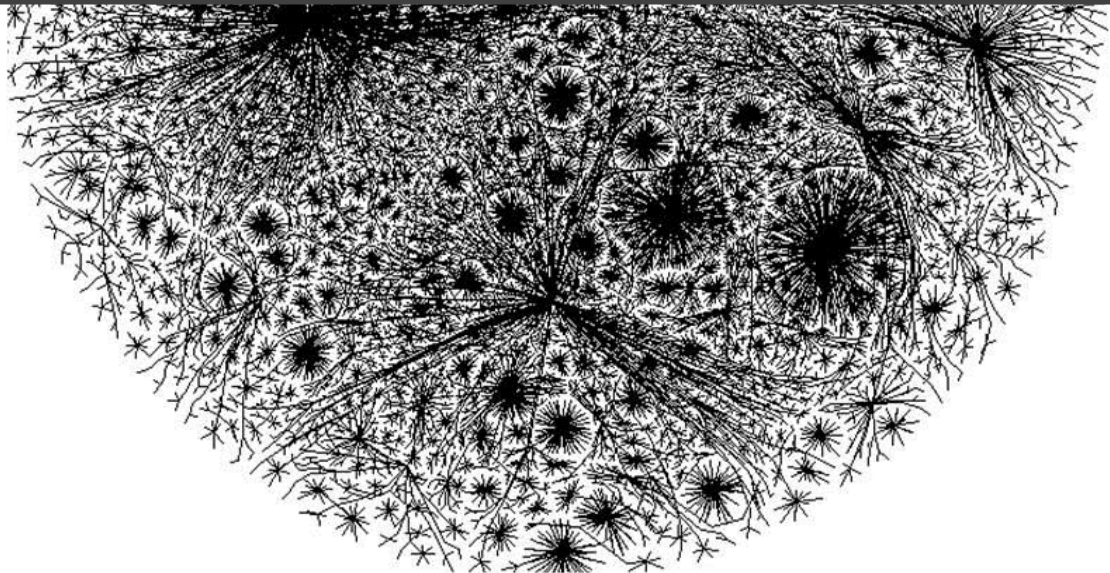# The Dutch Risk and Crisis Assemblage:

How and why moral and political considerations are filtered out of the scenario thinking practice

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Abstract

This thesis addresses the management or risks and crises through a focus on the scenario thinking practice in the Dutch risk and crisis assemblage. In recent years, a renewed risk-thinking mentality has come to be seen as the answer to a more globalized and heterogeneous security landscape of threats, risks and potential undesired future events. The practice of scenario thinking is a technological embodiment of this renewed focus on risks, which inevitably brings about many moral and political considerations posed as a dilemma against the importance of security. Through the scoring of impact, probability, costs and benefits, morally and politically charged decisions are made that deal with the worthy and less worthy lives, or the acceptance of a residual risk. For reasons that should be questioned, some moral and political considerations are filtered out of the scenario thinking practice. Drawing on this insight, this thesis aims to develop an understanding of practices that aid the filtering out of moral and political considerations. With the use of the assemblage analytic, a focus on the heterogeneous and contingent character of the Dutch risk and crisis assemblage helps pointing at the danger of filtering out moral and political consideration. Building on a vocabulary of government, neoliberalism and self-responsibilization, this thesis aims to provide an explanation for the reasons of why moral and political considerations are filtered out and calls for a critical scrutinizing of the practices in the Dutch risk and crisis management.

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Introduction

"A moral aspect determines that you cannot put a price tag on a human life: it is invaluable. That being said, I see that a human life in the United States is worth more than a life in Europe. [...] If something happens to you in the United States, a company must pay you millions of dollars. Therefore, in the United States, they will beware of accidents. Here [in the Netherlands], they are a little less beware. In India and Nepal, they won't beware at all. A human life there is worth even less."[1]

Worldwide, a renewed thinking on preventive and repressive risk and crisis management balances moral and political considerations against the importance of security and economy. As the above quote from military officer Ruud shows, working on the topic of security brings about a dilemma with on the one hand moral and political concerns and security on the other. Considerations about the value of life and death are inevitably morally charged and decisions that set boundaries to determine whether something is safe and secure enough, are inevitably politicized.

In the Netherlands this highly topical crisis management can be identified too. With the 2000 Enschede firework disaster[2] and the 2001 attack on the World Trade Center in the Unites States as some of the direct causes, a way of how this came to expression is through the adoption of the 2010 *Wet Veiligheidsregio* (Wvr). This law divides the Netherlands into twenty-five security regions and reveals the will to improve security by means of a plethora of actors such as police, fire brigade, medical assistance during crises and disasters (GHOR), Dutch Royal Armed Forces, and municipalities[3]. The plethora of actions and actors that deal with this renewed thinking on risk and crisis management I will hereafter refer to as "an assemblage:" a field of struggle over embodying knowledge production, "complex power relations, shifting structures and strategies, and normative implications" (Abrahamsen and Williams 2014:31).

This thesis aims to examine a particular reaction to the aforementioned growing preoccupation with risk and crisis management: the practice of scenario thinking in the Dutch risk and crisis assemblage and the decisions that are being made on this topic. The assemblage, acting in both a preemptive as well as repressive manner, uses scenario thinking in order to prevent, avoid, or better prepare for future risks and by doing so engages in questions . The character of scenario thinking is mostly actuarial, translating risks and undesired future events into calculations into the present. These are presented in diagrams, charts and tables, which then are deployed for administering individuals, institutions,

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[1] Author's interview on 1 May 2015 with military officer Ruud working in a security region. Interview was held at the office of the military officer at the security region office.
[2] Kamerstukken II, 2003/2004, 29517, nr. 1.
[3] Wet Veiligheidsregio's 2010. Paragraph 2. Article 8-24.

expertise, capacities and resources in the service of avoiding that unwanted potential future event. Scenario thinking in the Dutch risk and crisis assemblage is of highly political and moral nature. Nevertheless, the actuarial character of the practice predominates and is not questioned when discussing the practice. Building on this tension, this thesis will focus on the moral and political considerations within the scenario thinking practice from 2004 – the start of the preparation period for the implementation of the Wvr – until 2014, by seeking the answer to the question:

> *How and why are political and moral considerations on the practice of scenario thinking filtered out in the Dutch risk and crisis assemblage?*

In order to answer the general research question, sub questions are formulated in order to guide the analysis, as well as the outline of this study. First of all, the first chapter seeks to provide an answer to the following sub question: how did the security and risk discourses develop in general and in the Dutch security assemblage specifically, and what were the consequences for the practice of scenario thinking? The chapter provides a historical account and builds on the larger field of critical security studies to explain or revisit and recast some of the developments in the larger security assemblage in the Netherlands. This way, it also helps to identify a rough map of the main actions and actors in the Dutch risk and crisis assemblage. The second chapter will then zoom in further and presents some of the political and moral considerations that are specific for the scenario thinking practice. Through some of these moral and political examples, I will identify practices that take place in order to filter out the political and moral considerations. In the final chapter I will present a provisional answer to the question of why the political and moral considerations are filtered out. Placing this study's case in a larger societal picture I will examine how moral and political considerations are operationalized and whether critiques on neoliberalism, the redistribution of powers, and the responsibilization of the citizen offer a plausible explanation for the filtering out of the moral and political considerations. In the conclusion, the main findings and further recommendations of this thesis will be presented.

The remainder of this introductory chapter will present the theoretical framework and the key concepts that I use throughout this thesis. Furthermore, I will provide a justification for the relevance and objectives of this research, as well as the chosen research design with its opportunities and limitations.

Theoretical framework and key concepts

A fundamental premise upon which this research builds is that the reality of the social world must be understood by seeking the meaning of action. From this interpretative stance follows a methodology

that produces an analysis of discursive, political and social practices, from the position of the different actors involved. Social practices are defined as "relatively stabilized forms of social activity" (Fairclough 2003 in Demmers 2010:122). These practices flag agency, giving people a way to (re)produce social rules that are manifested in discourses and institutions (Demmers 2012:122). Hence, this study ties in with the body of literature of assemblages and its practices in the larger field of critical security studies.

The concept of assemblage has been found useful in the field of the critical security studies – a field of studies that aims to challenge traditional readings of security and uses concepts such as bio-politics, governance and governmentality. Hence, this field of studies is strongly influenced by Foucauldian readings of reality and post structuralism. It aims to explain the concept of security through new approaches and looks into the relation between power and knowledge. Information technology and government rationalities and technologies are not uncommon. In sum, one can expect an effort in understanding the assemblage analytic with a certain "will to improve", or "will to govern" (Foucault in Li 2007:264 and Li 2007:264) as I will explain in the remainder of this section.

In her article on community forest management, Tanya Murray Li provides the Foucauldian-inspired definition of an assemblage. According to her, an assemblage is (Foucault in Li 2007:264 and Li 2007:264):

"the way in which heterogeneous elements including "discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philantropical propositions" are assembled to address an "urgent need" and invested with strategic purpose. That purpose is the will to govern or, more specifically, the will to improve: the attempt to direct conduct and intervene in social processes to produce desired outcomes and avert undesired ones."

In other words, through an array of different social and material practices, an assemblage attempts to improve or avoid an unwanted potential future event. Through an intervention in the social processes, power is exercised and an unwanted future is averted (de Goede and Simon 2012:317; Allen and Cochrane 2010:1075).

The assemblage analytic, with its will to govern, has different features that contribute to the exercising of power. It "highlights the situated interplay of motion and contingency, of technology and ethics, [and] of opportunity and risk" (Ong 2007:5). Motion and contingency of the assemblage is something that directly links to the social practice of assembling. It is about the continuous work that is required to highlight the array of different actors and actions as settled (Li 2007:264). Here, it is important to note that assemblage is different from concepts such as network society, which describe

a complete system or a collaboration between different nodes with one clear goal[4]. For this reason, the assemblage analytic proves useful for the case of the scenario thinking practice in the larger risk and crisis assemblage. The different actors seem to work together, hence the assemblage invokes coherency. However, the different actors and their various stakes flag a field of struggle. As a result, and in contrast to for instance a security network, the interplay taking place in the assemblage causes unexpected outcomes and hence no single outcome is attributable to one assemblage or a collaboration of subjects of the assemblage.

Contingency in this sense leads to an important feature of the concept of assemblage, namely "its potential to finesse questions of agency by recognizing the situated subjects who do the work of pulling together disparate elements": this continuous (in-motion) practice takes place without attributing a master-mind to the actors involved (Li 2007:265). Through this diffusion of agency, assemblage as analytic steps away from any elite theorist view, as well as attributing a clear goal to a network, as network theory would do. The acceptance of unexpected political and ethical intentions nourishes the view that outcomes cannot be established in advance (Ong 2007:5). Exactly this is the contingent nature of assemblage analytic and the reason why Deleuze and Guattari emphasize temporality and spatiality (1987 in: Li 2007:265). The drawing together of different heterogeneous elements is a "particular conjuncture": a particular moment in time where the assemblage disperses or realigns (Li 2007:265). A shifting terrain or another angle of vision, causes the assemblage to be in constant motion.

In addition to motion and contingency, technology[5] and ethics take place in the situated interplay as well (Ong 2007:5). Through technologies and ethics, a space of problematization is created with "problems of governing by making calculative choices about intervention and risk in an unfolding situation" (Ong 2007:4-5). This problematization focuses on the question "how problems [are] defined in relation to particular thought, diagnoses of deficiency and promises of improvement" (Li 2007:264) and as well, the resolution of problems of governing and living (Ong 2007:5). Li illustrates this with her case on community forest management by noting that the contingent assemblage emerged over a "space of struggle", but, rather than starting from a "unified specification of a problem", it began from a "proposed solution" (2007:267).

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[4] For detailed examples of security networks, based on network society, see the article of Benoît Dupont (2004:76-91).

[5] Technology here should not be interpreted as how Li used it as a 'resultant formation' such as an apparatus or regime (Li 2007:264). Instead, I use this term in this context as the practice of using or portraying of scientific methods, calculations, materials and devices, but also policies, to solve "problems". An example is provided by Ong (2005:6) on zoning technologies that 'encoded alternative territorialities for experiments in economic freedom and entrepreneurial activity.'

The above elements interact too with "opportunity and risk", completing the features of the situated interplay that Ong notes (2007:5). First of all, risk, since government is "inherently risky" due to "fragile relays, contested locales and fissiparous affiliations" (Rose 1999 in Li 2007:264). The disguised problematization of this government and the contingency of an assemblage all contribute to the riskiness. Simultaneously, these risks create the act accounting for the second element: a search for opportunities. It is thus the contingent character of the assemblage that causes actors to constantly look for opportunities for the attempt to assemble.

In sum, the assemblage analytic seems to offer an approach that is "capable of accommodating the various hybrids of material, biological, social and technological components that populate our world" (Acuto and Curtis 2014:2). However, all these different features of the assemblage, complemented with the increasing complexity of actors and actions in the field of risk and crisis management puts the assemblage analytic at risk of trying to gather *everything* under the banner of the dynamic, transient and contingent aspects of the assemblage analytic. This, is eventually not helpful in understanding the phenomena critical security studies, and this study, would like to understand. The heterogeneous character of the assemblage, in contrast to a rigid, unified and set formation such as a state or a government (Rose and Miller 1992:177), can invite questions of how and why the assemblage is or is not made coherent (Li 2007:264; Allen 2011:154; de Goede and Simon 2012:316). But, in order to do so, a detailed and delimited analysis is needed in order to make the concept of assemblage a fruitful analytic. Through the concept of assemblage this study aims at a focused and detailed analysis of the different practices that take place in service of filtering out moral and political considerations during different phases of scenario thinking. To create this focused analysis, the practices identified by Li in her article on community forest management (2007) are a good start.

As Li aptly notices, the continuous work of assembling, the "pulling disparate elements together", singles out more than just the practice of assembling and the often highlighted practice of problematization (Li 2007:264). In her article on community forest management, Li therefore calls for a shift in focus to equally generic practices of an assemblage of which she provisionally identified six. These practices, in service of directing social conduct, are "forging alignments", "rendering technical", "authorizing knowledge", "managing failures and critiques", "anti-politics", and "reassembling" (2007:265). In chapter two, I will elaborate further upon these practices.

In reaction to Li's call for an increased focus on the generic practices taking place in an assemblage, this thesis will provide a case study of the Dutch risk and crisis management assemblage, with a specific focus on the practice of scenario thinking and its moral and political outcome.[6] I here

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[6] As van Burken explains in her dissertation, the outcome of a moral decision or consideration can be morally right or morally wrong. So a moral outcome means that there is a moral issue at stake, and the basis of this outcome depends on one's world view (2014:17).

define the practice of scenario thinking as being concerned with bringing possible future undesired events into calculations in the present. The avoidance of such events is the central object of the decision-making processes on, for instance, where to increase or decrease the amount of capacities. Doing so, it administers individuals, institutions, expertise, capacities and resources in the service of that ambition of avoidance. This corresponds with the three official phases that take place in the scenario thinking practice according to the guide of the Dutch National Security Strategy (SNV) (Ministry of Security and Justice, 2009:11-12), outlined as follows:

- Future exploration and horizon analysis with:
  o Selecting relevant scenario themes
  o Describing all possible scenarios
- The analysis and judging of the scenarios with:
  o Judge/estimate the impact of the scenario
  o Judge/estimate the probability of the scenario
  o Resulting in a risk diagram with all the possible scenarios positioned in relation to each other
- The capacity analysis, which seeks an answer to the question: which capacities do we need to strengthen in order to reduce the risks or better respond to them?

I argue that these phases of the scenario thinking process eventually are about (re)producing knowledge and the politics of defining what constitutes as legitimate knowledge. It is about describing scenarios, which produces data that is used in calculations. The end-product then, is a risk-diagram: a reproduction of the data, set out in relation to one another based on impact and probability. In the primary sources[7] I used for this study, a scenario is seen as "a way of communicating about and providing an overall image of risks and factors that are of importance for nowadays decisions". The way of communication they refer to, could arguably be seen as a way of (re)presenting new data and thus knowledge.

The chapter in the edited volume *Reassembling International Relations* of Nick Srnicek on cognitive assemblages and the production of knowledge is convenient here (2014:40-47). Srnicek argues that in an era where producing knowledge becomes politically more important (due to for instance big data), the concept of assemblage is especially fruitful. It is able to question the constructivist view of knowledge. Instead of looking at knowledge as "not only information that people carry around

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[7] For this research I have used the three existing versions of the national guide 'Working with scenarios, risk assessments and capacities of the National Security Strategy' (SNV) of respectively 2007, 2009, and 2013. In addition, I used the Guide Regional Risk profile 2009 (HRR): the guide for designing a regional risk profile, which is based on the SNVs.

in their heads, […] and primarily, the intersubjective background of context, expectations, dispositions, and language that gives meaning to material reality" (Adler 2004 in Srnicek 2014:41), the assemblage helps to see the heterogeneity of knowledge, and more specifically, the materiality of knowledge. According to Srnicek, knowledge can be recognized as "being comprised of a heterogeneous set of materials, of which only a small portion are in fact identifiably "social" or "in our heads"" (2014:41). The assemblage analytic highlights the material side of knowledge. It is able to focus on the material means of knowledge production such as measuring instruments, data collection tools, computer and physics models, archives, and databases (Srnicek 2014:42).

I propose to look at the scenario thinking practice as a material means of knowledge production. Scenario thinking is a technical tool that involves computer models[8] which the (local) government(s) use(s) in order to calculate and compare the impact, the risk and the priority of scenarios (Ministry of Security and Justice 2009:11-12; Ministry of Security and Justice 2013b:9-10). It provides a method in order to collect data through expert opinions[9] and statistical data (Ministry of Security and Justice 2009:13; Ministry of Security and Justice 2013b:14). It makes use of and contributes to an archive, by evaluating scenarios that actually took place, looping back to the collecting data tools. Furthermore, the scenario thinking practice eventually creates a database full of developed scenarios or a risk map. These can be used at the operational level for practicing, but also form the basis of the development of new scenarios. The complexity and the endless amount of variables in scenarios, in combination with the differences between the scenarios, makes the task of scenario thinking and its comparison to determine priorities almost impossible to carry out by one or a few minds. Therefore, a thorough description of a method and the use of computer models contribute to the character of scenario thinking as a material means of knowledge production.

The production of this knowledge adds to the decisions that are made about who, when and how one is ought to act upon certain scenarios of (in)security. In this way, knowledge production eventually contributes to the administering of individuals, institutions, expertise and resources that are in service of avoiding that specific scenario. Thus, that what is coined by Srnicek as a "cognitive assemblage", concerned with highlighting the material infrastructure and emphasizing the technological dynamics (2014:45), becomes a "*necessary* mediating point" between a problem and those who are charged solving this problem. Accordingly, the problem "*must* pass through a technological mediator"

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[8] Examples of computer models are provided at the website of the RIVM, the National Institute for Public Health and the Environment: SAFETI-NL for external risks, GEVERS for (civil) airports), CAROLA for high-pressure natural gas pipelines, and RBM II for the transport of hazardous materials by rail, water and road.
[9] The use of expert opinions flags a qualitative approach within the tool. However, since the opinions are translated eventually to numbers and statistics, I argue that the scenario thinking practice can still be seen as a materiality of knowledge. Furthermore, I will show later on in this thesis that the scenario thinking practice as technology is not neutral or objective, hence neither is the materiality of knowledge.

in order to make it "thinkable" by a policymaker (2014:46, original emphasis). In other words, the materiality of knowledge is needed in order for policy makers to grapple their mind around the complex security issues. This results eventually in a series of representations of the problem "into the cognitive assemblage and these go onto shape the behavioral, perceptual and cognitive capacities available to political actors" (2014:46-7). In essence, the representations of knowledge have the ability to shape, or perpetuate, social life through the capacities available to political actors. It is in this way that knowledge production is corresponding to the will to improve or govern, and hence the exercising of power.

A difficulty that I find, however, is that a technological mediator such as the scenario thinking practice is not neutral. It does not take place in a social vacuum, on the contrary: highly moral and political security issues are at stake. These moral and political issues are unquestionably delegated to technology. Therefore, what is significant is the question whether the representational aspects of the technological medium are right or not. My suspicion for the failure of including moral and political considerations in the scenario thinking practice intrinsically links this question of representational aspects to the main question of this thesis. This brings up the need for defining what exactly counts as a moral and political question.

At present, there still exists no consensus between philosophers and professional ethicists over what exactly counts as a moral question (van Burken 2014:16). Due to the scope of this research, I will not profoundly discuss this question, but to give some delimitation to the domain, I quote Casebeer and Churchland from their article on neural mechanisms of moral cognition. According to them, "moral reasoning deals with *cognitive acts and judgements associated with norms, or with facts as they relate to norms"* (2003:171, original emphasis). In other words, moral considerations can be nourished by the cognitive acts and judgments that can be influenced by a worldview, a certain background, or by something that is considered a fact by someone.

This automatically flags the difficulty of distinguishing between a moral or a political consideration. I therefore argue that these considerations can overlap. For instance, an (im)moral decision on security governance, can automatically be an unpopular political consideration. Here, one can think of the distribution of resources between a densely populated deprived neighborhood and a thinly populated area with many of your political followers. This ties in very well with the discussion and absence of consensus over what exactly counts as a moral question. The cognitive acts and judgments associated with norms can be informed by political norms, or a political preference. Something that would count as a moral or political question is subjective and is arguably in itself not neutral and politicized[10].

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[10] I am aware that the politics of labeling something moral (or immoral) is in itself not neutral. This ties in well with the field of critical security studies which studies complex relations over security, power and knowledge.

Karin Mieremet   -   The Dutch Risk and Crisis Assemblage

I have introduced the assemblage analytic, the moral and political nature of different dilemmas when discussing security and risk and crisis management and the specific features such as knowledge production of the scenario thinking practice. Why then, is the assemblage analytic fruitful in explaining the power relations and the filtering out of moral and political consideration within the scenario thinking practice? I argue that the different heterogeneous elements such as the production of knowledge, discourses, laws, policies and actors in the Dutch risk and crisis management qualify themselves as an assemblage. First of all through the area of problematization and struggle over how all these different elements are drawn together. Secondly, over how the security in the Netherlands is improved through (governing) interventions for providing security, and preparing for and avoiding that risks. As Rita Abrahamsen and Williams stated, the "assemblage is not a neutral network. It is a field of struggle embodying complex power relations, shifting structures and strategies, and normative implications. As always, it is deeply political" (2014:31). Since crisis management also includes such power struggles, the vocabulary of the assemblage analytic proves useful for this thesis.

Relevance and objectives of the research

Since the practice of scenario thinking is not unique to the Netherlands, and as conflicts and terrorism around the world seem to make the renewed thinking on crisis management necessary, this thesis presents a context-specific case study of a wider recognized phenomenon. Currently, providing security is made into a business: private and hybrid organizations occupy a larger place in what has become marked as a market (Dupont 2004:77). A market that is not questioned, where no attention is being paid to moral and political considerations, and where the importance of security is taken for granted. Hence, by studying the specific practice of scenario thinking in the larger risk and crisis assemblage, I am able to provide a unique insight into the moral and political side of a practice: a side that is now more often than not neglected. As Charles Ragin in his book *Constructing Social Research* states: "[s]ocial researchers seek to identify order and regularity in the complexity of social life; they try to make sense of it" (1994:31). Hence, I aim to make sense[11] and interpret significance of the tensions within the scenario thinking practice and the larger risk and crisis assemblage.

Assemblage highlights a set of practices that are often mentioned implicitly in studies of government, but are rarely scrutinized in a focused manner (Li 2007:264). While Tanya Murray Li provisionally identifies six generic practices in her article on community forest management (2007:264-5), I propose to further scrutinize these practices to establish if these are partly overlapping and if there are possibly more practices at work. Therefore, the analysis of this study's empirical example functions

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[11] See for the overview and descriptions of the sub-goals that contribute to the overarching goal of social research: Charles Ragin 1994:31-53.

as a first attempt to explore the possible existence of more or other generic practices. The analytic of assemblage contributes to this exploration, since it provides academic tools to highlight aspects of the management of potential future risks.

This brings me to the last goal of this study. Managing risks has been subject for research for a long time. In different sectors, both commercially (financial world, banking) and public issues (guaranteeing security for citizens) have made use of tools, calculations and different programs to predict and act on potential risks. Despite many researches that conclude the contrary, risks are perceived manageable by governments and politicians. This research adds to the debate of calculations versus the human factor, by zooming in on the specific practices that filter out the moral and political character of the scenario thinking practice. It should be seen as a call in favor of the human factor and the acknowledgement of the role morality should play.

Methodology and design

According to de Vaus, the logic of a research process is key to producing a strong and convincingly argued answer to the research question (2001:9). This research is therefore designed carefully, using assemblage theory to deductively sensitize features that are used to generate propositions and specific questions for semi-structured interviews. Then, the collection and analysis of data has been an ongoing process whereby an interaction took place between the collected data, the implications for propositions, analytic frames and the social theory.[12]

The main and sub questions posed for this research also bear implications for the design of this study. Therefore, I chose to do what is often referred to as a case study method. This method studies in depth a "typical case" (Nichols 2000:13): a "contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (Yin 2002 in: Terpstra 2013:15). In order to understand how and why moral and political considerations are filtered out, this study uses the concept of assemblage while explorative placing it in a larger social context.

I have identified the assemblage and the accompanying moral and political considerations, by (1) conducting document research, and (2) using semi-structured interviews held in Dutch[13] with

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[12] This process has been inspired by the "Simple Model of Social Research" that Charles Ragin has displayed in his book *Constructing Social Research* as figure 3.1. According to him, social research constitutes of "a dialogue between **ideas** and **evidence**," whereby "images" and "analytic frames" function as mediators in order to understand the "representations of social life" (Ragin 1994:55-59, original emphasis).

[13] The questions/topics of these semi-structured interviews are included as an attachment.

purposively[14] sampled actors from the assemblage. As for the first stage, I have identified the larger picture of actors and discursive, political and social practices of the assemblage. Furthermore, I have discussed the statistical and mathematical details of the scenario thinking practice with a mathematician. During the second stage I zoomed in on the specific scenario thinking practice, with which I could triangulate the findings of the first stage. For this stage, I entered the research population through a military network. This entails that the unit of analysis consists of ten military advisors who know, and work within the regional scenario thinking practice in the Dutch risk and crisis assemblage. I supplemented this with one semi-structured interview with a person who is involved as a project coordinator in the scenario thinking practice at the national level[15].

During the interviews with the military officers I was working on two datasets. The first dataset focused on the role of the military officer in the security region and was carried out for the Dutch Ministry of Defense (MoD). The second half of the interview dealt with the scenario thinking practice. The reason I interviewed the respondents about two different subjects in one interview was that it was in terms of time more feasible for respondents to do one interview, instead of two separate interviews. This could be seen as a disadvantage, because the total time for the two topics was eventually shorter than if I had done two separate interviews. Furthermore, if questions of one dataset were considered as sensitive, this could have been of influence for the other dataset.

I have met all informants, with the exception of one[16], in the privacy of their offices. Visiting them in their working environment was useful to see how they were embedded within the security region. All the interviewers were moreover granted anonymity and spoke with consent, which I obtained verbally on tape beforehand and written per E-mail afterwards. In addition, the informants were asked if the interviews could be recorded. With the exception of one[17], none of the participants made any objections to this. An advantage of recording interviews is that the possibility exists to write down the whole interview text through intelligent verbatim. I shared this text with the informants and gave them the opportunity to debrief and evaluate their answers.

Throughout my thesis I refer to the informants with Dutch pseudonyms in order to guarantee their anonymity, while maintaining the personal and Dutch character. In addition, I use their quotes to illustrate my observations. These quotes reflect patterns or exceptions in data, but I do not quote all my

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[14] With purposively sampled I mean actors that take actively part in the scenario thinking practice. In the case of this research these were military advisors working in security regions and a scenario thinking project coordinator of the National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism (NCTV).

[15] This person worked as a project coordinator on scenario thinking at the NCTV: the organization that is built around the National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism.

[16] Due to logistical reasons it was more convenient to meet each other in a quiet area of a restaurant.

[17] The policy of the NCTV is to not allow recordings. Hence the interview with the project coordinator on the national level of scenario thinking could not be recorded.

informants. If quotes contained geographical locations, I removed these, since locations of operations are classified information.

Limitations and opportunities

A common complaint about case study research is: how can one generalize from one single empirical example? A case study approach will not provide statistical data and therefore, a statistical generalization would not be valid (Boeije 2010:181). However, some argue, through the amount of qualitatively generated data, a rich and lively picture can be generated which still can provide valuable insights (Nichols 2000:13).

The next question is then, is it possible to generalize to the extent of theoretical propositions, creating external validity by embedding the study into the larger theoretical debates on assemblage, neoliberalism and the privacy-security dichotomy? For a theoretical generalization it is important to purposively choose the case and its sample (Boeije 2003:181). This study focuses, for reasons such as scope, time and interviewee access opportunities (military network), mostly on the military officers in the security regions. The different organizational culture[18] military advisors are used to, could be of influence on their answers and is therefore a possible limitation to this research. Eventually, an increased theoretical external validity could only be created if further research is conducted on civil counterparts and with a larger amount of cases to test and refine theory inductively (Boeije 2003:181).

One specific limitation of this research is the focus on the practices within the assemblage. Even though it is a good thing to demarcate an area of study when having limited time, the specific focus on persons who were *actively involved* in the scenario thinking practice creates a possibility of excluding critiques of those who are silenced or excluded from the assemblage and scenario thinking practice (for instance activists or legal advocates). I am well aware that as an academic, and as a result of certain choices, your role is never neutral and also politicized. Therefore, statements or critiques on the scenario thinking practice, other than derived from secondary literature, are not directly illustrated through data derived from interviews.

Lastly, due to the contingent, transient character of the assemblage analytic, a description or representation of an assemblage is nothing more than a snapshot in time. As I argued earlier in this introduction, a shifting terrain or another angle of vision causes the assemblage to be in constant motion. Due to the specific context and timing a case study takes place in – things can be politicized and never take place in a social vacuum – this study will not make any generalizations of the scenario thinking in, for instance, other countries. Furthermore, it cannot state anything about the experience of

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[18] For a thorough analysis of organizational structures and cultures of both military and classic organizations, see Rizzo et al. 1970:150-1.

civil actors in the scenario thinking practice at the regional level since they have not been included in the unit of analysis. Hence, the main purpose of this study has been to *understand* how is dealt with moral and political considerations within the scenario thinking practice in the security regions, and why this is happening the way it is, but the above mentioned limitations should be kept in mind while reading.

Having introduced the theoretical framework with its key concepts, as well as the relevance and design of this study with its limitations, opportunities and objectives, I will present in the next chapter a historical account of the security, risk and crisis developments, as well as a rough map of the Dutch risk and crisis assemblage.

1. The development of security governance: a new risk-mentality

This chapter shapes the context of this study's case by describing briefly the Dutch security landscape in the context of critical security studies. Subsequently, based on the context and the historical account, I introduce more specifically a rough map of the assemblage of the Dutch risk and crisis management in relation to the scenario thinking practice.

1.1 The Security Landscape and the assemblage

"International security is not what it used to be, at least in the treatment it receives from scholars at the forefront in the innovative theorizing of what has come to be referred to as 'global security governance'" (Schouten 2014:84). According to Schouten, international security traditionally referred to the "interactions between the security apparatuses of monolithic states" (2014:84). However, security has moved away from such "state-centric arrangements" and towards "a more diffuse aggregate picture" due to the departure from the Westphalian State system towards the more globalized and heterogeneous landscape in the post-Cold War period (Ong and Collier 2005:17; Schouten 2014:84).

In the case of the Netherlands, a similar perception of international security and states as monolithic apparatuses, can be identified. Scholtens, in her article on controlled collaboration in Disaster and Crisis Management in the Netherlands, gives a comprehensive and detailed historical account of the developments in the disaster and crisis management environment. She describes the traditional form of security by analyzing the post second World War period. At that time, considerations on risks in the Netherlands were dominated by a fear of war, or the threat of war, with a possible combination with natural disasters (Scholtens 2008:196). This perception became eventually the foundation for the *Bescherming Bevolking* (protection of the population) as part of the Dutch system of "civic defense" (van der Boom 2000 in Scholtens 2008:196). This system, ran by military lines, functioned as the first disaster management organization and the primary task of the *Bescherming Bevolking* was offering protection and support to the Dutch population during and after a war (Scholtens 2008:196).

In the late 1960s, one experienced, among other things, greater levels of industrialization. Scholtens sees this as one of the reasons for a new development in the perception of threats and security. It became clear that a more intensive use of roads could cause large-scale incidents where neither the *Bescherming Bevolking* nor the regular emergency services would be prepared for. A new regionally organized disaster management organization was therefore needed: for peace-time disasters *and* large-scale accidents in wartime. A bottom-up reorganization was realized and in the early 1980s the *Bescherming Bevolking* was incorporated in the newly launched *Reorganisatie Rampenbestrijding* (disaster management reorganization). One realized that the distinction between wartime and peace

time disasters was no longer needed, and the organization needed to be able to cope with every risk that represented a threat to society. Therefore, the primary objective became the creation of "a new administrative and organizational structure for dealing with disasters" (Scholtens 2008:196).

Due to the fact that decentralization might impede on good levels of collaboration, doubts were raised if the fire brigade, police, ambulance and medical services should be made responsible for disaster management (van der Boom 2000 in Scholtens 2008:196-7). After all, the intention of this new form of disaster management was the acting of the independent emergency organizations as one single entity. Collaboration was key to that. Due to raised doubts if collaboration would actually occur, the 1985 Disasters and Major Accidents Act was eventually imposed from above making coordination and collaboration compulsory. In this way, one argued, better solutions could be offered to the occurrence of inadequate coordination between the partners (Scholtens 2008:197). The terms proposed in that the Disasters and Major Accidents Act are still of influence today and can be seen as the foundation for the wider context of the collaboration-discourse in the system of disaster response.

When the Cold War headed towards its ending, the post-Cold War perception of international security moved away from seeing the states as monolithic (Schouten 2014:84). In the Dutch crisis management system, this led to a new form of disaster response. The idea that one organization is responsible for one kind of event was discarded (Brainich von Brainich Felth 2004:12; Scholtens 2008:197) and instead, a multidisciplinary collaboration expanded, with the *incorporation of crisis management* (Scholtens 2008:197, my emphasis). Note that in the Netherlands a difference is made between a *disaster* and a *crisis*. Whereas the former refers to all classical mayor incidents, such as floods or accidents with chemical transports, the latter refers to man-made incidents: for instance, disturbing the public order or terrorism.

Borrowing from a criminological discourse, I noticed that in the post-Cold War period, the governance of security is supported by "a new risk mentality" (Dupont 2004:77; Rose 2000:332; Garland 1996:450-1). This, as an addition to the already existing "punitive mentality" is a future-oriented rationality in the security governance. This rationality uses statistical techniques and calculations and translates undesired future events to the present, in order to govern or administer heterogeneous actors and actions in the service of that governing ambition (Rose 2000:332). Garland, similarly mentions calculations that are directed no longer to the individual perpetrator, but to the prevention and reduction of opportunities for the potential perpetrator (1996:451-2). This requires early identification of opportunities, as well as a responsible attitude from non-perpetrator citizens. While both Rose and Garland have a criminological focus as empirical example of respectively the United States and the United Kingdom, I suggestively argue that this shift is also noticeable in the crisis management field in the Netherlands, due to the inclusion of man-made incidents.

Developments in the Netherlands started as a result of evaluations of crises such as the attacks on the World Trade Centre towers in New York on 11 September 2001, the war with Iraq in 2003, the bird flu and the threat of the SARS epidemic. The most important development is the shift in the attention being paid to risks[19]. Parallel to the developments regarding disaster response, the government worked on a policy for crisis management, identifying possible future risks. This is eventually laid out in the Crisis Management Policy 2004-2007 (CMP),[20] causing the Dutch practices and policies regarding crisis management to be *in flux* (Brainich 2011:4). From traditional threats such as a flood, the new risk mentality now focuses on *all* threats which until recently were not, or to a limited extent, on the political agenda.

In the CMP one argues that the management of future crises especially benefits from early identification of potential crises. According to the CMP this requires scenario-development with:

> "a permanent staff capacity at the national level with related competencies. This involves regular monitoring of trends in crisis, conducting strategic analyses of threats and vulnerabilities, and the development of possible scenarios. Thereby, the attention is focused on interagency and interdisciplinary aspects, since this is considered to be the "Achilles heel[21]" of the crisis management structure. More than before, the dependence on the chain of critical infrastructure gets attention and in addition, the international dimension (European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization) receives a more active role through active participation of relevant coordination centers."[22]

I argue that the development of scenarios add to the similar risk mentality that was identified in the criminological accounts. To illustrate, besides the CMP, also the Promoting Quality of Disaster Response Act was accepted in 2004[23], as well as the proposal of the Dutch government on the need for security regions[24]. The first one highlights the need for risk-inventories, upon which further policies and plans are based. These policies are updated regularly, leading to a certain cycle of risk-inventories[25]. Even though this act only contained changes of existing laws, the focus on risk and scenarios is now laid down

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[19] Note the change in the naming of policies. First: the Disaster Response Policy 2000-2004 (Kamerstukken II 1999/2000, 26956, nrs. 1–2), which was followed up by: Crisis Management Policy 2004-2007 (Kamerstukken II 2003/2004, 29668).

[20] Kamerstukken II 2003/2004, 29668 nr. 1., p. 5.

[21] With the 'Achilles heel' one refers to a weak spot in spite of overall strength. It is from Greek mythological origin.

[22] Kamerstukken II 2003/2004, 29668 nr. 1., p. 24.

[23] Kamerstukken II, 2002/2003, 28644, nr. 3, p. 1.

[24] Kamerstukken II, 2003/2004, 29517, nr. 1.

[25] Kamerstukken II, 2002/2003, 28644, nr. 3, p. 4.

in law. For instance, the introduction of the provincial risk map (Brainich 2011:4), as well as the question of receiving support that is based upon regional risk-assessments are included.

The viewpoint on the security regions sketches bottlenecks and renewed perspectives on the disaster and crisis structure. This once again emphasizes how mandatory regional risk assessments are needed in order to tackle the identified problems. Furthermore, the focus on multidisciplinary collaboration between partners of the disaster and crisis management increases due to for instance, the multidisciplinary management plans.[26] In sum, the answer to the identified problems is the combination of the improvement of the "classical" disaster response organizations, the focus on scenario development and risk assessments for "modern" crises, and the new multidisciplinary structures created through security regions.

The most important development that adds to the new risk discourse, however, is the acceptance of the National Security Strategy (SNV) by the government in 2005, and the implementation of it in 2007 (Ministry of Security and Justice 2007:7). Most important, because with the implementation of this strategy, the official guides on *working with scenarios, risk assessments and capacities as part of the national security strategy* were published. Secondly, and most importantly, based upon these scenarios and risk assessments this national strategy seemingly determines the direction of most other actors and actions working on risk and crisis management. An example of this is the regional risk assessment that security regions are obligated to conduct. These assessments are based upon scenarios and accompanying risks which are identified and prioritized for the SNV (Ministry of Security and Justice, 2009-13-14). One could thus argue that through the topics that are prioritized at the national level, the security governance at the local level is influenced too.

The focus on scenarios and risks is part of what is referred to as the "all-hazard approach" (Handreiking Regionaal Risicoprofiel 2009:II-7). This can be best understood as a further expansion of the classical disaster response mechanisms to crisis management. A clear description is provided in the guide for the regional risk profile that states that the "new risk-thinking" aims for a "paradigm change" and will have far reaching consequences for policies and educational forms in security regions and partners dealing with crisis management (Handreiking Regionaal Risicoprofiel 2009:I-19).

Eventually, the realization of the security regions took place in October 2010, while the development of scenarios and risk assessments had already started earlier as preparation. With the implementation of the security region, the beginning of becoming one single regional administrative management body started.[27] Furthermore, with the implementation of the Wvr, security regions are obligated to present a new security policy every four years. This policy is based on the so-called risk-

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[26] Wet Veiligheidsregio's 2010. Paragraph 2. Article 8-24.
[27] Kamerstukken II, 2006/2007, 31117, nr. 3, p. 1-2.

profile. The risk-profile consists of an overview of the risks that can lead to a fire, disaster or crisis, an overview of the different types of fires, disasters, and crises that may occur in the security region, and an analysis in which the impact and probability of the consequences of the identified types of fires, disasters and crises are scrutinized[28].

With the introduction of risk profiles, and their qualitative and statistical techniques for appraising risks properly, the criminological risk rationality that I described earlier in this chapter, can now be fully recognized in the Dutch risk and crisis assemblage as well. This risk-mentality, needing an enormous amount of information which is a resourceful operation, plausibly explains the focus on the need for collaboration. While collaboration implies a genuine cooperation, I prefer to see collaborations as parties to the risk and crisis assemblage. In order to provide a better image of these parties, the next section introduces a rough map of some actors that are active in the Dutch risk and crisis assemblage. This is a rough map since for the practice of scenario thinking, not all actors are relevant. Furthermore, because of the contingent and transient character of an assemblage, this is a snap shot in time.

1.2 Dutch risk and crisis assemblage

With the arrival of the security regions in the Netherlands, a cooperation is supposedly established between a heterogeneous set of actors. The partners of the security region, thus important and contributing to the scenario thinking practice, are police, fire brigade, medical assistance during crises and disasters (GHOR), and municipalities.[29] Other actors that deserve to be mentioned in relation to the scenario thinking practice are listed below.

Civil military cooperation

The civil military cooperation with the Dutch Royal Armed Forces is secured through the Wvr, which contributes to the realization of the third main task of the Armed Forces: support to civil authorities for law enforcement, disaster relief, humanitarian aid, both nationally and internationally. In contrast to the other two main tasks that are laid down in the Dutch constitution,[30] the third main task is defined by the Armed Forces themselves in the *Defensie nota* 2000.[31] This hints at an expansion of main tasks to increase the legitimacy and right to exist in relation budget cuts.

Since the Armed Forces are deployed a number of times in small crises and disasters before the start of the Wvr (Haas 2007:3), the Dutch Armed Forces are relevant to the risk and crisis assemblage.

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[28] Wet Veiligheidsregio, Paragraph 3, Article 15.
[29] Wet Veiligheidsregio 2010. Paragraph 2. Article 8-24.
[30] Dutch Constitution: Chapter 5, Paragraph 1, Article 97 *Krijgsmacht*.
[31] The third main task, the national task, is labeled as one of the three main tasks since 2000 in the *Defensienota*. Before 2000 the national task was described as a secondary or additional task. Kamerstukken II, 1999/2000, 26900 nr. 2.

Furthermore, the military's permanent presence with military advisors in the security regions,[32] makes the Armed Forces also relevant to the scenario thinking practice. Furthermore, the agreements on the intensification of the cooperation[33] and the role of the Armed Forces from "safety net" to active and "structural crisis partner,"[34] came to expression in different covenants and the producing of a catalogue[35] with all the available capacities of the Armed Forces to the civil partners.

Internationalization of crisis management.

Besides the participation and interests of the Dutch Armed Forces, also at the international level there occur changes what have been labeled as a "progressive internationalization of crisis management" (Brainich 2011:4). This is both the case regarding the risks, as well as regarding the governments that are involved. An example of this focus on international partners is given in the CMP. According to them scenario-developing needs to involve more than before, "the international dimension (European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization) [...]through active participation of relevant coordination centers" (2004:24). According to Brainich, this international focus only leads to unnecessary complexity, which is at odds with the need for simplicity and transparency in crises (2011:4). Therefore, one can conclude that a tension exists in the internationalization of crisis management and the scenarios that are developed in relation to it.

Private security industry

Nowadays, private and hybrid organizations occupy a larger place in what has become marked as a market in which different parties continuously explore new opportunities (Dupont 2004:77). Hence, an actor in the risk and crisis assemblage that is increasingly more important are private security companies. Waard, in his article on the Dutch private security industry, this can be ascribed to the difficulty of dividing public and private space. The grey area in between those – the semipublic places – are difficult to classify as either the one or the other. Think of for instance surveillance in shopping malls (1999:51). According to Johnston and Shearing the growth of private security is intimately linked to "the contemporary dominance of neo-liberal modes of governance" (2003 in: Abrahamsen and Williams 2009:3), which is given an illustration of by Waard. He mentions the emergence of government policies that find "more effective and cheaper ways to deal with security and protection by inviting private contractors to bid competitively" (1991:146). With the shift away from the welfare state and a state-centric approach, neo-liberalism promotes a shift towards a more diffuse model of government, giving

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[32] Kamerstukken II, 2006/2007, 31117, nr. 3, p. 37
[33] Audit Function Defense & Inspection Security and Justice, 2013. *Civiel–militaire samenwerking: Eindmeting 2013.* Pp. 46-47.
[34] Bestuursafspraken inzake intensivering civiel militaire samenwerking, 2007:1.
[35] Ministry of Defense 2015. *Catalogus Nationale Operaties.*

way to private security companies to act alongside the other providers of security (Abrahamsen and Williams 2009:4).

2. Filtering out moral and political considerations

In this chapter I zoom in on some examples of moral and political considerations in the scenario thinking practice. Furthermore, I will look into the practices identified by Li and how these, interlinked with others that I have identified, occur in the practice of scenario thinking in service of filtering out moral and political considerations.

2.1 Moral and political considerations within the scenario thinking practice

I argue that the practice of scenario thinking is highly politicized and includes many moral considerations. Scenarios from the scenario thinking practice are the present embodiment of possible future risks. Regardless whether this future is, or is not going to happen, the decisions made for it always have a moral outcome. For instance, the decisions about life and death, not uncommon in the security and crisis management, are inevitably morally charged. In this section I will further elaborate on examples of political and moral considerations.

In any attempt that involves understanding moral considerations, one should be aware of the underlying assumptions and the non-consensus that exist in the studies to the moral realm. Due to experimental designs that often take place in an artificial setting, understanding moral considerations and theories on morality comes with many caveats. Casebeer and Churchland have listed some of the reasons for possible caveats, of which the most important one is that moral judgements are social. They never take place in a social vacuum. Moral considerations are more often than not led by emotion, and in a rich (social) context – formed by (perceived) rights, duties and obligations – moral judgments form together a complex of neural, cognitive and social interactions (Casebeer and Churchland 2003:186-8). Hence, due to these complex interactions, it is difficult to fully capture all the sides of moral considerations. This should be kept in mind while reading this chapter.

In order to delimitate the moral and political questions throughout this research, I distilled moral and political patterns in the scenario thinking practice that appeared in the data when discussing the topic of scenario thinking during semi-structured interviews with military officers active in the scenario thinking practice. These will function as examples throughout this research and can be classified as the *acceptance of risks* and its relation to *the costs and benefits*.

The first moral consideration zooms in on the acceptance of residual risks. This is related to moral questions such as: whose risks do you accept? What are worthy, and what are less worthy lives, places or buildings? These questions are automatically political considerations too, since the acceptance of residual risks takes place at the intersection of costs and benefits. It is political, since decisions are made on budget: how much should or is security allowed to cost? The final answer to this question

automatically determines whose risks you are and are not willing to accept. In the case of the scenario thinking practice in the Netherlands, the acceptance of the residual risk is a fixed number: "10^{-6} is the norm of safe or secure. The calculations continue until 10^{-7}, which is ten times more secure than the norm."[36] Ruud, who explained me this then asked me this question: "should you then continue until 10^{-8}?" And answered the question himself: "I do not know."[37]

The question of residual risk is intrinsically linked with the value of human lives. Here, a clear contrast seems to exist between the peculiarity and the acceptance of translating human lives into a value expressed in euros. Military officer Luuk, for instance, clearly acknowledged the difficulty of comparing human lives with financial or reputational damage: "we have to do it all, but it is very difficult to weigh or consider it. Human lives or reputations cannot be expressed in terms of finances. It is very tricky."[38] However, as this quote and the quote at the beginning of this thesis also shows, is that one is aware of the peculiarity of the moral question about the value of human lives, but also experiences it as an operational necessity of the calculation. This justification could arguably be seen as a coping behavior mechanism.

Besides a financially motivated moral and political consideration on the intersection of costs and benefits, a political consideration also depends on timing: the social momentum that does or does not exist for a political decision. An example of this was given by a military officer working in the security region. As representative of the Royal Dutch Armed Forces, the officer mentioned the use of a Raven in certain scenarios.[39] Hypothetically, the military officer Stefan presented a political consideration of privacy: "if you just had a week with a lot of media coverage on privacy issues and drones, you are a bit more hesitant in using a Raven in an operation than during another week. It is called a political antenna."[40] Furthermore, the momentum is determined by the political actor that has to take the decision during an actual crisis. Stefan stated: "that is the thing with the regional risk profile: are you dealing with a political actor who *dares* to take a decision quickly on the basis of what we have all fabricated with each other?"[41] What this example illustrates, is the social character of the moral and

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[36] Author's interview on 1 May 2015 with military officer Ruud working in a security region. Interview was held at the office of the military officer at the security region office. An example of the norm of risks is given in the 2013 Act "Decision external security transport routes" (*Besluit externe veiligheidtransportroutes)*. Paragraph 2, article 4.

[37] Author's interview on 1 May 2015 with military officer Ruud working in a security region. Interview was held at the office of the military officer at the security region office.

[38] Author's interview on 10 April 2015 with military officer Luuk working in a security region. Interview was held in a quiet room at the security region.

[39] A Raven is an Unarmed Aerial Vehicle (popularly known as a drone) that is able to make detailed pictures by scanning a certain area.

[40] Author's interview on 6 May 2015 with military officer Stefan working in a security region. Interview was held at a colleague's office in another, neighboring security region.

[41] Author's interview on 6 May 2015 with military officer Stefan working in a security region. Interview was held at a colleague's office in another, neighboring security region.

political considerations an actor in the scenario thinking practice shows. The considerations do not take place in a social vacuum, hence the moral and political outcome may vary.

Besides a momentum, I argue that there exist other practices that possibly influence the moral and political outcome, by filtering out the considerations in the scenario thinking practice. In the next section, I will therefore present a rough map of practices that I have identified during my analysis of both policy documents and semi-structured interviews that aid filtering out moral and political considerations.

2.2 Practices within the scenario thinking practice

I have provisionally identified practices within the scenario thinking practice that are in service of filtering out moral and political considerations. These I distilled as general patterns from the interviews, the guides "working with scenarios, risk assessments and capacities as part of the national security strategy" and the guide regional risk profile. I sensitized features from studies in the social cognitive and moral realm to categorize the data patterns.

The first practice that I identify is **moral justification**, something that is coined by Bandura (1986:55) as a way of justifying "reprehensible conduct". This may seem obvious, since an important characteristic of an assemblage is the will to improve. Through moral justification, certain (perceived) immoral decisions are being made for a greater good. In the case of the Dutch risk and crisis assemblage, this means a more secure Netherlands. For instance, the implementation for the Security Regions Act was justified in the Brochure on the Security Regions Act as "a fundament for the organization of the disaster and crisis management with the aim *to offer an improved protection to civilians*" (Ministry of Security and Justice 2013a:6) . The justification here – protect citizens against risks – possibly distracts questions away from important debates on for instance boundaries of government and privacy.

The second practice that I identified can be labeled as **dehumanization** or **depersonalization**. This practice entails that those whose conduct is to be conducted by the assemblage are referred to in a non- or less human way. This practice, not uncommon during conflicts, is the process "whereby victims are excluded from the moral universe of the perpetrators" with the consequence that "they no longer deserve an ordinary treatment" (Kelman and Hamilton 1989 in Smeulers and Grünfeld 2011:101). Any immoral considerations are then easier to make. In the case of the scenario thinking practice the possible victims of scenarios are referred to in a nonhuman way in two different ways. First of all, the victims described in the scenarios are referred to as "T1, T2, T3 and T4" (Ministry of Security and Justice 2013b:53; Ministry of Security and Justice 2009:35). These terms are derived from emergency medicine, and are used to determine whether it is worth or not to treat a victim when you have limited medical capacities available (Ministry of Security and Justice 2013b:53; Ministry of Security and Justice 2009:35).

A second example of how possible victims are referred to is in financial terms. In order to compare and calculate with different kinds of consequences of a crisis, victims are expressed in financial terms. In one of the examples in the guide of working with scenarios, a male of 38 years with an average income and two children who would pass away, costs the Dutch society €160,000 per year (Ministry of Security and Justice 2009:38). This number is used in calculations and disappears in the eventual outcome[42]. Due to calculations with these numbers, every human aspect of a victim is taken away, hence I have termed this dehumanization.

A third practice that adds to filtering out moral and political considerations can be labeled **displacement or diffusion of responsibility**. Bandura, in his chapter on social cognitive theory describes that "[u]nder conditions of displacement of responsibility, people view their actions as springing from the dictates of others rather than their being personally responsible for them"(1989:56). Due to a certain chain of responsibility in the scenario thinking practice, it is easy to diffuse accountability for moral and political considerations. To illustrate, the different phases that take place within the scenario thinking practice are carried out by different working groups. During the first phase – describing scenarios – different ministries propose and develop scenarios. Some of those scenarios are then chosen to be further scrutinized. A second working group, consisting of "experts" then perform an impact and risk assessment of those identified scenarios. The department "Threats and Capacities" then performs according to a predetermined calculation method a test to determine the largest deviations. Lastly, a working group of again "relevant professionals" perform the capacity analysis. Throughout the process, results of each working group are presented to the interdepartmental working group national security, but decisions are made in the national security committee who eventually translates all the results into a policy advise (Ministry of Security and Justice 2009:12-13). What becomes clear from the above described process, is that the number of decisions that is made is diffused over different working groups and committees. Hence, moral and political considerations that are already filtered out in the first or second working group through for instance dehumanization, are not likely to become recognized as a moral consideration in a later stadium, thus making the moral consideration easier. In addition, earlier working groups are further removed from the actual policy decision, which could contribute to a decreased feeling of responsibility for the decision being made.

Besides the diffusion of responsibility, scenario thinking includes the practice of lengthening or prolonging the perceived **temporal immediacy**. This refers to "the length of time between the action and its consequences. An action that results in immediate negative consequences will cause a greater increase in moral intensity than an action for which the consequences are delayed" (Jones 1991 in:

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[42] Eventually, the outcome of a decision is a combination of calculations that include different aspects. When prioritizing the scenarios, one works with the final outcomes. This means that the initial aspects such as the human factor cannot be traced back.

Lincoln and Holmes 2011:57). In the case of the scenario thinking practice an absence of the above mentioned temporal immediacy adds to the filtering out of moral considerations. The consequences of actions in the scenario thinking practice are low. To illustrate, during the process of scenario thinking, one works with future horizons of up to twenty-five years (Ministry of Security and Justice 2009:19; Ministry of Security and Justice 2013b:38), and one is unsure whether the scenario will ever happen. Hence, there *seems* to be a long period of time between scenario-thinking and the actual consequence of scenario-thinking.

What is important to note, however, is that the temporal immediacy does not account only for the actual occurrence of the scenarios. It also accounts for the policy (advise) that is formulated on the basis of the scenario thinking practice. This time horizon is supposedly much shorter; according to the Wvr every four years when a renewed policy should be presented.[43] I am well aware of this fact, but during interviews, the focus was not brought on this consequence by interviewees. Even though I have not literally asked my interviewees about their perception of temporal immediacy, some interviewees did hint at it. When asked if it was okay or normal to discuss or talk with colleagues about the possible consequences of their decisions, military officer Pim stated: "of course, it is very crazy when you talk about potential injured or death victims; and to make a decision then, *to the extent you actually do* [make a decision]. That is very special."[44] The italicized part of the quote illustrates that this military officer questions the actual occurrence of the scenario and the consequences of his actions because he thought of that scenario. He seems not convinced to which extent his decisions have consequences.

This brings in the last practice that I want to discuss: the "**probability of effect**" which refers to "the likelihood that the predicted consequences and the expected level of harm/benefit will occur" (Jones 1991 in: Lincoln and Holmes 2011:58). If it is likely the consequences occur, the ethical nature of the moral considerations should increase. I argue however, that the above quote of military officer Pim shows that he seems not convinced that the consequences will happen as a result of his actions. In addition, another example links with the earlier described diffusion of responsibility: the probability of effect interrelates with diffusion of responsibility since eventually, the decision should also be made at the level of the politician. As mentioned earlier when discussing the socio-political momentum, Stefan mentioned this and stated: "that is the thing with the regional risk profile: are you dealing with a political actor that *dares* to take a decision quickly on the basis of what we have all fabricated with each other?"[45] The probability of effect of their actions seems through a dilution of liability no longer within the powers of the scenario thinking practitioner.

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[43] Wet Veiligheidsregio's 2010. Paragraph 3, Article 14.
[44] Author's interview 28 April 2015 with military officer Pim working in a security region. Interview was held at the office of the military officer at the police station/security region office.
[45] Author's interview on 6 May 2015 with military officer Stefan working in a security region. Interview was held at a colleague's office in another, neighboring security region.

Eventually, all of the above identified practices could be brought under the banner of decreasing the moral intensity. This term, initially coined by Thomas Jones (1991), refers to different characteristics[46] that possibly add to the increasing or decreasing of the ethical nature of the moral consideration. If the intensity overall increases, the awareness of the ethical nature should also increase (in: Lincoln and Holmes 2011:57). Even though more research is needed on this specific topic, a practice that could be generic to all assemblages, is the overarching label of the specific practices identified in this section: the decreasing of moral intensity.

For this thesis, I have zoomed in specifically on the scenario thinking practice. As I have argued earlier, this practice as a form of knowledge production through risk assessments, steers many other elements of the Dutch risk and crisis assemblage. But as a result of this delimitation it is hard to distinguish whether the practices that I have identified are generic to other assemblages, or if they are specific for the scenario thinking practice. In the next section I will combine and establish overlap between the practices of scenario thinking and the practices that were already identified by Li in her article on community forest management (2007:265).

2.3 Generic practices of assemblages

Li, in her article on community forest management provisionally identified six practices that she finds generic to any assemblage in general, being forging alignments, rendering technical, authorizing knowledge, managing failures and critiques, anti-politics, and reassembling (2007:265). Many of these practices can be identified in the scenario thinking practice and in the larger security and risk assemblage that is identified in chapter one. The practices however, partly overlap and arguably may be broken into other more detailed practices, that now stay hidden under larger overarching banners. In this section I will therefore propose clearer terms for the practices in order to reduce overlap between different practices.

The first practice that is identified by Li is "forging alignments". This is described as "the work of linking together the objectives of the various parties to an assemblage, both those who aspire to govern conduct and whose conduct is to be conducted" (2007:265). I have argued that the scenario thinking as a material means of knowledge production is about the (re)production of knowledge that is eventually presented in scenarios, risk diagrams and risk profiles of certain regions. The production of this knowledge adds to the decisions that are made about who, when and how one is ought to act upon certain scenarios of (in)security. In this way, the knowledge production eventually contributes to the

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[46] The six characteristics of moral intensity are: 'Magnitude of Consequences, Temporal Immediacy, Social Consensus, Proximity, Probability of Effect, and Concentration of Effect'(Jones 1991 in: Lincoln and Holmes 2011:57).

administering of individuals, institutions, expertise and resources that are in service of avoiding that specific scenario. An example of this is provided in the national security strategy. Here, one states that many threats and risks are larger than just regional or national risks. As a result, the strategy argues for international cooperation at both bilateral and multilateral levels. With the justification that countries depend on each other if they want to increase their resistance and resilience, the strategy aims at intensifying relations with countries that use similar methods to safeguard national security (Ministry of Security and Justice 2007:5). What this example illustrates, is that the national risk diagram and profile is arguably a means of how alignments are forged over the identified risks and the possible interventions in order to avoid that risk.

A second practice that is identified by Li and relevant for the practice of scenario thinking is "rendering technical." This is defined as the practice of "extracting from the messiness of the social world, with all the processes that run through it, a set of relations that can be formulated as a diagram in which problem (a) plus intervention (b) will produce (c); a beneficial result" (Li 2007:265). One could compare this the scenario thinking practice in the following way: (a) a future undesired event – a scenario –, plus (b) risk and capacity assessments will produce (c) the avoidance of that undesired future event or a future with less severe consequences. In sum, this practice describes the essence of scenario thinking practice.

The third practice that Li identifies is labeled "authorizing knowledge", which is, according to Li, the practice of "specifying the requisite body of knowledge; confirming enabling assumptions; containing critiques" (Li 2007:265). I propose to divide this practice into two practices that can be labeled authorizing knowledge and containing critiques, since the authorization, in the sense of letting somebody speak or let somebody be heard and deriving a certain objectivity from something labeled as knowledge involves different actions than containing critiques. I can illustrate this difference through the example of the scenario thinking practice.

The scenario thinking practice, with its qualitative origin, makes use of "expert opinions." During the three phases, experts and their knowledge is in this sense authorized and used for the creation of threat scenarios, while by referring to experts a certain objectivity or truth is derived from it. This can be illustrated through an elaborated appendix on the use of experts in the SNV (Ministry of Security and Justice 2009:73-76) as well as a section in the chapter "formats and background information" in SNV (Ministry of Security and Justice 2013b:103-104). According to the SNV, the use of expert opinions is "not only inevitable, but also essential for sufficient reliability, robustness and details in the development of a scenario, the scoring of the impact and probability and an inventory of required capabilities" (Ministry of Security and Justice 2013b:103). This is supported by many quotes that military officers made when asked about how I should imagine the meetings of the scenario thinking practice. For instance, military officer Pim, who took part in the updating of scenarios, stated that the project

coordinator invites different experts. This inviting process is very precise or "custom" work, where attention is paid to the backgrounds and knowledge of the experts.[47]

This brings up "anti-politics," which Li defines as the "reposing [of] political questions as matters of technique; closing down debate about how and what to govern and the distributive effects of particular arrangements by reference to expertise; [and] encouraging citizens to engage in debate while limiting the agenda" (2007:265) as a different practice. I suggest that this practice can be combined under the banner of authorizing knowledge and containing critiques. First of all, because reference to experts can be coined as authorizing knowledge, as I have argued earlier in this section. Secondly, as mentioned in the theoretical framework of this thesis, knowledge is not only "social" and "in our heads" (Srnicek 2014:41), but knowledge also has a material side to it, which comprises of technologies such as data collection tools and computer models. Hence, obtaining a certain authority by referring to the "social" knowledge (experts) is no different from referring to the "material" side of knowledge (technologies). The aim is the same: obtaining a certain objectivity or truth by referencing to an "authoritive" form of knowledge.

The practice of authorizing knowledge is easier to establish than the practice of containing critiques. After all, a contained critique could be hidden and is more difficult to expose. What one could expect is that critiques are contained by *not* inviting a certain expert. This is however not proven by the data. In contrast, when asked about who was or was not allowed to join the meetings on scenario thinking, some of the interviewees mentioned the possibility of putting forward an expert if they thought a relevant person was missing.

I therefore suggest another way to look at the practice of containing critiques. Namely, that of engaging in debate while limiting the agenda and closing down a debate, as defined under the banner of anti-politics. This could arguably be seen as an example of containing critiques. After all, closing down debate makes it impossible to contribute other or new critiques, and limiting the agenda provides the opportunity to leave off sensitive topics that might receive critiques. While not all military officers experienced containing critique during the scenario thinking practice, the following quote of military officer Luuk provides an example of containing critique by closing down a debate at the operational level of the scenario thinking practice:

"In a meeting we looked at what some of the scenarios were and we tried to reach consensus on the normative scenario." [...]

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[47] Author's interview on 28 April 2015 with military officer Pim working in a security region. Interview was held at the office of the military officer at the police station/security region office.

Author: "What happens if you cannot reach a consensus?"

"Well, I have seen cases where one just takes the lead and says: this is it. [...] The next meeting it was just kind of announced. That was not taken well by some people."[48]

The above quote shows that within the scenario thinking practice, there are apparently possibilities of closing down debate by cutting of threads. The above situation of closing down debate might occur because of "professional expertise", a term coined by Blau and Scott (1962 in: Rizzo et. al. 1970:151). When possessing professional authority, decisions can be enforced through collegial authority. Colleagues with an established reputation can consciously or unconsciously enforce their opinion on, in this case a certain scenario and by doing so containing other critiques. Another example that is possibly constructive in illustrating this form of containing critiques is through the following quote:

"There is not really a debate whether [the risk] is really as it is. It is more based on old experiences. One tends to follow the authorities in that field. [...] What I have felt, we tend to rely only on the knowledge and experience that are present during the meeting."[49]

This quote illustrates too that a (collegial) authority can consciously or unconsciously cause a containment of a critique by closing down debate or even by not opening it at all.

In contradiction to containing critique, another data pattern describes the decisions that are made during the scenario thinking practice as an "average decision" or based on a "shared view or common denominator."[50] This reminds of a practice identified by Li as "managing failures and contradictions". According to Li, this entails "presenting [a] failure as the outcome of rectifiable deficiencies; smoothing out contradictions so that they seem superficial rather than fundamental; [and] devising compromises" (2007:265). While the decisions are not so much about failures per se, the fact that the decisions, and hence the moral and political considerations are seen as something average. An example was given by military officer Sven. He mentioned that the GHOR and the police, two partners of the security region were disagreeing on a certain impact of the evacuation of a home for the elderly. The GHOR found, based on their operational experience, that many risks exist when evacuation takes place. Eventually, the police and the GHOR devised a compromise through exchanging operational

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[48] Author's interview on 10 April 2015 with military officer Luuk working in a security region. Interview was held in a quiet room at the security region.
[49] Author's interview on 6 May 2015 with military officer Stefan working in a security region. Interview was held at the office of the military officer at the police station/security region.
[50] E.g. Author's interview on 30 April 2015 with military officer Sven working in a security region. Interview was held in a conference room at the police station/security region of the military officer.

experience. This shows, that having a different background, can eventually decide how the scoring of risk, probability and impact proceeds.

The last practice that Li identified is labeled "reassembling", which constitutes of "grafting on new elements and reworking old ones; deploying existing discourses to new ends; [and] transposing the meanings of key terms" (2007:265). Due to the limited scope of this research, and the thorough discursive analysis that should be conducted in order to say anything substantive about this practice, this thesis will refrain from making any claims on the practice of reassembling.

In sum, within the scenario thinking practice decisions are being made about who, when and how one is ought to act upon certain scenarios of (in)security. The different practices contribute to making the heterogeneous elements of the risk and crisis assemblage around the scenario thinking practice more coherent and straightforward than they actually might be. While some of the practices relate clearly to the filtering out of moral and political considerations, some of them also have other functions. The overarching practice of decreasing moral intensity, might be provisionally identified as a practice that functions alongside the practices that were identified by Li. However, a better understanding of the reassembling practice and its relation to the Dutch risk an crisis assemblage is needed first, since overlap with the decreasing moral intensity is possible.

In the next chapter I will seek a provisional answer to the question of why moral and political considerations are filtered out of the scenario thinking practice in the Dutch risk and crisis assemblage.

3. Operational necessity and government through self-responsibilization

Having focused on moral and political considerations and practices specific for scenario thinking, as well as in the larger risk and crisis assemblage in the previous chapter, this tentative chapter will explore the question why moral and political considerations are filtered out on two different levels. The reason for these two different levels is that some explanations can be clearly labeled as having a practical function at the level of the scenario thinking practitioner, which I will refer to as the operational level. Other plausible explanations fall within wider societal developments and contexts and will focus on the larger risk and crisis assemblage. In the first section the focus is kept on the scenario thinking practice. The subsequent section will then position the practices in a larger societal picture and builds on a vocabulary of the governing technology of neoliberalism.

For reasons of scope and time, this thesis has focused very specifically on the practices within the scenario thinking practice and within the larger security and risk assemblage. Due to this specific focus, the answer to the question as of why moral and political considerations are filtered out is purposively kept exploratory. Hence, the results and patterns shown in this chapter are tentative, which should be kept in mind while reading.

3.1 The scenario thinking practice at the operational level

The first reason why moral and political consideration are filtered out of the scenario thinking practice at the operational level is simultaneously an illustration that moral and political considerations are not filtered out completely. According to interviewees, there occurs a certain necessary "numbing" of feelings in order to make the practice "**workable**." Simultaneously, this leads to the tension between allowing a certain gut feeling or dismissing it. This tension is an illustration that the moral and political considerations are not filtered out completely. The tension between welcoming and dismissing feelings is arguably an indication for the presence of moral and political considerations.

This can be illustrated through the occurrence of letting feelings in during the prioritization and scoring of scenarios. For instance, interviewees mentioned a certain "gut feeling" that played a role during the phase of prioritizing scenarios. When asked which factors played an important role during the prioritizing of scenarios, military officer Ruud answered: "Oh, that is difficult, it is usually an affair of feelings."[51] Another interviewee, military officer Thomas, described the scoring of impact versus risk

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[51] Author's interview on 1 May 2015 with military officer Ruud working in a security region. Interview was held at the office of the military officer at the security region office.

by licking his finger and holding it in the air.[52] This is usually interpreted as taking place without any valid substantiation or justification. This opinion, however is not shared by everybody. Pim described the process as a *mediation* between feelings and arguments[53]. In sum, the role assigned to valid arguments during prioritizing is not acknowledged by every interviewee and arguably differs per situation. What is shown in the data however, is the general pattern that feelings do play a role in the morally charged process of prioritizing scenarios and hence are not dismissed completely.

In contrast to the role assigned to welcoming feelings, a second clear pattern is the need for *dismissing* feelings. One military officer described the dismissing of feelings as a necessity in the context of setting boundaries in the acceptance of a certain risk. This links with the balance between the human and the financial aspect, a difficult moral and political question. The officer Ruud described it as: "the longer you… You get a kind of numbing. I don't want to call it becoming numb, but you deal differently with the materials. You become more detached. And you must, otherwise you will constantly push to the limit."[54] While first describing it as a necessity, later on during the interview this necessity also seemed a *coping behavior mechanism*: "one realizes that you have to filter out the feeling. You must look at the numbers and ignore the feelings."[55] Whether it is a coping behavior mechanism or not, the dismissing of feelings makes the practice of scenario thinking and its accompanying moral and political considerations more workable.

This is not in line with what Collier and Ong aptly notice: in an environment that focuses on risks and unknown future events, policy choice cannot be "simply data-driven" (2005:14). According to them, the role of ethical dispositions, feelings, stomach aches, hunches or gut feelings should not be underestimated. Examination of these feelings or hunches appeared to be derived from domains of expertise, pointing at the understanding that the "social realm [is] not in alignment with the representations generated by the application of the reigning statistical mode of analysis" (Holmes and Marcus 2005 in Collier and Ong 2005:14). Thus, a reaction through a certain gut feeling occurs and should be allowed to let the policies be better informed.

A second plausible explanation as of why moral and political considerations are filtered out is at the political level of **accountability.** For reasons of accountability, it is of utmost importance to complete the by-law-defined three phases of the scenario thinking practice. Not only because local governments

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[52] Author's interview on 5 May 2015 with military officer Thomas working in a security region. Interview was held at the office of the military officer at the police station/security region office.

[53] Author's interview on 28 April 2015 with military officer Pim working in a security region. Interview was held at the office of the military officer at the police station/security region office.

[54] Author's interview on 1 May 2015 with military officer Ruud working in a security region. Interview was held at the office of the military officer at the security region office.

[55] Author's interview on 1 May 2015 with military officer Ruud working in a security region. Interview was held at the office of the military officer at the security region office.

are legally obliged to complete the risk assessments and policies,[56] but also because the risk profiles, policies, and renewed resources or capacities can be a valid substantiation for (local) governments to illustrate that they did everything within their power to make sure the citizens of their region were safe. The security regions are a form of extended local government,[57] hence a political actor such as a mayor is motivated to make the right decisions at times of crises that are mediated between his political preference and accompanying followers as well as the interests of the region in general.

This interlinks with **objectivity**, derived by reference to experts and statistics which makes the scenario thinking practice an "evidence-based" policy. The scenario thinking practice claims to be based on objective and consistent calculations, where subjective numbers are linked to qualitative data in order to calculate with it. The statistics that are used during the calculations, are supposedly[58] based on experiences, but one of the interviewees referred to this as contributing to the "creation of an illusion of security"[59]. Regardless if it is an illusion or not, political actors can refer to the objectivity of "evidence-based" policy, which is a third plausible explanation why moral and political considerations are filtered out.

An example and argument for why this objectivity and the dismissing of moral and political considerations is needed, is given on the factsheet of the NCTV and the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations on the national risk assessment methodology (2009). It states:

"In the risk assessment the threats that came forward during the thematic deepening of the scenarios are measured on one yardstick on the basis of a predetermined model: the national risk assessment method. Scenarios include for instance floods, pandemics or man-made incidents. For the methodology of the national risk assessment, the scenarios are described in a uniform way, underpinned by numbers and aggregated. In this way, the risks for the national security will be similar and comparable. Now, ranking to policy priorities becomes possible."

As one can read in the above excerpt of the factsheet, different sorts of threats for crises and disasters need to be compared for prioritizing policies to become possible. This impossible task is now perceived

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[56] Wet Veiligheidsregio, Paragraph 3, Article 14-16.
[57] Wet Veiligheidsregio, Paragraph 3, Article 9-10.
[58] Supposedly, since many interviewees acknowledged the tension between experience-based statistics, while the Netherlands as a country did not have any real disasters or crises in a long time. Hence, the statistics that are based on experiences, are this only to a certain extent. The expectation value within calculations such as disasters or crises per year is only valid if you have large amounts of data (for instance, N=5000, instead of N=1). If you have one accident every twenty years, it is too little to actually get valid outcomes of your statistical calculations. This is one plausible explanation, why the use of expert opinions is such an important element within the national security strategy and calculations.
[59] Author's interview on 10 April 2015 with military officer Luuk working in a security region. Interview was held in a quiet room at the security region.

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as possible through the "objectivity" obtained by the consistent method of the national security strategy. The fact that all the different threats can now be measured on one yardstick, makes the different scenarios comparable and therefore workable for policy makers. A similar justification one can find in the first national security strategy (Ministry of Security and Justice 2007:4):

> "With the method described in the strategy, the government will be better able to determine which threats endanger our national security and how to anticipate on those threats, regardless of its origin and its nature. In addition, the process makes it possible not only for the government to make more informed choices in determining priorities and acting upon them, but also to view these choices in conjunction."

What the above excerpt shows, is an example of a justification for the scenario thinking practice and the national security strategy. The method flags a certain objectivity derived from the scenario thinking practice that helps describing the threats, "regardless of its origin and its nature", in this case for "more informed choices." If feelings, or moral and political considerations were allowed in the scenario thinking practice, the scenario thinking practice could not have been labeled objective, or, evidence-based. In order to claim a certain objectivity, the moral and political considerations need to be filtered out.

The focus on the objectivity obtained by the scenario thinking practice brings up the last reason that arguably could explain the filtering out of moral and political considerations at the level of the scenario thinking practice. This reason could be labeled as a way of **redefining successes and failures and scaling down expectations.** In his article on strategies of crime control, Garland describes this as a strategy as a reaction to criticism, "by scaling down expectations, redefining their aims, and seeking to change the criteria by which failure and success are judged" (Garland 1996:458). The scenario thinking practice lends itself well for justification by authorities to quickly point to limitations and successes of their contribution to the management of risks. The logic is in the ability of relying on the perceived and promoted objective character of the scenario thinking practice. If nothing happens, it is because of the successes of the scenario thinking. If something happens – a failure of the scenario thinking practice – one can refer to the exception to the rule. The statistical, objective character offers an explanation of the anomaly that occurs within statistics. Hence, this is a way of redefining a failure, as well as a way of scaling down the expectations of what one could expect of the scenario thinking practice and the national security strategy.

3.2 The scenario thinking practice in the larger risk and crisis assemblage

The scenario thinking practice is a practice within the larger Dutch risk and crisis assemblage and can therefore be seen as only a small part or element of the assemblage. This section involves the larger risk and crisis assemblage and developments in the Dutch society in order to provide a plausible explanation of why the moral and political considerations are filtered out.

In their article on global security assemblages, Abrahamsen and Williams explain the shift of the security governance throughout the world as a rearticulation of global and national structures. States have actively contributed to what seems forces eroding the state itself (2009:3). However, seen in this light that has been coined as "disassembling the state" by Saskia Sassen, this is not the case. She argues that by approaching phenomena such as the rearticulation of the global and national structure as the disassembling of the state, it is possible to register all the various ways in which states actively participate in setting up new frameworks for new forms of (security) governance (2006:234 in Abrahamsen and Williams 2009:3). I suggest to approach the practice of scenario thinking as a technical embodiment of such active contribution of a state.

The rearticulation of the national state, is something that can also be illustrated on the Dutch national-local level. What I first noticed is the focus on the security regions as a form of extended local government. As Allen and Cochrane in their article on assemblages of state power mentioned, government is all about *intensive* reach. Reach of government, in this sense, refers to "its pervasive quality; the ability of the state to permeate everyday life" (Painter 2006 in Allen and Cochrane 2010:1074). The contingent, spatial-temporal features of the assemblage analytic are helpful here in explaining and illustrating the "unbundling" of what was previously seen as a centric "nation state" (Sassen 2006 in Allen and Cochrane 2010:1078).

The security regions as extended form of local government could arguably be seen as a form of redistributing powers that takes place in the Netherlands. This may seem a logical shift. After all, experiencing (international) security as something between monolithic states is something that no longer is perceived that way. Hence a shift to a more local approach follows logically from this. According to the factsheet Wvr, this is indeed the case. Risks are perceived locally and "security is a prime local business."[60] However, according to the factsheet Wvr, it can also be too local. Hence, up scaling through regionalization should supposedly offer significant opportunities for improvement for being prepared for risks.[61] Up scaling through regionalization causes an increased motion in the risk and crisis assemblage, mainly through a new, risky, redistribution of powers. The scenario thinking practice, as "objective" form of knowledge production, without moral and political considerations, as well as the

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[60] Ministry of Security and Justice, 2013a. Brochure Wet Veiligheidsregio
[61] Ministry of Security and Justice, 2013a. Brochure Wet Veiligheidsregio

increased focus on collaboration within the security regions possibly contribute to making the assemblage seemed settled.

Another vocabulary that lends itself well in explaining the relations within the risk and crisis assemblage is the vocabulary of the governing technology of neoliberalism. This has been defined as "a mode of governing through freedom, that requires people to be free and self-managing in different spheres of everyday life" (Ong 2007:4), which is similar to Allen and Cochrane's intensive reach of government and its ability to permeate everyday social life. It includes a focus on responsibility at the community level, as well the "new requirements of self-responsibility." This suggests neoliberalism as "governing by calculation" with new relations between "the governing, the self-governed and the space of administration" (Ong 2007:4). Questions about these relations are posed easier with the use of the contingent character of the assemblage analytic. In this case of the risk and crisis assemblage, one can ask questions of how power is exerted by recognizing "the situated subjects who do the work of pulling together disparate elements" (Li 2007:265). Hence, by focusing on these situated subjects, questions can be asked about how power is exerted, how is governed or self-governed, without attributing a mastermind to the assemblage as a whole, or to a situated actor within the assemblage.

In the case of the scenario thinking practice, one tangible form of governance as a result of scenario thinking stood out: the risk map. This is a map that every Dutch citizen can visit on the internet and which is formed by the different regional risk profiles[62]. It portrays risks of all different kinds, varying from chemical transportation lines to places where public disorder is more likely. When entering your postal code, one receives a map with all the possible future risks that are identified in your neighborhood. According to the website of the risk map itself, the aim of the map is the following:

> "The risk map will provide the most current and complete picture of the risks in your living area. Furthermore, the explanations accompanying the map indicate how and with which people one can best prepare for disasters and crises. In addition, the risk map helps to create awareness and to encourage everyone to think about how we can increase safety in our environment."[63]

The risk map is meant for everybody who seeks an answer to questions such as: "Do I live in a place where I am more at risk for disasters and accidents?" Or: "Do I work in a risk area?"[64] According to the website, the risk map is meant for both citizens of the Netherlands, as well as policymakers active in the

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[62] 2007 "Regulation Act Provincial Risk Map" (Regeling Provinciale Risicokaart) Article 2-5.
[63] Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations and Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment, 2007. Risk map/reason and purpose.
[64] Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations and Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment, 2007. Risk map/for whom is the risk map.

risk and crisis assemblage.[65] What is remarkable about the risk map, is that it provides thorough descriptions that actively involve citizens about how, and when to expect risks, and even how to prepare or avoid them. In this sense, the government through the calculations of the scenario thinking practice and the calculative representation of it, adds to the self-responsibilizing of citizens. This is in accordance with the increased focus on for instance, the resilient citizen. According to the national security strategy, less resilience can lead to more fear or panic during crises and disasters (2013:68). Hence, self-responsibilization of the citizen is an important element of the risk profile and adds to the management of crises by changing or aiming to change the citizen's behavior.

What is more, is the call for not only taking responsibility for yourself, but also for your neighborhood. Besides that the information is used by emergency services, every citizen in the Netherlands is able to find out where buildings are with many people present who may need help during a major incident. These include for instance hospitals, schools, and childcare [66]. In this sense, the self-responsibilization also arguably functions as a moral call or a form of management through morality.

Through the representation and designing of certain zones of danger or geographical categorizations that are marked risky, control is exercised over those spaces and those who live in it. Populations of those areas are possibly subjected to techniques of self-governing and self-control, of which an example is the *Bewonersinitiatief Veiligheid* (residents security initiative). This initiative, started by residents of the municipality The Hague, aims at a safer neighborhood. Over five hundred volunteers contribute to surveillance and controlling their own neighborhoods. With the local police they agreed on what issues are being watched, the timing of the surveillance and how they contact the police for feedback on remarkable events (Municipality The Hague 2015). What is possible, is that the risk map contributes to these kinds of initiatives. However, it is difficult to establish exact cause-effect relations, therefore, first more research should be done in order to say something about this relationship.

It is difficult to establish the exact relations between these kinds of neoliberalist forms of self-government and the filtering out of moral and political considerations. However, what becomes clear is that the neoliberal strategies and their focus on calculative choices leave little room for moral and political considerations. Neoliberalism responds to "problems of governing by making calculative choices about intervention and risk in an unfolding situation" (Ong 2007:5). Accordingly, the scenario thinking practice, based on calculations and generating representations of potential undesired futures,

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[65] Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations and Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment, 2007. Risk map/ for whom is the risk map.
[66] Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations and Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment, 2007. Risk map/ which risks are on the map.

on which policies that play interventions for future risks are based, also leaves little room for moral and political considerations.

Conclusion

The central theme of this thesis was the management or risks and crises through a focus on the scenario thinking practice in the Dutch risk and crisis assemblage. It sought to uncover different practices at play that aid the process of filtering out moral and political considerations of the scenario thinking practice. Through exploring the field of critical security studies and by embedding the scenario thinking practice in a renewed risk mentality in the Dutch risk and crisis assemblage, the assemblage analytic provided concepts to answer the following question: *how and why are political and moral considerations on the practice of scenario thinking filtered out in the Dutch risk and crisis assemblage?* In order to answer this question I organized my data in three chapters.

The first chapter provided an insight in the larger field of critical security studies and the developments in the Dutch security governance, eventually ending up and understanding how the scenario thinking practice is embedded in a new kind of risk mentality. I found that, borrowing from a criminological discourse, this new risk mentality has developed in the Dutch risk and crisis assemblage as a result from the shift from disaster response to crisis management. With a wave of new policies, government statements and laws, the new risk mentality eventually became embodied in the practice of scenario thinking as the official method of the national security strategy. This practice I decided to approach as a form of knowledge production, whereby the assemblage analytic helped to highlight the heterogeneity, and more specifically the materiality of knowledge: the scenario thinking practice as technical tool that involves computer models, (statistical) calculations about impact, risk, and interventions. The focus on the developments in the Netherlands proved useful in identifying the risk-oriented discourse, and helped furthermore providing a rough map of the Dutch risk and crisis assemblage. As assemblage features contingency and motion, this is no more than a snapshot useful in identifying the moral and political considerations for chapter two.

The second chapter zoomed in on the specific scenario thinking practice and on the question how moral and political considerations were filtered out of the practice. With a focus on the ethical and political nature of worthy and less worthy human lives, buildings and places I identified different practices that helped filtering out some of these moral and political considerations. The practices are labeled *moral justification,* a way of justifying reprehensible conduct; *dehumanization,* victims are referred to in a way other than human, excluding them from moral considerations of the perpetrator; *diffusion of responsibility,* diffuse liability due to dividing different phases over a chain of responsibility; *temporal immediacy*, the time between the action and the consequence of that action; *and the probability of effect,* which refers to the likelihood that the consequences of an action actually occur. All these practices can best be brought under the overarching banner of *in-or decreasing moral intensity*,

a term that is initially coined by Thomas Jones and proves useful in bundling the different practices together.

Through the focus on the practices taking place in the scenario thinking practice, as well as the practices in the larger risk and crisis assemblage that were already identified by Li (2007:265), I was able to partly reassemble the practices that she identifies. It became clear that the practice *authorizing knowledge* and *containing critiques* deserved their own label. Furthermore, by approaching the scenario thinking practice as a material side of knowledge, the practice described as *anti-politics* could be put under the earlier mentioned practices. The authority derived from referring to a social or material side of knowledge, does not alter the content of the meaning of authorizing knowledge.

With a better understanding of the practices that were both active in the scenario thinking practice, as well as the larger risk and crisis assemblage, the third chapter explored plausible explanations for why the moral and political considerations were filtered out of the scenario thinking practice. In this tentative chapter it first became clear that at the operational level moral and political considerations were dismissed in order to make the practice workable for the scenario thinkers. Moreover, filtering out feelings and moral and political considerations helped portraying the scenario thinking practice as a risk assessment method more objective and evidence-based. As a result of that accountability for successes and failures of the scenario thinking practice and the security issues at stake were covered.

At the level of the larger risk and crisis assemblage, the vocabulary of neoliberalism as "a mode of governing through freedom, that requires people to be free and self-managing in different spheres of everyday life" (Ong 2007:4) and intensive reach of government as "permeating everyday life," (Painter 2006 in Allen and Cochrane 2010:1074) proved fruitful. The example of the scenario thinking practice showed that a tangible representation of risks in the risk map, as a result of the regional risk profiles, fitted the concept of self-responsibilization of the citizen. Through a sometimes moral call on the citizen, everyday life is arguably influenced, and citizen's behavior is administered in the service of better preparing for possible risks.

What this thesis has tried to show is that security, risk and crisis management should include many moral and political considerations. For reasons of workability or, as the assemblage analyst would describe this: the will to improve, measures in order to improve or govern risks and security seems to be taken for granted. The new risk-thinking mentality in the Dutch risk and crisis assemblage uses technical representations of knowledge that seem unable to include moral and political dilemmas. This shows that the filtering out of moral and political considerations stays largely unquestioned while security management is taken for granted and is seen as a necessity. More research on security could

raise awareness and go against practices of for instance containing critiques, making an assemblage more open and transparent.

What became clear from the focus on practices is that there are many different, sometimes even hidden, practices. Giving the right labels to these practices in order to categorize and understand the contingent character of the assemblage has been difficult. The assemblage analytic, with its transient character is at risk of wanting to include every element of what has been termed the heterogeneous elements of the assemblage. Hence, I argue for clear delimitations of the concept. In addition, more case studies could possibly aid the further detailing and categorization of practices within an assemblage, without (further) obscuring the assemblage analytic.

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Attachment 1: Questions semi-structured interview (Dutch)

Interview Officier Veiligheidsregio: relaties en scenario-denken binnen de Veiligheidsregio

In het kader van het onderzoek dat ik uitvoer voor zowel mijn afstuderen van mijn master *Conflict Studies and Human Rights* aan de Universiteit Utrecht als het Ministerie van Defensie zou ik graag gebruik willen maken van je kennis en mening over de Veiligheidsregio en een aantal bijbehorende denk processen. Het onderwerp houdt zich bezig met de Officier Veiligheidsregio en het scenario- of risico-denken binnen de Veiligheidsregio.

De resultaten zullen geanonimiseerd worden gebruikt. Dit houdt in dat hieruit bepaalde gegeneraliseerde uitspraken volgen. Ook wordt er gerefereerd aan uitspraken, maar deze zijn niet te herleiden aan een persoon of een geografische locatie. Dit betekent dat je vrijuit kunt spreken.

Ik zal de vragen en antwoorden opnemen, tenzij je hier bezwaar tegen hebt. Deze werk ik dan uit op papier, waarna ik je ze stuur. De vraag is of je ze dan wilt valideren. Het kan ook zijn dat ik nog één of twee vervolgvragen stel als een onderdeel bij uitwerking toch niet helemaal duidelijk blijkt.

Er wordt geen waardeoordeel gegeven over de antwoorden. De vragen zijn bewust open, en er zijn dus ook geen goede of foute antwoorden.

Ik schat dat het beantwoorden van alle vragen ongeveer 90 minuten duurt. Mochten er vragen zijn die je, om welke reden dan ook, niet wilt beantwoorden, dan kun je deze open laten: je bent niet verplicht om de vragen te beantwoorden.

Wel denk ik dat het onderzoek dat ik uitvoer kan bijdragen aan verbeteringen waar uiteindelijk andere Officieren Veiligheidsregio's (en andere civiele partijen) profijt van hebben. Dat is ook één van de redenen waarom ik dit onderzoek graag wil uitvoeren.

Vragen of diegene er klaar voor is of nog vragen heeft.

6. Scenario of risico-denken binnen de Veiligheidsregio in de koude fase

6.0 Wat versta je precies onder scenario- of risico denken binnen de Veiligheidsregio? → Kijken of definitie overeenkomt met eigen definitie:

Met scenario of risico-denken wordt bedoeld, het denkproces dat zich bezighoudt met het vertalen van mogelijke onwenselijke toekomstbeelden naar berekeningen, diagrammen en cijfers in het heden. In de daaropvolgende besluitvorming staat het vermijden van deze gebeurtenissen centraal. Bovendien worden verschillende experts, instituties en middelen ingezet om het vermijden ook daadwerkelijk mogelijk te maken.

6.1 Word je betrokken als Officier Veiligheidsregio bij het proces van scenario- of risico-denken in de koude fase binnen de Veiligheidsregio?

6.2 Hoe vindt het scenario-denken plaats, hoe gaat dat in zijn werk?

6.3 Wie mogen er allemaal aan mee doen aan een sessie scenario denken en waarom juist zij? Wat zijn de relaties tussen de mensen die daar aan mee mogen doen? Hoe is hun wisselwerking?

6.4 Zijn de thema's binnen een scenariosessie van tevoren vast gelegd, of kan iedereen daar invloed op hebben? Waar worden die thema's dan op gebaseerd of waar komen ze vandaan? Worden er ook weleens bij voorbaat thema's geweigerd?

6.5 Wat zijn volgens jou de functies van het scenario- of risico-denken binnen de Veiligheidsregio?

6.6 Welke functie van de bovengenoemde functies vind jij het belangrijkst? Waarom juist die? *Scherp zijn of iemand wel echt een functie noemt, en niet een methode!*

6.7 Ervaar je scenario- of risico-denken als nuttig? Waarom wel/niet?

7. Prioritering van scenario's

7.0 Wat versta je precies onder prioritering van scenario's? → *Kijken of het overeenkomt met wat ik eronder versta.*

7.1 Hoe worden binnen jouw Veiligheidsregio scenario's geprioriteerd? Heb je daar invloed op of mag jij deel nemen aan dat proces van prioriteren? Wie doen daar allemaal (nog meer) aan mee?

7.2 *Indien bij 6.2/3 nog niet helemaal duidelijk antwoord is gegeven:* Wie kunnen scenario's aandragen voor een sessie, zodat ze in aanmerking komen om geprioriteerd te worden?

7.3 Wat gebeurt er als men (*ter verduidelijking eerdere actoren noemen 7.1*) het niet eens wordt over de prioritering, als er geen consensus is? Is er dan iemand die de knopen door kan of mag hakken? Waarom dan juist diegene?

7.4 Wat zijn, denk je, redenen om het uitwerken van een bepaald scenario wel of niet te prioriteren? Zijn er bepaalde indicatoren of factoren die een vergroot risico aantonen die gebruikt worden om die thema's te kiezen? Hoe gaat dat dan? Hoe vindt dat plaats? En waar komen die factoren/indicatoren vandaan?

7.5 Als jij prioriteit zou mogen geven aan bepaalde scenario's en de uitwerking ervan, wat zouden dan factoren zijn die meespelen? En wat is daarvan de belangrijkste factor voor jou? Welk scenario zou jij dus uiteindelijk prioriteren?

8. Overig

8.1 Zijn er nog vragen die je hebt over dit onderzoek?

8.2 Heb je nog andere op- of aanmerkingen? Waren er vragen je erg lastig vond?

Dit waren alle vragen. Ik wil je hartelijk bedanken voor de tijd die je hebt genomen om de vragen te beantwoorden.