all humans, only because they are humans, have rights that they may exercise against the state and society was basically a pipe dream.[43] Looking into different phases of European history for example, one can authenticate this argument.

In Ancient Greece for instance, one could see a fundamental distinction between the Greeks and the non-Greeks (barbarians as they were coined) with the latter being viewed as incapable of self-ruling yet perfectly fine for enslavement.[44] In medieval Christendom, for those being non-Christians (heathens or heretics they were usually called) social, political and economic rights were perhaps unknown words to them.[45] Even the fruits of Enlightenment (a process that is often invoked by liberal political thinkers) were meant

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[35] Geddes and Scholten, 2014, p. 6
[36] Wong and Guney-Celbis, 2019, p. 100
[37] ibid
[38] McAdam, 2014, p. 204
[39] ibid
[40] 2013, p. 7
[41] Ibid, p. 108
[42] Baehr 2001, Kaplan 2018
[43] Donnelly, *Universal Human Rights in Theory and Practice*, 2013, p. 71
[44] Ibid
[45] Ibid, p. 83

for the propertied, white, Christian men; *women, servants and wage laborers* could never be imagined as subjects of natural rights at the end of the 17th century.[46] It took centuries of fight and often violent political struggles for these groups to earn what we now consider as self-evident: "full and equal participation in public and private life"![47]

Arriving at the mid-20th century, even the creation of a Declaration that -as its name implies would guarantee a *universal* shared understanding of human rights- was not enough. The UDHR initially ignored largely colonialism and with it the brutal and systematic denial of most human rights of the colonized.[48] It took some years after the UDHR with decolonization and the establishment of subsequent human rights treaties (such as the ICCPR, ICESCR) to expand the subjects of human rights to all human beings everywhere in the world.[49] Yet even today the applicability of human rights remains contested, especially with regards to refugees as human rights holders, as the next sub-section indicates.

2.1.1 Forced Migration and Human Rights: Non – Refoulement Principle

Aside from granting human rights to all humans in general, specific attention has been paid by the international community towards special categories of persons, such as the refugees. Setting off from legal ground, the most important treaty for refugees has undoubtedly been the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. The GC was adopted in recognition of the absolute failure before and during the WWII of the world community to protect the persecuted. As Teitelbaum argues:

> "the world system of sovereign states had assumed that each person had a country of citizenship which would provide protection and succor, yet it became apparent at the end of WWII that sovereign states had flagrantly persecuted their own citizens".[50]

Initially, the Refugee Convention applied only to persons who were refugees as a consequence of events before 1951, however, further enlargement came with the 1967 New York Protocol extending the Convention's spectrum to all refugees 'without any geographical limitation'.[51]A vital feature of the GC has been arguably the *non-*

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[46] Ibid, p. 71
[47] Ibid, p. 91
[48] Jensen, 2016, p. 3
[49] Donnelly, 2013, p. 92
[50] 2002, p. 163
[51] Ryan and Mantouvalou, 'The Labour and Social Rights of Migrants in International Law', 2014, p. 182

refoulement principle as enshrined in Article 33. The non-refoulement principle has been commonly regarded as the 'cornerstone of international law'[52] due to its significant obligation upon states to "not expel or return (refouler) a refugee in any manner whatsoever to the frontiers of territories where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion".[53] Further, Article 42 of the GC prohibits any reservation to Article 33.[54] Over the years, the applicability of the non-refoulement has been expanded to include protections to refugees and asylum seekers facing removal (plus extradition, expulsion) to a country where there are substantial reasons for believing he or she would be tortured or would suffer irreparable harm.[55]

Without question, the non-refoulement notion challenges considerably the traditional sovereign capability of states in the area of migration control to refuse the admission of non-nationals in their territory.[56] However, like any other right, non-refoulement is also subjected to certain exceptions; one of which directly relates to the theme of this research, the securitization of migration. If one or more persons are deemed as a serious threat to national security, due to affiliations of these persons with hazardous activities (like terrorism), then the state maintains its power to hinder that person(s) from entering the country.[57] As the reality indicates, states have attempted on a frequent basis to link irregular migration from Middle East with such concerns,[58] as a way to justify their prohibition of entry towards irregular migrants. In this respect, it becomes interesting for this research to discuss whether such state-action rests upon right assumptions and thus is in agreement with human rights standards.

2.2 Migration in Europe after 1945

The ongoing refugee flows have been argued to be the continuation of the third phase of population movements in Europe since the end of WWII.[59] What does this third phase

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[52] Chetail, 'Are Refugee Rights Human Rights? An Unorthodox Questioning of the Relations between Refugee Law and Human Rights Law', 2014, p. 29
[53] UNHCR (n/d) b, *Art 33(1)*
[54] Ibid, *Art 42(2)*
[55] Grant, 2011, p. 31
[56] Chetail, 2014, p. 30
[57] Chetail 2014, IOM 2018
[58] Yuval-Davies et al, *Bordering*, 2019, p. 54
[59] Lalic and Ceranic, 2019, p. 49

mean though and what have been the previous two rounds of migration in Europe? This part serves to contextualize the ongoing refugee arrivals in Europe since 2015 by looking into how migration in the Old Continent has evolved during the second tun of the 20th century. In broad terms, immigration in Europe since the end of the Second World War has been a process developed in phases, where each phase is characterized by specific economic, social, cultural, demographic, and political causes.[60] Staying in route with the historical development of each phase, this section is divided accordingly.

2.2.1 War – torn Europe: The Need for Economic Recovery (1945 – 1960)

In the period after the Second World War it was transparent that all European, national economies were badly damaged, yet not all of them in the same span. Western European countries that were among the main victors of the war as well as countries that managed to mostly stay out of the war (like Sweden) embarked on achieving a fast economic restructure, by accelerating their industrial and manufacture production. However, their local native workers seemed reluctant to take up unhealthy and poor paid jobs in agriculture, construction, mining etc.[61] To surpass this challenge, North-Western European governments set out to recruit foreign, blue-collar labor from the economically under-developed at that time periphery which included countries like Algeria, Greece, Italy, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, Turkey, and former Yugoslavia.[62]

The main recruiting countries at that time were Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, and the UK. The recruited foreign workers were expected to return home after their labor was no longer needed and for that reason, they tended to be granted few rights and little to no access to welfare support.[63] In this period, European migration was regarded as beneficial for the sending countries too. For example, emigration was instrumental for the Mediterranean countries in order to alleviate the pressure from high unemployment, low productivity and even lower income.[64] Moreover, migrants' remittances were expected to greatly benefit the countries' economies as in the case of Turkey where monetary returns played a vital role in its economic resurrection.[65] Beyond

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[60] Ibid

[61] Van Mol and de Valk, 'Migration and Immigrants in Europe: A Historical and Demographic Perspective', 2016, p. 32

[62] Kaya 2002, Van Mol and de Valk 2016, Lalic and Ceranic 2019

[63] Van Mol and de Walk, 2016, p. 32

[64] Ibid

[65] Ibid

the financial element, as Van Mol and de Walk[66] hold, getting rid of the poor and unemployed entailed political motives too for certain countries (like Italy), as a way to deprive the socialist and communist parties of potential voters.

2.2.2 A Turbulent Second Stage: Decolonization, Oil Crisis and Family Reunifications (1960 – 1989)

Following the end of the first phase in the early 1960s there was a lurking hypothesis that the temporary labor migration had come to an end and thus migrants would return to their countries of origin, since they were no longer needed.[67] This assumption was however proven mistaken. Not only did the guest workers stay but in fact more of them were needed too.[68] A big peak in labor migration occurred during the 1960s and it was at that time that major destination countries like, France, Belgium, the Netherlands etc decided to secure a steady flow of labor migrants by consolidating bilateral agreements with sending countries, such as Turkey, Portugal, Morocco, and the former Yugoslavia.[69]

The increased demand in labor migration coincided with another important development at that time, namely, the process of *decolonization* in Africa, Asia and Latin America which triggered a mass type of migration from the former colonies towards former, European, colonial countries.[70][71] Suddenly, and until the end of the second phase, Europe begun to transform from a region of colonizers and emigrants to a destination area for a vast diverse array of origin countries.[72] Table 2 below depicts the largest number of migrants arrived from the former colonies in Europe right after decolonization:

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[66] Ibid

[67] Geddes and Scholten, 2016, p. 8

[68] Ibid

[69] Van Mol and de Valk, 2016, p. 33

[70] Van Mol and de Valk 2016, Lalic and Ceranic 2019

[71] While the discussion about decolonization would be more accurate to be conducted during the first phase, since the commence of the decolonization process predates phase two, it is placed here instead. This is because it is during this phase's time period that immigration in Europe due to decolonization reaches its peak

[72] Castles et al, 2020, p. 10

Table 2: Largest Migratory Flows towards Europe as a result of Decolonization[73]

Countries of Origin	Countries of Destination	Number (approx.)
North Africa (Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria)	France and Italy	1.8 million
Portuguese African colonies (Angola and Mozambique)	Portugal	1 million
East Indies (Indonesia)	Netherlands	300,000
Congo	Belgium	< 300,000

Regarding the overall migrants originating from the former colonial order, some migrated for economic reasons while others begun to arrive during or after the struggles for independence.[74] In the 1970s a notable shift concerning the pattern and main driving forces of European immigration was observed, owing to the 1973-74 oil crisis. The crisis was triggered by the decision of the OAPEC to impose an oil embargo on the US and other Israel's allies during the 1973 Arab – Israeli War.[75] It caused considerable ramifications on the economic landscape in Europe, reducing sharply the need for employment.[76] Hence, one by one the European countries that were in need of cheap labor force during the previous years started to introduce restrictions to control and reduce immigration.[77]

Nevertheless, instead of being halted, migration flows were rather transformed. Whereas previously the main driving force of migration was labor, the principal reason now became family reunification. A lot of the guest workers managed to organize themselves in small communities and thanks to that accomplished to remain in their country of employment permanently.[78] Therefore, the next step was to invite their close family members from the country of origin to come and stay with them thus the creation of the family reunification pattern.[79] Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, European governments became aware that migration populations were likely to stay forever, consequently they

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[73] Van Mol and de Valk, 2016, pp. 33–34
[74] Ibid, p. 34
[75] Smith, 2006, p. 329
[76] Van Mol and de Valk, 2016, p. 35
[77] ibid
[78] Castles, 2003, p. 20
[79] Geddes and Scholten, 2016, p. 8

set out to develop integration policies.[80] Despite the positive character of such move, the intention to integrate the migrants in a period of high unemployment and low welfare fueled the rise of extreme right wing parties across Europe which took advantage of the situation to cultivate xenophobia and establish migrant residents as job and welfare stealers.[81]

2.2.3 The End of the Cold War further on (1989 – 2008[?])

A third wave of immigration in Europe emerged in the beginning of the post CW era with the fall of the Iron Curtain, the subsequent dissolution of the USSR and later the end of Yugoslavia. These developments induced thousands of migrants and asylum seekers flowing across Europe in pursue of a new life.[82] During this period, integration of migrants, asylum seekers and eventually refugees from Southern (=former Yugoslavia) and Eastern Europe (=former USSR) became a 'hot potato' issue and caused significant split opinion across the rest of Europe.[83] On the one hand, one could see the adoption of a more welcoming approach, as the example of the Scandinavian countries illustrates. In this case, Scandinavian states like Sweden offered the most generous integration policies in the 1990s by for instance awarding permanent protection and settlement rights to roughly 90,000 refugees from Bosnia – Herzegovina.[84]

On the other hand, a stricter formula was observed in much of Western Europe marking a shift from granting asylum and international protection to efforts of containing refugees in their regions of origin. In this climate, state policies included non-arrival measures such as carrier sanctions and visa requirements, attempts to obstruct as much as possible the application of the 1951 Convention, detention of asylum applicants and denial of social assistance.[85] In addition to various state policies, this third phase is closely associated with the development of a series of common EU migration and asylum policies since the 1990s in response to the huge concentration of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in Europe.[86] European states foresaw the continuation of similar migratory flows in the long

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[80] Van Mol and de Valk, 2016, p. 51
[81] Castles 2003, Van Mol and de Valk 2016, Lalic and Ceranic 2019
[82] Van Mol and de Valk 2016, Geddes and Scholten 2016, Lalic and Ceranic 2019
[83] Freeman, 1995, p. 894
[84] Valenta and Bunar, 2010, p. 464
[85] Loescher, 'UNHCR and Forced Migration', 2014, p. 220
[86] Geddes and Scholten, 2016, p. 9

CW aftermath (albeit not of the same high levels compared to the initial 1990s flows) and so realized the need for a common migration policy on regional level.

The first stage of this policymaking was the adoption of the Dublin Convention in 1990. It was decided that in order to put an end to the 'asylum shopping' phenomenon which gave the asylum seekers the possibility to apply for asylum wherever they wished, the asylum claim was to be examined only from the state of first entry.[87] Dublin became EU law in 2003 leading to Dublin II regulation and was further renovated in 2013 resulting Dublin III.[88] Shortly after the first Dublin Convention the 1992 Maastricht Treaty entered into force in 1993, making intra-European movement a lot easier yet at the same time restricting considerably the entry of foreigners into the EU, by for example imposing stricter border controls and visa regulations.[89] For many, the Maastricht treaty comprises the legal basis for the securitization of migration in the EU.[90]

The long race of policy developments during the 1990s was concluded with the entry into force of the Amsterdam Treaty in 1999, which aimed to accomplish more enhanced cooperation in tackling issues regarding migration, asylum, the free movement of persons, rules governing the crossing of the EU's external borders and the rights of third countries' nationals.[91] Since the beginning of the new century and until the end of phase 3, mobility in Europe included multiple developments. Aside from the further enlargement of the EU, several member-states stepped up attempts to achieve 'brain gain', namely, to attract and incorporate highly skilled and educated migrants into their domestic labor market, from countries both within and outside Europe.[92] Yet at the same time, the events of 9/11 (2001) and the terrorist attacks in Madrid (2004) and London (2005) brought growing restricting policies and exclusion against the arrivals of migrants and asylum seekers, principally for those of Muslim origin.

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[87] Geddes and Scholten 2016, Afouxenidis et al 2017, Lalic and Ceranic 2019
[88] Geddes and Scholten, 2016, p. 153
[89] Van Mol and de Valk, 2016, p. 38
[90] Lalic and Ceranic, 2019, p. 50
[91] Castles, 2004, p. 217
[92] Van Mol and de Valk, 2016, p. 38

2.2.3.1 Financial and Refugee Crisis (2008, 2015 and beyond): A Potential Fourth Phase?

In the start of section 2.2 it was mentioned that the current refugee 'crisis' consists just another feature of the third phase of migration towards Europe. Indeed, almost all existing studies insist on placing the ongoing refugee issue as the last (so far) episode of the third round of migration in Europe. However, this sub-section serves to argue for an alternative interpretation, namely that the refugee matter in the EU comprises a gear of a new phase of mobility patterns in Europe. The signs that lead to this conclusion are plenty: To begin with, the refugee issue begun to unveil in a period of fierce, economic crisis resulted from the 2008 global financial crisis. Peripheral EU countries such as Greece, Italy, Portugal, and Spain have particularly been hit hard by the financial crisis, with unemployment - especially in young ages- reaching unprecedent levels.[93] Hence, these countries have presented an increased tendency of emigration since the start of the crisis mainly towards richer countries of Northern Europe.

Simultaneously, and to some extent, the economic crisis has affected even the most resilient European economies and as such the economic migrants who wish to enter Europe from non-European countries. Europe seems no longer be the 'promised land' to the extent it used to be in the past, nor is it in strong need for unskilled workers.[94] The refugee crisis therefore unfolded in a crucial time for many (if not all) EU countries. The way(s) several EU member-states have responded to the burgeoning challenges of the refugee matter further highlight the connection of such matter with the new phase of migration in Europe. To exemplify, as opposed to the construction of the common European migration policy that took place during the third phase, many European states undertook decisions that largely undermine that common European structure and pose interesting questions regarding the future of the EU.

For instance, the decision of the German government in the beginning of the refugee arrivals in the summer of 2015 to permit Syrians to seek asylum in Germany, irrespective the country from which they had entered the EU, seriously undermined the Dublin System,[95] a system already under heavy criticism as argued in the end of section 1.1.

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[93] Ibid, p. 45, 52
[94] Christopoulos, *Αν το Προσφυγικό ήταν Πρόβλημα, θα είχε Λύση,* 2020, p. 55
[95] Geddes and Scholten 2016, IOM 2018

Similarly, the decision of Hungary to erect fences in its borders with Serbia and Croatia to stop refugees and immigrants from entering its territory delivered a significant blow against the unconstrained, intra-European movement.[96] Suddenly, a domino of similar policies across the region was observed, with countries like Croatia, Slovenia and Austria shielding their borders towards each other.[97] In the same fashion, other EU countries like Sweden took measures that contradict free movement, by reinstating ad hoc border controls and identity checks in the borders with Denmark, as a way to control the entry of both regular and irregular migrants in its territory.[98]

Turning into the domestic political situation, the increasing arrivals of refugees have sparked significant disagreement between liberal voices advocating for less strict border policies under the premise of 'refugees welcome' and more conservative ones arguing that irregular migration constitutes a threat to the integrity and cohesion of the society.[99] As a consequence of this debate we have further noticed in the EU the boosting into power of extreme right wing parties -either as governmental or as major opposition parties.[100] Even in Sweden which as presented it the previous section seemed to endorse the acceptance of refugees during phase three, nowadays we see a growing skepticism against migration in general and non-European migrants in particular. This shift is mostly represented by the Swedish far right party, the Swedish Democrats, who argue that ultimately the Swedes will turn into a minority in Sweden, cultivating thus hostility and hate against refugees.[101]

Finally the implementation of BREXIT among other reasons due to immigration may be seen as an important factor of phase four. To date, the UK is the only country to formally leave the EU. No one can really predict what the future of the EU will be in the end of the refugee issue, but if one thing is certain that is that the way several EU states have reacted towards this ongoing matter signifies anything but a common, unifying migration policy. Hence the argument in this subsection that the refugee issue speaks largely for the establishment of a fourth stage of migration in Europe.

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[96] Afouxenidis et al, 2017, p. 15
[97] Ibid
[98] FRA 2016, Geddes and Scholten 2016, Afouxenidis et al 2017
[99] Castles et al, 2020, p. 12
[100] Yuval-Davis et al, 2019, p. 53
[101] Elgenius and Rydgren, 2019, p. 593

2.3 Migration and Greece: An Indivisible Bond

On the 25th of March 2021 Greece celebrates its 200th anniversary since the commence of the Greek Revolution in 1821 against the Ottoman Turks, a struggle that eventually led to the recognition of Greece as an independent state in 1930. Despite its short life hitherto as independent (191 years), the Greek state has since its foundation consisted of a permanent point of population movements, either as a departure or transit point or final destination.[102] In the 20th century, which is the central study period for the thesis, Greece becomes in the beginning of the century a source of outgoing migration mainly for economic reasons towards mostly the US but also to other regions like the UK, Australia, Canada and Germany creating a large Greek diaspora.[103] Meanwhile, driven by the irridentist project of 'Megali Idea'[=Great Idea] in its foreign policy, Greece ended up with the task of integrating millions of refugees in its territory.

2.3.1 The Aftermath of Asia Minor Catastrophe: Greece as a Destination and a Passage

The project of *Megali Idea* was the territorial extension for the purpose of creating a united (Greater) Greece by restoring the Byzantine Empire, based on the historical claim that Byzantium was the national state of Greece and Constantinople the natural capital of such Greater Greece.[104] Unfortunately for Greece, the last stage of the project was the Greek -Turkish war between 1919 – 1922 where the country suffered a huge defeat and with that came the destruction of Asia Minor.[105] As a result, about 1.5 million Christian refugees were forced to leave Turkey for Greece, with the Greek state facing the challenge of assimilating the refugees, who by the way comprised 20% of the total population![106] At this point it is important to note that although nowadays it is positive for someone to be descendant of 1922 refugees from Turkey such was not the case for the refugees themselves in the 1920s.[107] They were largely considered as aliens by the rest of the population; 'Turkish seeds' was one of the plenty dismissive terms directed against them. Such historical lessons hold some part in contemporary discussions on why someone is

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[102] Christopoulos, 2020, p. 46
[103] Ibid, p. 49
[104] Sotirovic 2018
[105] ibid
[106] Liakos, 2017, p. 43
[107] Christopoulos, 2020, p. 59

designated as unwelcome: for his/her status as migrant/refugee thus an outsider by definition or due to his/her specific nationality? Probably the former.

Returning to the Greek case, in the following decades the refugees became at last full and equal members of the society. Beyond that, no major development regarding international migration took place for Greece. Until the 1990s, migration to Greece mainly involved repatriation of ethnic Geeks from abroad and refugees in transit.[108] Any asylum seekers arriving in Greece were placed under the protection of the UNHCR and after a brief period they were leaving the country in the context of relocation programs.[109]

2.3.2 The 1990s Novelty: Greece as a Major Destination Country

The 1990s launched a new era for migration in Greece. Like the rest of Europe which as presented at the start of section 2.2.3 experienced a third wave of mass migration due to the end of the CW, Greece transformed into a major destination.[110] Instantly, new and numerous migrants begun to arrive from Eastern Europe and mainly from Albania, yet this time not in order to transit but to settle permanently. It is in this period that the early features of securitization of migration in Greece started to emerge, targeting the Albanian migrants. Political elites, mass media and even public opinion adopted xenophobic discourses which increasingly linked Albanians to high crime rates, casted them as enemies to the Greek cultural homogeneity and so stressed the need to exclude Albanians from the society.[111]

On policy level, initial legislative responses to immigration were draconian, emphasizing on security and prevention.[112] The 1991 Immigration Law introduced by the center-right government of ND made irregular migration punishable up to five years in prison.[113] Furthermore, the securitization aspect of the Act was firmly entrenched by Article 4 which recognized the Greek Police as the only competent authority to regulate immigration issues.[114] Until the end of the century, Greek immigration policy at the hands

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[108] Freeman 1995, Castles et al 2020
[109] Afouxenidis et al, 2017, p. 11
[110] Liakos 2017, Christopoulos 2020
[111] Swarts and Karakatsanis 2013, Geddes and Scholten 2016, Grigoriadis and Dilek 2019
[112] Geddes and Scholten, 2016, p. 221
[113] Ibid, p. 222
[114] *Immigration Act 1975/1991* (Gr), s. B

of the police was based on the method of arrest-and-deport of mostly Albanian migrants who were seen as threats to the purity of the Greek nation.[115]

2.3.3 2000 – 2015: New Century New Migration Policies

Initially, the change in century was not escorted by substantial change of Greek migration policy. The 2001 Immigration Law -even though it succeeded in granting legal status to hundreds of thousands of migrants-[116] judged a posteriori spawned many setbacks. Family reunion plus right to public health and education was restricted for irregular migrants and their children and at the same time owing to the endless Greek bureaucratic procedures, migrants were unable to obtain (in due time) residence or employment permits.[117] While the 2001 Law kept people cautiously optimistic, leaving room for future, embellished migration policies, 9/11 occurred and with it an endless outburst of conflict, hunger, state 'fragility' and other evil results emerged. Such events led inevitably to new types of immigration shifted east to the Greek- Turkish borders, encompassing mixed-flows of economic migrants, irregular migrants, unaccompanied minors, refugees and asylum seekers.[118]

In this trajectory, Greece promulgates the 2005 Immigration Law in order to prevent uncontrolled immigration and hamper the entry of non-nationals in the country, in a period where migratory movements intensify globally.[119] At least, for (irregular) migrants within the Greek territory, this law accomplished to heal a big wound of its predecessor by granting access to migrants' and asylum seekers' children to education, irrespective of their parents' legal status.[120] Three years later, as a consequence of the 2008 economic crisis, the socioeconomic landscape in Greece altered radically and this affected greatly the migration subject. On the one hand, a renewed emigration of mostly young and educated (on university level) Greeks was observed towards richer, North-Western European states, with the purpose of finding better employment opportunities.[121]

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[115] Grigoriadis and Dilek, 'Securitizing Migration in the European Union: Greece and the Evros Fence', *Journal of Balkan & Near Eastern Studies*, 2019, p. 174
[116] Christopoulos, 2020, p. 88
[117] Geddes and Scholten, 2016, p. 224
[118] Afouxenidis et al, 2017, p. 7
[119] Christopoulos, 2020, p. 91
[120] Ibid, p. 92
[121] Geddes and Scholten, 2016, p. 226

On the other hand and in the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century, owing to the ailing economy and deep austerity, the Greek government -in spite of existing labor demands in areas occupied mainly by migrant workers- argued that no more immigrants could be taken.[122] Concurrently, instead of pursuing politics of naturalization by either granting citizenship to long-term migrants[123] or allowing newly and mainly irregular ones to settle into the country, the Greek government played once again the securitization card. In the mid-2012, the newly elected ND government had decided that irregular migration was a threat to societal security and state survival in a period of imminent economic plight. The first step of this decision was the apprehension of irregular migrants in public spaces (squares and stations) as well as private ones (migrants' houses) and subsequent deportation from the country under the 'Xenios Zeus' operation, bizarrely named after Zeus in his capacity as the ancient Greek God of hospitality…[124].

A further measure was the construction of the Evros razor fence in the end of 2012 between the Greek-Turkish land borders to stop the extensive, uncontrolled irregular immigration that was taking place on daily basis.[125] Beyond its natural purpose to deal with irregular migration, the construction of the fence encrypted a symbolic meaning too. Namely, to spread the message that Greece is not an 'open gate' to the EU rather the gatekeeper of the Union's external borders to protect both the Union and its citizens.[126] Such functionality has been repeatedly asserted, especially during the ongoing refugee 'crisis' as the Analysis chapter will highlight.

In concluding 2.3.3 section, the legacy of politicization of (irregular) migration since 2012 is still present nowadays and is definitely worrying with regards to the livelihoods of vulnerable groups, such as immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers. Immigrants are being constructed as thieves and rapists while Islamophobia against refugees and asylum seekers is on the rise.[127] In big cities like Athens and Thessaloniki, ghettoization and marginalization are so dominant that in certain neighborhoods migrants outnumber

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[122] Triandafyllidou and Ambrosini, 2011, p. 262
[123] Anderson, 2015, p. 93
[124] Smith 2010, Geddes and Scholten 2016, Grigoriadis and Dilek 2019, Christopoulos 2020
[125] Grigoriadis and Dilek 2019, Christopoulos 2020
[126] Grigoriadis and Dilek, 2019, p. 176
[127] Tsitselikis, 'Sticks, not Carrots: Immigration and Rights in Greece and Turkey', *Journal of Southeast European and Black Sea Studies,* 2013, p. 424

locals.[128] Finally discrimination and harassment in services and social spaces, ranging from verbal abuse to physical violence preserve social exclusion which in turn obstructs migrants' and refugees' ability to achieve good livelihoods.[129]

[128] Tsitselikis 2013, Liakos 2017
[129] Jacobsen, 2014, p. 107

3) Theoretical Framework

The goal behind this chapter is to lay out the theoretical ground that surrounds this thesis. As the title of the study illustrates, the employed perspective is the *securitization theory*. The chapter begins with an explanation of the ST according to the Copenhagen School of International Studies. It proceeds with a presentation of the securitization of migration in the post 9/11 era and then displays an example of Greece as a securitizing actor. Finally, it discusses the interplay between securitization and human rights.

3.1 Theory of Securitization

ST was first conceptualized by the Copenhagen School in the 1990s which contributed to the expansion of the security agenda to include non-military threats. The most notable scholars of this School have been Barry Buzan, Ole Waever and Jaap de Wilde. In their collective book *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, the authors link security with survival; to ensure something's security, guarantees the existence of the object.[130] The aim of ST is to offer a framework to understand the construction of security predicated on *speech acts* that frame specific issues as *existential threats* towards a particular *referent object*.[131] Before moving on, it is helpful to briefly explain the three emphasized tenets.

Put simply, *speech acts* refer to the specific discourse that is employed by the securitizing actors (such as political leaders, governments) to describe and represent an existing issue as an existential threat.[132] As far as *existential threat* is concerned, this is anything that jeopardizes or undermines the survival of the referent object, therefore this issue must be moved into the state of emergency to be tackled decisively and with the appropriate measures however extreme they might be.[133] The threat can be both objective (real threat) and subjective (perceived threat).[134] Lastly, the *referent object* is what the securitizing actor perceives to be endangered from the existential threat'; in security studies, the referent object is primarily the state (whose survival is about sovereignty) and to a lesser extent the nation (whose survival is about identity).[135]

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[130] 1998, p. 21
[131] Ibid, pp 21 – 23
[132] Williams 2003, Farny 2016, Topulli 2016
[133] Buzan et al 1998, Leonard 2010
[134] Buzan et al, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis,* 1998, p. 30
[135] Ibid, p. 36

Drawing from these principles, securitization is essentially a process that contains four components. A *securitizing actor* (like political elites or government) carries out a speech act to determine a particular matter (like immigration) as an *existential threat* towards a particular *referent object* (the state) and, if such rhetoric is accepted by the relevant *audience* (the people or the voters), conditions have been met for the use of extraordinary measures in response to the alleged threat.[136] Figure 1 below displays how securitization unfolds:

Figure 1: The Process of Securitization[137]

3.1.1 Securitization of Migration and post 9/11 Era

For Buzan et al the widening of the security agenda beyond the military – political context resulted the consideration of a broader range of security concerns, including economic, environmental or societal ones.[138] Societal insecurity emerges when communities of any kind approach a development as a potential danger to their survival as community.[139] A classic example of a factor of such insecurity has been argued to be migration, namely

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[136] Ibid, pp 27, 40 – 41
[137] Sjöstedt 2017
[138] 1998, pp 7-8
[139] Ibid, p. 119

when the community of *X people* is being overrun by arrivals of *Y people.*[140] In such instance, *X people* fear that their community and identity will pause to be homogenous and coherent,[141] especially when *Y people* are of different religious, racial or cultural background. As Hammerstadt holds:

> "Migrants are by definition outsiders aiming to come in and settle among the insiders. Depending on how insular and traditionalist the communal identity of the host population is, how culturally different migrants are to their hosts, the nature of the historical relationship between host community and migrant sending community, and the sheer magnitude of the migrant influx, migration can become securitized as an existential threat to the identity, cohesion, and way of life of the host community".[142]

According to Buzan's et al conceptualization, securitization of migration in the societal sector adheres to a bottom-up approach: The society identifies migration as a threat and so moves the issue to the state agenda, expecting from the government to resolve the issue through legislation and/or border controls.[143] However, in contemporary times we have seen state officials adopting a top-down stance too. In this scheme, politicians themselves embrace a stricter stance towards immigration even without a previous mobilization from the society to this end. A catalyst role to this development has been played by the events of 9/11 and further Islamist terrorist attacks in the EU, due to which states have increasingly engaged to major migration reforms and stricter border control in the name of national security.[144]

Meanwhile, for immigrants who manage to enter and settle into the country, their living standards are not absolutely perfect. In the post 9/11 era, owing to the fact that the perpetrators of Islamic terrorist attacks have been migrants or their offspring,[145] migrants (be labor ones, refugees or asylum-seekers) have discursively been criminalized, linked to global mafias, organized crime, drugs, Islamic radicalism, urban violence and/or other ills.[146] The equation that dominates modern Europe is astonishing: Migrant = Muslim = potential terrorist.[147] Lastly, the audience tends to frequently adjust to such discourse.

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[140] Ibid, p. 121
[141] Nyberg-Sorensen, 2012, p. 66
[142] 2014, p. 268
[143] 1998, p. 122
[144] Crepeau et al 2007, Hammerstadt 2014, Topulli 2016
[145] Castles et al. 2020, p. 2
[146] Leonard 2010, Nyberg-Sorensen 2012, Elgenius and Rydgren 2019
[147] Christopoulos, 2020, p. 90

From a sympathetic stance towards immigrants and the general notion of protecting refugees due to the horrors the later have experienced, public opinion's position transforms into a feeling that immigrants are too many, too costly for taxpayers and dangerous.[148]

3.2 Examples of Securitization: Greece as a Securitizing Actor

It was discussed in 2.3.3 part that since 2008, the financial stagnation has delivered a hard blow on the economy of migrant-receiving countries. Consequently, migration-terrorism-related anxieties have been supplemented with concerns regarding the economic and broader well-being of the host population.[149] In such environment, migrants are depicted as scapegoats, framed as job-stealers, criminals and carriers of serious diseases. This became much obvious in Greece where, in a period of severe economic downturn, two consecutive governments in 2012 shaped migration as a solemn societal concern.

To begin with, as Sjöstedt[150] observes, although traditional securitization studies did not include health diseases as a security topic, epidemics nowadays comprise a big field of security analysis. In spring 2012, under a three-party coalition government (PASOK, ND, LAOS), the Ministers of Health and Civil protection identified migrants residing in the city center of Athens as an existential threat against public health. In the words of the Minister of Health, Andreas Loverdos [ot]:

> "Illegal migrants living in overcrowded residencies constitute a *health bomb* placed in the center of Athens that is ready for *explosion*".[151]

Later, the Minister of Civil Protection Michalis Chrysochoidis re-emphasized the 'health bomb' narration, adding that [ot]:

> "(illegal) migrants pose a serious threat towards public health, security and social prosperity".[152]

It is interesting to keep into account this discussion of portraying migrants as a public health danger because as it will be illustrated again in the Analysis chapter, the detention

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[148] Buonfino, 'Between unity and plurality: the politicization and securitization of the discourse of immigration in Europe', *New Political Science,* 2004, p. 29
[149] Hammerstadt, 'The Securitization of Forced Migration', 2014, p. 270
[150] 2017
[151] Kostopoulos 2020
[152] Ibid

of refugees strictly within the refugee camps today has been largely justified on their characterization as COVID-19-carriers.

Similarly, following the June 2012 elections, the new Minister of Civil Protection under ND governance Nikos Dendias made crystal clear in August same year the intentions of the new government to regulate migration as a security issue. His statements came shortly after the initiation of the 'Xenios Zeus' sweeping operation that was mentioned in part 2.3.3. Acting as a securitizing actor, Nikos Dendias constructed *mass migration* as a crucial problem for the state, perhaps even bigger than the country's financial one.[153] In his words [ot]:

> "(…) The country is on the verge of *extinction*. Since the Dorian Invasion, 4000 years before, never before has the country experienced such large-scale *invasion*. It is a *bomb* in the state's and society's foundation".[154]

To conclude this sub-section, as both examples highlight, securitization of migration in Greece became a norm, in a period of severe financial predicament. On both occasions the aim of the securitizing actors was to diverge the *audience's* attention from the financial crisis, for which the actors themselves had been chiefly responsible. Yet the public's adaptation to such discourse was catastrophic. Xenophobia in Greece rose dramatically, and this was mostly apparent in the emergence of the neo-Nazi political party Golden Dawn, which in the next years increased rapidly in strength and voters.[155]

3.3 Securitization and Human Rights: Parallel Lines?

In the migration-security nexus, the relationship between securitization and human rights becomes inevitably complicated. Western democracies that are featured as major destination countries are increasingly caught between accepted rights-based standards of behavior towards all their people, and pressures to effectively and securely control the entry and settlement of non-nationals into their territory.[156] The dilemma posed on states by securitization of migration between ensuring national sovereignty on one side and promoting international human mobility on the other becomes interesting to examine,

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[153]https://www.tovima.gr/2012/08/06/society/n-dendias-gia-metanasteytiko-exoyme-mia-nea-kathodo-twn-dwriewn/

[154] Ibid

[155] After a five-year trial, Golden Dawn was in October 2020 ruled by Greek Justice as a criminal organization and has since then seized to exist

[156] Crepeau et al, 2007, p. 312

particularly in the EU context and with regards to the Schengen agreement. On June 14th, 1985, France, (Western) Germany and the BENELUX countries signed the Schengen Agreement for the abolition of internal border controls between those member-states.[157]

The Schengen Agreement has been central to the EU project, since it has enabled the free, unconfined movement of millions EU and non-EU citizens legally present on the territory without being subject to internal border controls.[158] At the same time, however, the establishment of a borderless internal area was accompanied by increased security measures and cooperation among member states to create restrictive external borders, focusing on the exclusion of non-EU citizens.[159] This has led to the concept of Fortress Europe, which promotes human rights such as free movement of the insiders, yet simultaneously -in the name of security- becomes as much inaccessible as possible for the outsiders, whether these are migrants, refugees or asylum seekers. As Husymans[160] infers the cost of facilitating the free movement of law-abiding agents comes at empowering external border controls to prevent agents that (may) constitute threats to internal security from entering and moving freely around the EU.

Linking this topic with the goal of this thesis, since 2015 the interplay between securitization and human rights in relation to the 'Schengenland' has been reheated, on account of the mass arrivals of refugees and asylum seekers. The barbed wire fences in countries like Hungary, Spain and Greece to halt irregular migrants from crossing their borders, let alone the presumed *temporary* border controls in states like Germany, France and Sweden to control refugee and migratory flows have additionally impeded free movement for EU citizens too.[161] Such actions indicate a rising securitization of migration and pose a question mark on their conformity to human rights principles.

The discussion about the relationship between securitization and human rights could be extended in SAR operations in the context of boat migration, where although the rhetoric of saving the lives at sea is strong, in reality, the commitment to human rights is often questioned once effective border control is exercised over boat migrants.[162] Such

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[157] European Commission, 2020a, p. 1
[158] Geddes and Scholten 2016, European Commission 2020
[159] Farny 2016, Grigoriadis and Esra 2019
[160] 2000, pp. 759 – 760
[161] Geddes and Scholten 2016, Yuval-Davies et al 2019, IOM 2020
[162] Ghezelbash et al, 2018, p. 331

discussion relates a lot to the non-refoulement principle yet due to the existing limitations in space and length it is better to stop here and leave this discussion for the analysis. Summarizing this part and chapter, and using Buonfino's argument[163], the creation of boundaries between us and others, between inside and outside leads issues of solidarity and human rights to become secondary to matters of security, thus endangering and demonizing both newly arrived and already settled migrants. While securitization may be used to secure the harmony of the 'society', it seems nevertheless to work against human rights and peaceful coexistence.[164] Hence, as R.Q 2 demonstrates, it becomes interesting to investigate this claimed tension between securitization and human rights.

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[163] 2004, p. 24
[164] Ibid

4)　　Research Design

The research design is as crucial gear of the research as it sketches the format of the thesis, including how and what arguments to make.[165] Remembering the corresponding words of section 1.3, the chapter's breakdown occurs in three parts: Epistemology – Data Collection – Methods.

4.1 Epistemology

Deriving from the Greek language epistemology largely speaks about the nature of knowledge that exists out there, in other words, what is knowable about the social world and which form of knowledge we can treat as legitimate.[166] As far as this research is concerned, an interpretative stance is adopted. Put simply, interpretivism maintains that the social world is subjectively created.[167] Under this prism, the primary goal of social science must be to achieve an understanding of human behavior through an interpretation of the meanings, beliefs and ideas that give people reasons to act.[168] Closely related with interpretivism is the constructivist worldview. (Social) Constructivists believe that individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work, by developing subjective meanings of their experiences—meanings directed toward certain objects or things.[169] In a constructivist context, the researcher's intent is to make sense of (or interpret) the meanings others have about the world.[170]

Social constructivism (and with it interpretivism in a broader sense) relates directly to ST as it is the securitizing actor that constructs an issue as a threat, based on his own interpretation, view and belief of what is the real world / what constitutes a threat.[171] Indeed, as ST reveals, security is a construction designed by securitizing actors that is injected into issues to frame them as existential threats.[172] Having established a connection between my thesis and epistemological knowledge, the next task now is to present the collected material, based on which the thesis is produced.

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[165] Roselle and Spray 2016, Halperin and Heath 2017
[166] Pierce 2008, Halperin and Heath 2017
[167] Halperin and Heath, 2017, p. 41
[168] Ibid
[169] Creswell, 2018, p. 56
[170] Ibid
[171] Hammerstadt, 2014, p. 266
[172] Buzan et al, 1998, p. 204

4.2 Data Collection

Engaging with the empirical world requires collecting information as evidence to advance our arguments and this is what we conventionally refer to as data.[173] For the purpose of this study, it is useful to present three main distinctions regarding data collection. The first is between primary and secondary *sources of data.* As the Literature Review chapter has shown for instance, this study is much supported by secondary sources namely knowledge provided by other scholars which is processed and (re)analyzed again by the researcher.[174] These sources represent authored works found in bibliographies, academic journals and/or websites. The main issue here to be aware of is the quality of these data (high or low) and perhaps their bias, matters that have already been taken into account in section 1.5. Regarding primary sources, these function also as an important gear of the research. An example here is reflected by original, legal texts, such as Acts of Law. The various Immigration Acts used in parts 2.3.2 and 2.3.3 for example, consisted of a useful starting point to highlight features of securitization in the Greek migration policy. The same formula will be employed again in the next chapter to examine EU and state policies in response to migration as a regional and domestic security subject.

The second and third classification concern data itself. First, we look into *qualitative* vs *quantitative* data. Whereas quantitative research concerns the assignment of numerical values to the data, qualitative is about the extraction of particular language and content used in data.[175] As an interpretivist one, this study inclines towards the qualitative aspect. To assuage the pursued goals the thesis will look into texts within which security discourse (though specific words or language) is distinguished.[176] Verbal (and written) accounts by politicians provide a pivotal set of data for my thesis and this brings us to the final stratification, which is about *primary* and *secondary* data.

Secondary data covers information that has been usually produced by secondary parties and for purposes outside academic research, such as governmental statistics on crime or unemployment, etc.[177] While such data may sometimes play major role in a research, that is not the case in my thesis. On the contrary, this thesis relies heavily on primary data

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[173] Halperin and Heath, 2017, p. 168
[174] Ibid, p. 253
[175] Ibid, p. 178
[176] Buzan et al, 1998, p. 177
[177] Halperin and Heath, 2017, p. 180

found mostly in political speeches. According to the previous chapter, securitization is a product of speech acts, hence the need to probe the discursive material and extract the specific words, phrases, language that suggest the appearance of securitization discourse. As for the securitizing actors, I will be looking into statements produced by Greek officials to analyze how those in power aim to regulate the migratory flows and then evaluate how close or how far their regulation stands with regards to human rights standards. Finally, besides speeches -and when applicable- other documents such as EU directives, policies, action plans, etc will be utilized too.

4.3 Methods

Methods refer to the employed practices and techniques we use to address and conduct our research.[178] For analyzing my data and conducting my study in accordance with my theoretical perspective and epistemological position, I recruit two research techniques: *Case-Study* and *Discourse Analysis*.

4.3.1 Case – Study

The first chosen method is case-study. According to Pierce[179], an effective case-study possesses self-containment and typicality. Self - containment implies that the variables being researched (security discourse, human rights [in]compliance, etc) should be clearly distinguishable, while typicality refers to making a careful, right and conscious selection of the case among the range of other, potential cases. The case-study is applied into Greece as a representative case of an EU south member-state whose national borders comprise additionally EU external borders. Similarly to other such states like Italy or Spain, Greece has acquired the role of EU's bastion in controlling the entry of refugees and asylum seekers in European territory.[180]

Since 2015, the refugee issue has been both a national and a regional matter. Policymaking in response to this issue, such as border controls, creation of closed-reception facilities (hotspots), and surely the frequent portrayal of refugees/asylum seekers as threats, criminals and other ills indicate an ongoing and increasing securitization of the refugee arrivals by Greek policymakers. The dominance of

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[178] Andreassen et al, 2017, p. 4
[179] 2008, p. 55
[180] Grigoriadis and Dilek, 2019, p. 176

securitization in the decision-making produces effects that appear to stand against certain human rights standards, such as the non-refoulement principle. Consequently, I believe it becomes interesting to examine the securitization aspects of the Greek migration policy in congruence with the EU directives and discuss how close or how far the migration policy stands towards human rights.

4.3.2 Discourse Analysis

As a form of textual analysis, discourse analysis is deeply interpretive. It strives to reveal the meanings that the political world has for agents who participate in it and that give people reasons for acting.[181] In this study, one such meaning can be immigration as a security threat which leads certain agents (be policymakers) to act in a way that restricts immigration (thorough tougher border controls). But discourse analysis is also constructivist. Beyond revealing the meanings of the political world it assumes that such meanings are socially and discursively moulded,[182] and that is true with securitization too. As Buzan et al note:

> "The defining criterion of security is textual: a specific rhetorical structure that has to be located in discourse".[183]

Regarding the specific form of discourse analysis, this study brings into play the *speech act theory* technique. The speech act theory treats language both as a way to convey – express something and as a sort of action. In other words, speech act theory studies how discourse is used not only to present information but also to carry out actions (based on the presented information).[184] It was advanced by British philosopher of languages John Austin who observed that utterances (speeches, statements) -beyond communicating something- give legitimacy to the speaker to do an act based on that utterance.[185] Linking it with the thesis' theoretical ground, we can examine speech act theory in line with ST. In this manner, the speaker (securitizing actor) carries out an utterance (statement). The produced language (discourse) of that statement-aside from describing an issue (be mass irregular migration) as a threat to the state- allows the speaker to take any suitable action he deems necessary to deal with this issue. Securitization is viewed as bringing things

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[181] Halperin and Heath, 2017, p. 336
[182] Jorgensen and Phillips 2002, Halperin and Heath 2017
[183] 1998, p. 176
[184] Halperin and Heath, 2017, p. 337
[185] Austin, *How to do Things with Words*, 1962, p. 25

into the state of emergency and so conducting discourse analysis through the speech act tool helps to uncover and explain how the securitizing actor aims to address an issue and, eventually, whether the actor's selected approach stands in compliance with human rights.

Having concluded the presentation of my epistemological position, of the collected data and the employed methods to carry out this study, the next step now is to move forward with the Analysis chapter.

5) Analysis

As a vital component of the thesis, this chapter serves to analyze the collected material and eventually answer the two RQs presented in section 1.2. To do so, the chapter is divided in three main parts. Part 5.1 stands as the starting point of the analysis, reminding first and foremost the reader of why the current, ongoing refugee issue signals the emergence of a 4th phase of migration in Europe. Then the second aim of this section is to reveal how securitization of migration begun to rise. This later goal functions eventually as an introduction to the first R.Q, which is the construction of the refugee flows by Greece and the EU as a security threat. The full answer to this R.Q is supplied by section 5.2, where the securitization discourse of the current Greek Government is investigated. As noted in the second R.Q, securitization of the refugee arrivals leaves a big impact onto certain human rights standards. Thus this is where section 5.3 comes into play to evaluate if the agency of securitization in the migration policy abides by the selected example of human rights.

5.1 The Commence of the 'Crisis' and Early Features of Securitization

5.1.1 4th Phase and Refugee 'Crisis'

As presented in section 2.2.3.1, the beginning of the huge refugee arrivals can be said to mark the initiation of a 4th phase of immigration in Europe. The evidence for such argument looks strong. By far, the ongoing refugee arrivals in the EU have been the greatest the Old Continent has witnessed since the end of WWII. Only in Greece, compared to previous years, the number of irregular migrants entering the country since 2015 has been at least 20 times bigger, resulting the characterization of the refugee issue as a 'crisis'. Indeed states like Greece -that served as the entry point for numerous of refugees and asylum seekers- were largely overwhelmed and seemed unable to sufficiently manage such extensive arrivals.[186] In such context, the refusal to a common, EU migration policy adopted by many member-states further reinforces the argument of phase four.

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[186] Dimitriadi and Sarantaki, 'The refugee 'crisis' in Greece: politicization and polarization amidst multiple crises', 2018, p. 3

Example given, under the principle of burden sharing which (besides asylum) is another way of granting refugees international protection,[187] the EC proposed in September 2015 a resettlement scheme with a dual function: to immediately relieve countries that were affected primarily by the increased refugee flows and to combat the root causes that force people to seek refuge in Europe.[188] While such decision was firmly upheld by countries with severe capacity problem like Italy and Greece, other member states including Austria, Hungary, Slovakia and Czech Republic declined it.[189] Other measures included in the Commission's proposal that are relevant to the thesis and will be discussed later were the inclusion of Turkey in the list of safe countries of origin and the establishment of identification, reception centers of irregular migrants in Italy and Greece, 'hotspots' as they were coined. For now, what is imperative to note is that such negation towards a unified, European migration policy sheds more light on the implantation of the 4th round of European immigration.

This negation comes part and parcel with the extreme securitizing discourse adopted by several European leaders, such as Viktor Orban, who after the drowning of 42 people near the Greek coast in January 2016, went as far to state:

> "The best migrant is the migrant who does not come".[190]

Lastly, on top of fourth's phase securitization lies the decision of the UK -among other reasons due to non-European immigration- to abandon the EU,[191] a decision that if proven beneficial may well inspire other member-states to opt for a similar path and thus grievously undermine the EU foundation.

5.1.2 SYRIZA Governance and EU Reaction

In this vortex of miscommunication and hallmarks of securitization across the EU, a notable, pro-migration shift was observed in Greece. It is worth-mentioning that this change coincided against a significant backdrop, Grexit. In the January 2015 elections, the far left-wing party SYRIZA led by Alexis Tsipras became the largest party in the HP securing 149 seats out of the total 300.[192] A second mandate was secured in September

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[187] Betts, 2014, p. 67
[188] European Commission 2015b
[189] Afouxenidis et al, 2017, pp 14-15
[190] Stromme 2016
[191] Yuval-Davis et al, 2019, p. 62
[192] Geddes and Scholten, 2016, p. 227

2015. With the support from the Independent Greeks party, SYRIZA was able to eventually form a government. What occurred between the two mandates was the Greek 2015 referendum on the bailout proposal by Troika (=EC, ECB, IMF) with SYRIZA strongly advocating and mobilizing the Greek people against Troika's proposal.[193] As a result, an unprecedent political and economic instability took place, banks shut down, capital controls were imposed, people were constantly protesting and the political debate became much divisive.[194] In the end, SYRIZA withdrew and adopted Troika's proposal, yet this did not stop the party (initially at least) to draw a more open, pro-migratory policy regarding the refugee issue.

A few days before SYRIZA secured its second mandate in 2015, the image of the three-year-old boy Alan Kurdi lying dead in a Turkish coast of the EMR after a failed attempt of his family to cross the sea towards Europe triggered a mass humanitarian response. Suddenly, security concerns of the refugee issue were succeeded by humanitarian actions. On state level, in Greece under the SYRIZA governance (supported by the Independent Greeks) this transition became quite evident. Staying loyal to its radical left ideology, SYRIZA adopted a pro-migration rhetoric that was in stark contrast with the discourse of ND presented in section 3.2.

For instance, already in February 2015 several ministers of SYRIZA had expressed their concern over the migration policy of the previous government.[195] In their words [ot]:

> "the detention centers will close down and shall be replaced by open reception facilities throughout the country, while irregular migrants granted residence permit and asylum seekers will be allowed to move freely withing the Greek territory".[196]

On another occasion, when the opposition accused SYRIZA of adopting an open borders policy with regards to the refugee issue, Alexis Tsipras asked rhetorically [ot]:

> "Does the sea have boundaries and we did not know it"?[197]

This turn in a rhetoric on irregularity of migrants to a discourse on granting international protection for asylum seekers was accompanied by important institutional and policy

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[193] Dimitriadi and Sarantaki, 2018, p. 3
[194] Ibid
[195] Aggelidis 2015
[196] Ibid
[197] https://www.lifo.gr/now/politics/ehei-i-thalassa-synora-mia-frasi-toy-tsipra-prokalei-antidraseis

changes,[198] highlighting further the transition of the refugee issue from a security to a humanitarian matter. Perhaps the most notable change was the -for the first time ever in Greek politics- establishment of the Ministry of Migration Policy with its responsibilities expanding on asylum, migration and integration.[199] Other measures towards this pro-migration setting were the replacement of migrant detention centres by open accommodation structures as noted in the previous paragraph, as well as the cancellation of the Xenios Zeus operation and the abolishment of the arbitrary migrant arrests.[200]

In sum, SYRIZA pioneered an approach concerning the refugee issue that was totally different compared to not only the one of the previous government but perhaps the whole European stance too. As such, the EU begun to kick back and its reaction to the SYRIZA's policymaking was anything but soft. Having allocated millions of euros by the ISF alone to Greece in order to manage the refugee flows efficiently,[201] the EU demanded a better regulation from SYRIZA. Furthermore, allowing thousands of irregular migrants to enter in and then transit from Greece in a free, uncontrolled manner was a crucial blow on the foundation of the Schengen zone. Based on section's 3.3 discussion, the survival of internal, free, European movement implies increasingly securitized external borders with restrictive access for non-EU citizens.

On 27th of January 2016, the EU delivers its first reaction via the Schengen evaluation report on Greece. The language of the report is indicative:

> "The report shows that there are *serious deficiencies* in the management of the external border in Greece".[202]

Roughly three weeks later, the language of the conclusions of the European Council meeting is even more telling. Under the section 'Migration', the crisis is now coined as migration and not refugee with the main objective now being:

> "To protect our external borders, reduce illegal migration and safeguard the integrity of the Schengen area".[203]

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[198] Petracou et al, 'Greece - Country Report: Legal and Policy Framework of Migration Governance', 2018, p. 10
[199] Ibid, p. 66
[200] Geddes and Scholten 2016, Dimitriadi and Sarantaki 2018
[201] European Commission 2018
[202] European Commission 2015a
[203] European Council 2016a

Through this same document, the EU welcomes the NATO to assist and work together with the EU in strengthening the Union's external borders surveillance.[204] Once again, the refugee issue enters a securitization trajectory and as the next part shows, with the implementation of the EU-Turkey partnership it shall remain so. For its part, SYRIZA/Greece, under the threat of expulsion from Schengen, is obliged to obey the Union's securitized position.[205]

5.1.3 EU – Turkey Common Statement: Content and Results

Turkey hosts the highest number of refugees and this has allowed its authoritarian leadership to use them as a powerful negotiation chip in its foreign affairs, especially in its relations with the EU.[206] In March 2016, the EU -in order to meet the demand for securing its external borders in the EMR and quell the mass refugee influxes- issued a common Statement with Turkey.[207] The main premise of the deal was that the EU would return back to Turkey all new irregular, undocumented migrants crossing into the Greek islands from Turkey; in exchange the EU inter alia agreed to resettle from Turkey a number of Syrian refugees equal to the number of those returned from Greece.[208] Other points of the deal included the duly registration of migrants arriving in the Greek islands and the individual examination of asylum applications by the Greek authorities,[209] migrants not applying for asylum or whose application is deemed inadmissible would be returned to Turkey[210] and the declaration of Turkey as a safe third country.[211]

In spite of being much celebrated within the EU, the statement has nonetheless been mostly unsuccessful and this ineffectiveness fuels further the thesis' analysis. One year after the agreement and to some extent until today, the EU proudly celebrates an almost 95% reduction in irregular migration through the Greek – Turkish border.[212] EU leaders are now able to tell their audiences that the flows have stopped and security is guaranteed.[213] Yet, the reality largely demystifies the EU success story. As of 2016, the

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[204] Ibid
[205] Dimitriadi and Sarantaki, 2018, p. 15
[206] Castles et al 2020, Christopoulos 2020, EASO 2020
[207] European Council 2016b
[208] Petracou et al 2018, Yuval-Davis et al 2019
[209] Save the Children, 2017, p. 8
[210] Christopoulos, 2020, p. 162
[211] Petracou et al, 2018, p. 67
[212] EASO, 2020, p. 9
[213] Christopoulos, 2020, p. 163

asylum applications in Greece surge rapidly year by year (table 3). The open registration sites in the Greek islands that serve as first entry points for irregular migrants have been transformed into closed, police-run, detention facilities (hotspots).[214] Thousands of migrants remain trapped in there waiting for their status to be determined, which due to the high volume of the asylum applications takes enormous time.

Table 3: Growth of Asylum Applications in Greece, 2016 - 2019[215]

Year	2016	2017	2018	2019
Number of Asylum Applications	51,110	58,650	66,965	77,275

The next parts discuss how the new government of ND -among other actions-capitalizes the situation in the islands to further advance the securitization argument. Before moving to that, it is interesting to mention another big criticism of the EU-Turkey deal, namely the declaration of Turkey as a safe third country for Syrians. The fact that Syrians are only granted temporary protection under Turkish law causes suspicion as to what degree the refoulement of Syrians in Turkey is in accordance with the GC.[216] This criticism is readdressed in section 5.3.

5.2 New Government with Securitization as its Lodestar

The 7th of July 2019 national elections result delivered the center-right party of ND a sheer victory, earning an absolute majority (158/300) of the parliamentary seats.[217] Sticking to its pledges regarding the refugee issue already as the biggest opposition party and definitely upon forming the new government, major changes in the area of migration policy have been observed. This section serves to discuss such changes, under the prism of securitization of migration in the decision-makers' discourse and ultimately answer the first R.Q. As it stands, R.Q 1 entails two parts: (A) *how* and (B) *why* Greece constructs the refugee flows as a security issue. While the answer to the first appears to be simple since this aspect is covered by the analysis of the discursive material, for the second part various and more complex explanations emerge.

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[214] Petracou et al, 2018, p. 68
[215] European Parliament n/d
[216] Yuval-Davies et al, 2019, p. 135
[217] https://ekloges.ypes.gr/current/v/home/en/

5.2.1 Pre – election Commitments and Initial, post – election Steps

One obvious explanation behind securitization of migration by ND lies within the party's pre-electoral positions, when still being the major opposition party under the SYRIZA governance. Already in 2016, before the EU – Turkey deal, the president of ND and current Greek PM Kyriakos Mitsotakis, during his visit in a refugee reception facility in Mytilene made a short statement which largely reveals the security character of the party's position on the refugee issue. While he referred multiply to the topic as a 'problem' that the country is facing, he added that [ot]:

> "The problem contains both a humanitarian and a security dimension".[218]

Similarly, the first months after the EU-Turkey common statement, the then coordinator of the party's migration policy and current Minister of Health, Vassilis Kikilias presented in a meeting of the Central Union of Greek Municipalities the party's national plan about the refugee – migration topic. As mentioned in the plan [ot]:

> "security comprises the first and foremost concern in the exercise of the migration policy".[219]

As both examples highlight, ND invested a lot in the promotion of a migration policy that would guarantee the country's national security. As such, ND aimed to appeal and attract these voters who believed that the mass, irregular and often uncontrolled migration posed a direct threat to national security. And as the 2019 election turnout showed, emphasizing on the security side of governing migration was the right choice. Upon shaping the new government, the next step was the actual design of a migration policy with securitization at the forefront. The first hint towards this direction was supplied by the consultative meeting organized by Greek PM Mitsotakis with governmental officials and the EU Commissioner on Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, Dimitris Avramopoulos. Out of this meeting, six priorities concerning migration governance were announced.

Apart from improving the life conditions of irregular migrants in the hotspots, the main emphasis by the government was placed on the security aspect, stressing the need to secure the Greek/EU borders in the EMR, and to implement the EU – Turkey deal in order to decongest the Greek islands that are overcrowded by thousands of irregular

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[218] Nea Dimokratia 2016a
[219] Nea Dimokratia. 2016b, p. 7

migrants.[220] The latter demand held a protagonist role one week later, July 21st, during the government's programmatic statements in the HP concerning the refugee issue, made by the then Alternate Minister for Migration Policy Giorgos Koumoutsakos. The securitization of migration in his speech was dominant. Referring to the situation that the Eastern Greek islands face, he described it as [ot]:

> "Problematic", "tragic" and "unsustainable", while Samos island was characterized as a "besieged city".[221]

For all the Greek islands that serve as entry points in the EMR the situation has indeed been tough. Since the beginning of 2019, more than 45.000 new arrivals have been recorded in Greece, the majority of which via the Eastern Aegean islands.[222] Originally designed as short-term reception centers with barely 8,000 persons capacity, the island facilities have mushroomed in size hosting numbers of people beyond their regular volume.[223] Reasonably, as the CoE Commissioner for Human Rights Dunja Mijatovic, upon her visit in three refugee facilities, admits:

> "the situation of the persons in the hotspots has worsened dramatically. It is an explosive situation".[224]

Yet despite the severe conditions in the islands and the Commissioner's statements, ND insists on framing refugees as a threat towards the society, instead of viewing them as people escaping conflict and oppression.

5.2.2 Labelling

At the end of September 2019, a highly influential shift on Greece's migration policy took place. That date the Council of Ministers convened under the presidency of Mitsotakis and among other topics the following was announced [ot]:

> "Based on the analysis of the statistical data on the nationality of those (=people) who enter Greece, it is a common belief that hereafter we are dealing with a *migration* and not a *refugee* issue".[225]

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[220] Proto Thema 2019
[221] Koumoutsakos 2019
[222] European Commission, 2019, p. 3
[223] European Commission 2019, Harlan 2020
[224] CoE 2019
[225] Government Representative 2019

Taking into account the fact that those arriving in Greece were no longer Syrians or that Syrians comprised nothing but a minor percentage of the new arrivals, and since all (and mostly) Syrians are recognized as refugees, ND decided to alter the state's official discourse and claim that persons currently arriving in Greece are not entitled to refugee regime. Such claim is of course unrealistic, since as Christopoulos for example argues[226] even if Syrians are inexistent in the new arrivals this does not mean that other nationalities within the flows, such as Afghans, are not regarded as refugees. In fact, the great majority of Afghans who seek asylum in Greece and Europe are granted it.[227] Nevertheless, what really seems to lurk behind the government's words and intentions is the fruits of labelling so as to convince the people that the country is now dealing with a migration problem.

As opposed to other terms, like case or category, 'label' is a significant and much powerful word which can be used both to identify something and to modify the real content/meaning/status of the identified object.[228] The way in which migrants are assessed by the state matters significantly as this will ultimately determine issues of resource distribution, respect for human rights, plus more specific topics such as refugee status awarding.[229] Applying these thoughts in our case, selecting not to label something (or someone) as refugee is a deeply political action that aims to shatter the international protection regime for refugees and asylum seekers.[230] By doing so, essentially, the Greek government (to borrow Zetter's argument[231]) has attempted to further legitimize their exclusion and marginalization, by simply seeing them as 'migrants' whose mass presence threatens the country's integrity.

5.2.3 Security during Epidemics: Securitization of Migration in the COVID-19 Era

The novel COVID-19 has led to unprecedent challenges worldwide, including how we think of and perform mobility. In order to contain the virus and prevent the rapid infection it causes, a number of states internationally have administered various travel restrictions and border closures, all of which impact migrants' capacity to reach pre-planned

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[226] 2020, pp. 34 – 35
[227] Ibid, p. 35
[228] Zetter, 2007, p. 173
[229] Farny 2016
[230] Crawley and Skleparis, 2018, p. 52
[231] 2007, p. 189

destinations.[232] On European level, states do possess the sovereign right to manage their borders in times of pandemics as a way to tackle public health issues[233] and indeed several EU-member states have increasingly shut down their borders.

COVID-19 limitations however have not been uniform. In the EU sphere example given, while many restrictions are in response to the virus, many others have been combined with or used explicitly as migration enforcement measures.[234] Such reality is of course worrying given that these restrictions disproportionally impact irregular migrants, for instance refugees in transit or asylum seekers wishing to file international protection claims.[235] Under no circumstances should we think that COVID-19 implies a termination of irregular migration. Quite the contrary, persons escaping war and persecution are still trying to cross borders in pursuit of international protection.[236] States additionally -during epidemics- still bear grave responsibilities towards refugees and asylum seekers. For example, under Articles 18 and 19 of the EU Charter, member-states are not to set aside persons seeking asylum when implementing measures to address public health matters.[237]

In this context, ND got involved in a policymaking that largely established the refugees and asylum seekers as an existential threat towards public health, picturing them as COVID-19 carriers that spread the virus. Here it is useful to remind of section's 3.2 discussion, wherein it was shown how migrants in the past too were identified as number one public health concerns by the Greek politicians (again under ND's governance). On 27th of February, the Council of Ministers under the presidency of Mitsotakis met and the following relevant points were announced [ot]:[238]

A) "Immigration is now taking on a new dimension, as flows to Greece include people from Iran where we have had many cases of COVID-19, and many passing through Afghanistan. Our islands, therefore, which are already burdened with public health issues, must be *doubly protected*. Simply put, we will do everything in our power to avoid the virus - especially there".

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[232] Sanchez and Achilli, 'Stranded: The Impacts of COVID-19 on Irregular Migration and Migrant Smuggling', 2020, p. 6
[233] FRA and CoE, 2020, p. 7
[234] Sanchez and Achilli, 2020, p. 4
[235] ibid
[236] Ibid, p. 1
[237] FRA and Coe, 2020, p. 7
[238] Government Representative 2020

B) "As of today, our country invokes Regulation 2016/399 of the EC and especially paragraph 6, on safeguarding the prevention of *a threat to public health*. What this means in practice is that we are *upgrading* our border control to the greatest extent possible. To this end, I have already instructed the Minister of Mercantile Marine and the Chief of the Coast Guard to *significantly increase* the number of vessels and the number of patrols in the islands of the Eastern Aegean. And, under International Law, we will *increase controls both at sea and on land*. I have already informed the EC of this decision, which must treat it as a measure to *protect the health of the whole of Europe*".

Securitizing migration on account of the COVID-19 pandemic was a crucial move for ND to introduce law enforcement measures which paved the way for combatting coronavirus and irregular migration jointly. At the same time, the government (as the last lines of B point highlight) grabbed the opportunity to re-emphasize Greece's role as EU's gatekeeper, this time to safeguard European citizens' health. First, with the 2nd of March 2020 legislative act, the Greek government decided the cancelation of asylum applications in Greece for one month[239][240] (the time period was prolonged later in order to hinder potential asylum seekers capable of spreading the virus from entering the country). In spite of being much controversial and seemingly opposed to the GC,[241] the decision was nevertheless deemed legal for purposes of public interest by the Council of State.[242]

Moreover, on March 18th 2020, two days before the imposition of strict quarantine measures across the country, ND imposed strict mobility prohibitions for everyone residing within the reception centers. This practically meant the confinement of thousands of refugees and asylum seekers in places with a profound lack of healthy life conditions, such as overcrowded refugee sites, without adequate water and sanitizing facilities, wherein many people sleep next to each other in tiny tents.[243] It is telling that despite the existing conditions in the refugee centers that served perfectly for the further contagion rather than prevention of the virus, the government not only did it not resolve such conditions but also decided the extension of the lockdown in the refugee facilities until September 2020; meanwhile, the same

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[239] Christopoulos, 2020, p. 167
[240] Originally the purpose behind the suspension was in reaction to Turkey's decision to encourage migrants to cross the Greek-Turkish borders, something that consisted of a violation of the EU-Turkey deal.
[241] InfoMigrants 2020
[242] Stathis 2020
[243] MSF 2020a

quarantine measures for the general Greek population had gradually begun to be lifted completely.

Inevitably, forcing thousands of people to live in such deteriorating conditions indefinitely led to an explosive situation, literally and figuratively speaking. On 8th and 9th of September 2020 fires broke out in the refugee camp of Moria in Lesvos and Vathi in Samos, in the first occasion leaving approximately 12,000 people without shelter.[244] The Greek Ministry of Migration claimed that the fires were set up due to the imposed quarantine in the camp after some positive COVID-19 cases, while the UNHCR stated that the fires were a form of protest against the severe, inhumane conditions that predominated the refugee sites.[245] And while the last thing someone would expect would be the political exploitation of such grave, humanitarian subject to further advance a securitizing discourse, the General Secretary of Migration and Asylum said the following right after the fires in Moria [ot]:

> "*Greece is under attack.* If we retreat now, it will look as if Greece has been *defeated*. That is why the migrants, having done what they did, are going to *stay on the street*, in *tents* under olive trees for *as long as it is needed*".[246]

5.2.4 Latest Developments

In the aftermath of the fire incidents, the situation for all the forced migrants within the camps seems to only be getting worse and worse. Although those that were left without shelter after the fire in Lesvos have been relocated elsewhere, their living environment at the time of writing still remains perilous, with inadequate food, water, health care, etc.[247] Similar living conditions have been observed in other refugee camps too. At the same time, COVID-19 infection continues in the camps, given that the unhygienic circumstances in many refugee facilities still endure.[248]

On policy level, a worth-mentioning development has been the announcement of the new pact on migration and asylum by the EC.[249] The pact targets to alleviate countries like Greece off the burden of thousands of people arriving on its shores by persuading the rest

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[244] FRA, 2020a, pp. 3, 5
[245] Ibid, p. 3
[246] Zafeiropoulos 2020
[247] HRW 2020a
[248] Ibid
[249] European Commission 2020b

of the EU members to either receive some of the asylum seekers or assist logistically in returning individuals whose asylum claims are being rejected.[250] In particular, based on each member-state's financial and capacity status, each country is to take in asylum seekers and in case certain countries like Hungary or Poland refuse to do so then they must provide operational – financial support for sending back the rejected asylum applicants.[251] Furthermore the new pact as EC's Vice President Margaritis Schinas noted 'puts Dublin to bed' meaning that the old Dublin principle that was originally designed for a few people fleeing war can no longer be applicable to deal with the challenge of the mass refugee arrivals in one place.[252]

Essentially, the new pact designates the overall policy that dominates Europe during the 4th phase, which is to address the refugee arrivals as a crisis instead of a global, humanitarian issue. In such context, each state opts for its own migration policy pursuing its own national interests instead of working towards a common, more humanitarian approach. Even when a common policy, like this new pact, is produced it remains unclear what each member-state shall contribute and of course not every contribution weighs the same. In any case, what is indubitable is that refugees and asylum seekers are treated as just another, unresolved loose end. And as the next section illustrates, such an approach exerts enormous impact onto the forced migrants' lives and rights.

5.3 Evaluation and Proposals: Investing on Human Rights

Taking into consideration the analysis in the previous sections of this chapter regarding the response of the Greek government in the ongoing refugee 'crisis', there is an alarming concern whether the Greek migration policy safeguards human rights standards. As expressed in the theory chapter and discussed extensively throughout the thesis, securitization of migration implies framing migrants, generally speaking all migrants, as a threat towards national sovereignty. Hence, and to answer the second RQ, this section serves to investigate if the regulation of the current refugee issue as a security matter conforms to human rights. To do so, instead for a swallow analysis, this section attempts to dive deeply into the debate by discussing both the state's and refugees' perspective before delivering a final and concrete evaluation. Finally, sufficient examination of the

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[250] Euronews 2020
[251] BBC 2020
[252] Ibid

topic will allow me to procced to the second target of RQ 2, which is to argue for an alternative approach to regulate the refugee issue.

5.3.1 Claimed Violations

To depart with this section's analysis, this study uses the example of the non-refoulement principle to examine the migration policy's effect onto human rights. Reminding the reader of the non-refoulement notion, as elaborated in section 2.1.1, essentially it is a right accorded to a specific category of persons, the refugees. In particular, a state bears the duty of not returning refugees (and asylum seekers[253]) who arrive in its territory back to their countries, since such persons have already escaped and sending them back would endanger their lives.[254] Despite the clear framework of how persons acquiring-deserving international protection ought to be treated by national authorities, Greece has nonetheless been accused multiple times since the start of the 'crisis' of violating the non-refoulement principle.

Throughout 2017 for instance, in the immediate aftermath of the EU-Turkey deal, incidents of violent pushbacks at the Evros border have been systematically reported.[255] According to these charges, the Greek authorities commit arbitrary arrests of newly arrived persons entering the Greek territory from the Evros border, detain these persons in police stations close to the borders, and then push them back to Turkey.[256] Even the CoE Commissioner for Human Rights was forced to intervene and express her concerns regarding the collective expulsions of asylum seekers, urging Greece to immediately cease these pushback operations.[257] Nevertheless in 2018, the GCR issued an announcement mentioning that instances of pushbacks in the Evros region not only have not been stopped but continue incrementally, targeting even the most vulnerable groups, such as pregnant women, victims of torture and children.[258]

Recently, similar claims of violation of the principle of non-refoulement were observed and put under scope, this time both in the land and the sea Greek – Turkish borders. Based on data provided by FRA, in 2020 the UNHCR has repeatedly reported that refugees and

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[253] European Parliament 2015
[254] Gibney, 2014, p. 52
[255] Petracou et al, 2018, p. 46
[256] AIDA, 2017, p. 23
[257] https://twitter.com/CommissionerHR/status/872380520495280129
[258] GCR 2018

asylum seekers -shortly after they have reached Greek soil or territorial waters- have been arrested and returned back to Turkey.[259]

5.3.2 Presentation of the Debate

On this dispute regarding the violation of the non-refoulement principle, *for one side* the refugees' and asylum seeker's perspective and opinion are quite clear. Multiple times throughout the refugee issue have they reported that their right to seek asylum and international protection has repeatedly been violated, either by being unlawfully denied the entry into Greece or by being arrested upon entry by the police and directly expelled.[260] Frequently, their testimonies of alleged pushbacks have been published by NGOs working at the borders, that is at the very 'scene of the crime'.[261] On one occasion, human rights protests took an even more official form. Last October, 29 prominent NGOs sent an open letter to the HP, requesting from the Greek MPs to conduct an investigation on all the non-refoulement violation allegations and examine whether such actions represent the Greek government's official migration policy.[262]

Thus it can be drawn that, at least from the refugees' and asylum applicants' perspective, the threat of being refouled seems to be taking place in reality. This in turn leads to other types of ramifications, especially for those still residing in the refugee camps waiting for their status to be determined. Under the constant fear of expulsion (among other reasons), many children and adults often end up committing suicide attempts or self-harm for example.[263]

As far as the Greek state's position is concerned, the Greek governments adhere to a steady approach in response to the allegations. This includes a total negation of the reported pushbacks and expulsions, despite the ample amount of cases, in tandem with an invocation to international (and European) law on applying a migration policy that promotes and safeguards national security and sovereignty. For instance, in August 2020 during his interview on CNN with Christiane Amanpour, Mitsotakis -commenting on the

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[259] FRA, 2020a, p.19
[260] Arvanitis 2018
[261] FRA, 2020a, p. 19
[262] HRW 2020b
[263] Save the Children 2017, MSF 2020b

accusations on the Greek government of carrying out refoulements against asylum seekers at the sea- stated that:

> "*This has not happened.* […] Greece *has every right* as a *sovereign* state *to defend* its borders. We have a *tough but very fair* border management policy. These reports are an *insul***t** to the Greek Coast Guard that has saved tens of thousands of refugees and migrants at sea".[264]

Essentially, the PM's discourse confirms Greece's approach on both denying the allegations and at the same time reassuring that its actions in managing the arrivals stay in line with international and European directives. While there is no single explanation behind Greece's stance, in my opinion it is certainly not implemented on the hoof. Given the tough reality that national authorities have to deal with, with the hotspots in the Eastern Aegean islands still being vastly overcrowded[265] and new arrivals coming in constantly,[266] one can expect a migration policy based on strict border management. Yet is such migration policy consistent with human rights standards?

5.3.3 Assessment and Suggestions

Jumping straight into the question with which the previous part was closed, I believe that to an important degree the Greek (and European) migration policy refrains from meeting the non-refoulement principle. While it is true that the Greek coastguard agencies have contributed a lot into saving irregular migrants' lives at sea, the evidence remains too large to ignore that even upon saving them no pushbacks are applied. "The EU has closed its minds and its borders"[267] and in this reality Greece, staying loyal to the role of the gatekeeper, has seemed determined throughout the refugee issue to carry out its duties at any cost.

Forging ahead, an additional criticism in relation to the non-refoulement principle that ought to be addressed is the declaration of Turkey as a safe third country for the purposes of the EU – Turkey Statement, as mentioned in the end of part 5.1.3. Here it can be inferred that Turkey does stand as a safe third country for Syrians to be returned in it, at least according to credible data found in AIDA, provided by GCR (and ECRE more

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[264] Mitsotakis, 2020, 09.40 – 10.47
[265] FRA, 2020b, p. 120
[266] European Commission, 2019, p. 3
[267] Christopoulos, 2020, p. 16

broadly).[268] However, the nature of the Statement should not go on unaddressed. It must be said that it was not accidental that the EU-Turkey partnership was basically a product of a (common) statement. Statements do not comprise ratified agreements, therefore as Christopoulos observes,[269] they *cannot* be monitored on a legal basis. Consequently, this has led to a legal gap which not only appears to be an intentional out-turn but has provided breeding ground for policies that have largely left a negative mark onto human rights. The images from the overcrowded refugee facilities in the Eastern Aegean Sea, wherein living conditions become worse and worse, constitute a serious blow on humanity.

Taking into account the above evaluation words, as well as the overall thesis text, one can safely conclude that securitization of migration in response to regulating receiving migration does not promote human rights standards, rather it works against them. Thus, what is attempted in this second half of this section is to present a series of proposals, the adoption of which shall guarantee a more effective and more humanitarian approach to resolve the refugee 'crisis'.

To begin with, an imperative measure for Greece and the rest of EU states is to work towards *desecuritization*. Certainly, no one can deny that security is the foundation of each and every organized society and it is a crucial factor that safeguards the effective exercise of rights and freedoms by individuals.[270] However, the policy that dominates today is emphasizing on security not for the shake of individuals' well-being; rather in order to proact state's interests at all costs.[271] As such, in the Western sphere and as Nyberg-Sorensen puts it:

> "A severe limitation of the migration–security nexus is that it focuses primarily on the security of the West at the expense of the rest". [272]

This implies tougher and stricter border controls which in turn cause an escalation of deaths and disappearances of travelling irregular migrants.[273]

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[268] https://asylumineurope.org/reports/country/greece/asylum-procedure/the-safe-country-concepts/safe-third-country/#:~:text=Specifically%2C%20the%20Asylum%20Service%2C%20reaches,6%5D%20the%20Turkish%20Temporary%20Protection
[269] 2020, p. 161
[270] Tsitselikis, 2013, p. 428
[271] Ibid
[272] 2012, p. 67
[273] Ibid

The first step therefore is setting immigration off the state of emergency. Yet adopting a more welcoming approach -even on pan-European level- needs to be escorted by supplementary measures. In general terms, all these measures fall under the 'investing on human rights' proposal, as it stands in the title of 5.3 analysis part. Specifically, it is imperative that Greece alter its perception towards the individuals, all individuals, residing in its territory. One way to do so could be via the gradual introduction and application of the *welfare state concept* as exercised in Sweden in the Greek politics. In Sweden, which is generally regarded as an apotheosis of the welfare state, it is believed that the Swedish state assumes a greater responsibility for all individuals' well – being.[274] Indeed, in the case of asylum seekers for instance, the Swedish Migration Agency took a significantly sound initiative towards rejected asylum applicants who could not be returned due to COVID-19 restrictions, by resuming their provision of daily allowances to mitigate their precarious situation.[275]

In the Greek and broader EU context, measures of similar nature need to be employed. The EU has already committed itself via the new *Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy (2020 – 2024*) to invest more on human rights, rule of law and democracy to create stronger societies, able to tackle resourcefully the crises of the future whether these are economic, refugee, health, climate, etc.[276] It remains to be seen now how effective this 'investment' shall pe proven, principally on the individual – refugee level, meaning to what extent refugees will be empowered to enjoy their full range of rights and pursue active livelihoods. As far as Greece is concerned, the state needs to urgently take on initiatives that will improve the well-being of refugees and asylum seekers.

A foremost initiative to be placed forward is *relocation*. Greece needs to prioritize the immediate transfer of those living in the overcrowded facilities on the islands in open facilities within the rest of the Greek mainland and create living conditions that abide by the European legal standards of living.[277] This would imply an increase to the capacity of all the facilities and especially of the Reception and Identification centers that serve as first entry-points and of course taking due care for meeting the demands for sanitization,

[274] Aronsson, 2017, p. 164
[275] FRA, 2020a, p. 7
[276] European Commission, 2020c, p. 3
[277] Save the Children 2017, Christopoulos 2020

enough food and clean water. Another vital initiative, applicable for the beneficiaries of international protection who wish to start over their lives in Greece, is to achieve *integration*. As illustrated by figure 2 below, integration is a process that begins with four main components (employment, accommodation, education, health) and it gradually leads to a full and active membership in the society, where refugees are granted all human rights and eventually become citizens.
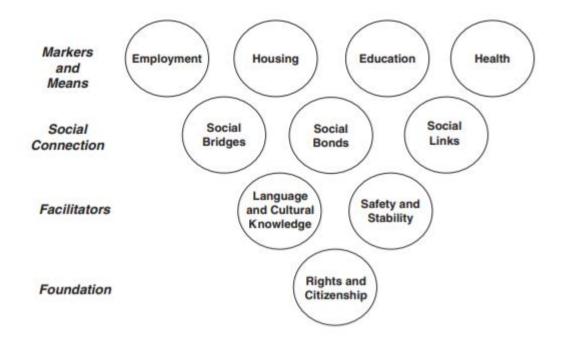

Figure 2: The Core Areas to achieve Integration[278]

Last and perhaps more radical proposal is to finally *address the problem in its roots*, identify the factors that preserve it and tackle them. (Forced) migration does not have a solution because it is not the problem.[279] The *actual problem is global inequality* and the factors that generate it (such as world economic order, political instability, armed conflicts) that eventually oblige people to abandon their place of origin and migrate elsewhere. In this area, states (especially the most powerful ones) are chiefly responsible for the prevalence of global inequality. Hence, to achieve this proposal, it is primarily human rights activists and humanitarian agencies that need to mobilize and address the

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[278] Ager and Strang, 2008, p. 170
[279] Christopoulos, 2020, p. 39

root causes of suffering. To engage in other words into what Michael Barnett coins as 'alchemical humanitarianism'.[280]

To eradicate the root causes of suffering and displacement, alchemical humanitarians' arsenal includes actions that redistribute power and wealth, and that frequently places them in opposition to states and political elites.[281] At the same time, however, politics far from being an opponent serves also as an important ally: Through pleading, lobbying or shaming, alchemical humanitarians have countless times managed to mobilize states to combat various tragedies around the world.[282] So in the example of refugees, alchemical humanitarianism has the potentiality to eliminate the root causes of forced migration, prevent future displacements, and as such function as an ideal human rights response towards the currently undergoing refugee 'crisis'.

So in conclusion of 5.3 sub-chapter, we can see that securitization of migration leaves in fact a negative mark onto human rights, as the example of the violation of the non-refoulement principle by the Greek state has indicated. Nevertheless, it is my firm belief that the situation is not irreversible; on the contrary, based on the detailed list of the presented proposals, solutions do exist but require strong political action to be successfully implemented.

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[280] Barnett, 'Refugees and Humanitarianism', 2014, p. 244
[281] Ibid, p. 245
[282] Ibid

6)   Conclusion

Summing up the text, it becomes clear that international migration has indeed been of the most ambivalent matters in contemporary politics. When it comes to forced migration in particular, the way(s) Greece as well as EU as a whole have regulated the constant flows of irregular migrants since the commence of the refugee 'crisis' help(s) to reveal that there has been a big change in state politics and rhetoric. This change is with regards to how the 'crisis' can be best addressed. In this research, I took the example of Greece, as a major destination country for refugees and asylum seekers, to discuss the regulation of the refugee issue from its commence in 2015 until nowadays. This discussion was the product of the first RQ I posed; namely *how does Greece regulate the refugee issue*. To answer this RQ, I used the concept of securitization of migration, in tandem with the methods of case-study and speech-act discourse analysis, which allowed me to show that for a plethora of reasons and in various ways a change in the Greek migration policy has in fact occurred.

Such change that points to the framing of irregular migration as a serious security threat and the subsequent adoption of tough migration policies to restrict it[283], inevitably impacts the incoming persons' life status and rights. For that reason, a second RQ was developed; to evaluate whether the regulation of the refugee arrivals by the Greek state was in compliance with human rights standards. For this task, the discussion revolved around the example of the non-refoulement principle according to Article 33 of the GC. As the last part of the Analysis chapter indicated, a breach to the non-refoulement principle was in reality been proven to be taking place. Thus, in the last section of the analysis chapter, I moved on to present some alternatives regarding the Greek and overall European approach on the refugee issue. A foremost starting point as reflected in section 5.3.3 is that states need to work towards desecuritization of migration, since as the creators of ST note, in the end it is better to shift issues outside the state of emergency.[284]

6.1 Contribution, Limitations and beyond the Research

Regarding the first aspect, this text comprises an important *contribution* to human rights as a field of study for two chief reasons. *First*, it has shed more light on the multilevel

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[283] Geddes and Scholten, 2016, p. 144
[284] Buzan et al, 1998, p. 4

function and nature of human rights. The firm establishment of the non-refoulement principle by a *legal* instrument (GC), the *politicization* of human rights during securitization of migration, the *historical* evolution of human rights both alone and in conjunction with forced migration, the link between human rights and *societal* activism, etc, all highlight the variety of layers covering human rights as an area of studies. *Second*, the advancement of the 4th phase of migration in Europe argument examined in sub-section 2.2.3.1 is principally dependent on human rights-related events. This is to say that the impact of certain events such as the lack of a common, European, migration policy that reveal the potential establishment of the fourth round of migration points to the assisting role of human rights in *producing new knowledge.*

As far as the *limitations* of the thesis are concerned, while the thesis provides significant new knowledge on the studied topic, still on other matters the study remains limited. To exemplify, considering the large time spectrum of the analysis (2015 – nowadays), including the change of governance with parties of different ideology there might be certain occurrences or aspects that were unstudied. In my analysis, I attempted to highlight and examine the most important aspects of the refugee issue but at the same time such attempt may imply that other policies or events occurred under the governance of either SYRIZA or ND were perhaps not touched upon. Furthermore, something that was not possible to be demonstrated yet it would be interesting to be included would be first-hand witnesses by the refugees and asylum applicants themselves on how they experience the results of the Greek (and European) immigration policy. Such testimonies I believe would embellish more my analysis.

Finally, it should be mentioned that this study can consist of a departure point for *similar, future research*. As mentioned in the beginning of the Introduction, international migration has escalated much over the last 50 years and according to latest projections it is expected to climb more in the future.[285] Among the various types of migration, forced migration is unfortunately highly conceivable to stand as one of the main forms of mobility. Hence researchers in general and human rights researchers in particular must be aware of this trend and conduct similar studies, with the aim to carefully investigate the various migration policies and their mark onto human rights. Potential example areas that

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[285] IOM, 2020, p. 2

yield the interest for such research include the *externalization process of the EU* to manage irregular migration or the *examination of the human rights status of those persons* who -albeit not refouled- remain stranded in the various, refugee facilities, waiting for their asylum applications to be processed.

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