‘Voices in Limbo’

An analysis of the strategic choices of the members of the refugee collective ‘We Are Here’ during their mobilisation for societal change

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2th August 2019

A Thesis submitted to the Board of Examiners in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Arts in Conflict Studies & Human Rights

The image on the frontpage is '*The Politician' (Die Asielzoeker)*, 2012 made by:

Marlene Dumas, Courtesy Studio Dumas

Supervisor: Dr. Mario Fumerton

Date of submission: 02-08-2019

Program trajectory: Research and Thesis Writing Only (30ECTS)

Word count: 26.216

How come that as a refugee,
You're expected to set your time still
While your patiently wait
For other people to decide
What is going to be your faith
When I talk nobody hears me
While I am here nobody sees me
I know how it feels to be invisible
I am in limbo

Please tell me
Cause I do not see
The difference between
The worthy of you and me
Two people in different bodies
Born in a different place,
But that does not mean
We run a different race
I was lucky I survived
But just like you
I was born to be loved
In order to feel alive[1]

[1] 'Still Life', poem of artist LILO in corporation with Hakim, member of 'We Are Here'.

Abstract

In the Netherlands, a discrepancy exists between the immigration control policies and its practical implementations, the so called 'policy gap'. As a result, there is a considerable number of rejected asylum seekers who are neither able to return to their country of origin nor eligible for a residence permit in the Netherlands. Despite the risk of detention, in 2012 a group of rejected asylum seekers mobilised to demonstrate their precarious situation in society. This mobilisation resulted in a social movement under the name of "We Are Here". By researching the case of 'We Are Here', this study aims to contribute to the lack of understanding about *how* activists make strategic choices in their repertoire of contention within the collective action body of literature. As a result, this research overcomes the structural emphasis within the Contentious Politics theory, by emphasising the agency dimension in the interactional process of claim-making. Therefore, this research makes use of the Strategic Action approach, leading to the identification of four components on which the members of 'We Are Here' base their strategic choices. These four components consist of core strategies, collective identity, resource availability, and the relationship with supporters. In addition, this research shows that in order to understand *how* these four components affect the strategic choices, it is essential to take the position of activists within society into account.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I want to thank all the members of ‘We Are Here’ for making this research possible. In particular I would like to thank the two current coordinators of ‘We Are Here’ who involved me in all their activities from the very beginning of my research. I am indebted to all informants who shared their personal stories with me and made me feel part of the collective. Their strength and courage – but especially their positivity – inspired and motivated me to write this thesis. The fieldwork period reminded me once again to cherish the small things in life and to be grateful for the educational opportunities I have had during my life.

Furthermore, I want to express my gratitude to Merijn Rijk and Lizelotte van Rijk, who supported me throughout the year. Merijn his pep-talks and critical feedback and suggestions motivated me to constantly improve my thesis. He is the most patient and supportive man I know. Thanks to Lizelotte, my classmate, to whom I could share all my thoughts and doubts and who always provided me with useful advice. I will never forget all the hours we shared in the library, the coffee and tea breaks, and the beautiful strolls around Utrecht. I wish you the best and hope we will keep in contact. Both of you made the writing process endurable.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, dr. Mario Fumerton, for his extremely supportive and constructive feedback. His enthusiasm and genuine engagement in my research motivated me to push further and to aim for the best.

Last but not least, I want to thank my family and my close friends for their continued support and believe in me. Your support was invaluable.

"The conception of human rights, based upon the assumed existence of a human being as such, broke down at the very moment when those who professed to believe in it were for the first time confronted with people who had indeed lost all other qualities and specific relationships – except that they were still human".

Hannah Arendt[2]

[2] Arendt, H. (1968). The Origins of Totalitarianism. (3rd. ed.,). New York, United States: Harcourt *in* Bernstein, R. J. (2005). Hannah Arendt on the Stateless. *Parallax*, *11*(1), 46–60.

Table of Contents

Introduction 10
Chapter 1. A ‘Policy Gap’ and the Emergence of ‘We Are Here’ 16
1.1 Legal Conditions 16
1.2 ‘We Are Here’ 19
1.3. ‘Illegalised Migrants’ 21
1.4 Summary 22
Chapter 2. Theoretical Framework 23
2.1 Contentious Politics Theory 24
2.2 Game Theory 26
2.3 Strategic Action Approach 27
2.4 Summary 30
Chapter 3. Research Methodology 31
3.1 Research Strategy 31
3.2 Sampling Method 32
3.3 Research Method for Data Collection 34
3.3.1 Phase 1: Description of Context 34
3.3.2 Phase 2: Cataloguing the Repertoire of Contention 35
3.3.3. Phase 3: Collection of Strategic Choices 35
3.3.4. Phase 4: Classification and Data Analysis 37
3.4 Ethical Considerations and Research Limitations 38
Chapter 4. Liminality and the Strategy of Visibility 41
4.1 Liminality 41
4.2 Experienced Liminality 42
4.3 Reasons to Become Visible 44
4.4 Powerful Agents 46
4.5 Summary 49
Chapter 5. Strategic Claim-Making 50
5.1 What Are We Fighting For? 50
5.2 How to Articulate the Claim for a ‘Normal Life’? 51
5.2.1 ‘We’ Are a Collective 53
5.2.2 Framing: Who Are We? 53

a. 'Decisive Victims' ... 55
b. 'Innocent Human Beings' ... 56
5.3 What Did We Achieve? ... 57
5.4 Summary ... 58
Chapter 6. Strategic 'Taste' in Tactics ... 59
6.1 Tactics and Arenas ... 59
6.1.1 Usage of Media ... 61
6.1.2 Squatting buildings ... 63
a. Collective Identity Reflection ... 63
b. Squatting a Strategic Tactic ... 65
c. Prefigurative Tactic ... 66
6.1.3 'Neighbourhood party' ... 68
6.2 Arenal Constrains ... 70
6.3 Summary ... 73
Conclusion ... 75
Bibliography ... 79
Appendix 1. Event Catalogue ... 88
Appendix 2. Interview List ... 90
Appendix 3. Focus Group: Strategic Dilemmas ... 91
Appendix 4. Banner ... 92
Appendix 5. Flyer ... 93
Appendix 6. Poster: 'We Can't Go Back' ... 94
Appendix 7. Logo: 'We Are Here' ... 95
Appendix 8. 'We' ... 96

Introduction

> "I have been in prison two times before I joined the group 'We Are Here'. They [the government] wanted to send me back to Somalia… After six months the IND or some other political people went to Mogadishu, they wanted to see what was going on in Somalia. After six months they came back and said: 'You guys you are free'.
> I thought: 'Why?'
> 'We cannot send you back,' they said.
> Which reason? I asked.
> 'Your country is not safe,' he replied.
> A thank you, you have seen the proof. Where is my life now?
> But they just said: 'No no, here you have a train ticket, you must go outside'.
> We could not even sleep in the prison that night."[3]

This quote clearly demonstrates the ambivalent position of rejected asylum seekers in the Netherlands. Rejected asylum seekers, as the name already connotes, are not eligible for a residence permit and are therefore obliged to leave the Netherlands.

However, it has been remarkably difficult for European countries to deport some of the rejected asylum seekers. This is owing to judicial challenges and the ban on deportations to countries deemed unsafe, but also because of the need to arrange an agreement with the receiving states and the difficulties in determining an asylum seeker's national identity (McGregor, 2011, p.599). Despite this obstruction, the Netherlands does not provide these rejected asylum seekers with a residence permit. As a consequence, they are neither eligible to legally stay in the Netherlands, nor can they return home and are "eventually sent out into the streets" (Van der Leun & Bouter, 2016, p.147). In the words of Mensink (2018, p.6) they are "basically denied an existence". These rejected asylum seekers are thus positioned in a situation of liminality: an ambiguous phase in which a person is "neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law" (Turner, 1969, p.95).

From a perspective of rationality – given the high risk of detention and deportation – "one would expect undocumented migrants[4] to avoid the public sphere and act out an existence in

[3] Interview with Abu [rejected asylum seeker] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 09-04-2019.
[4] Scholars in academic literature often refer to undocumented migrants since this terminology covers a variety of situations in which migrants become undocumented. Undocumented migrants refer to migrants who do not obtain

the shadows of the receiving country" (Nicholls, 2013, p.83). In the Netherlands, despite the precarious situation, the opposite happened. In 2012 several 'tent camps' emerged, comprised of rejected asylum seekers who decided to become publicly visible and demonstrate their problematic situation. This eventually evolved into what to date exists as the refugee collective and social movement called "We Are Here".

Since the members of 'We Are Here' are actively making political claims in the public sphere with the aim to change their uncertain situation, this refugee collective can be described as a "social movement". Social movements "are sustained, intentional efforts to foster or retard social changes, primarily outside the normal institutional channels encouraged by authorities" (Jasper, 2017, p.286). They use a wide variety of actions to promote a claim, based on a large network including organisations and solidarities[5] that sustain these public performances (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015, p.237).

In sum, owing to the precarious situation of the rejected asylum seekers and the high risk of detention and deportation, the establishment of the social movement of 'We Are Here' can be viewed as an 'unexpected' mobilisation (Freedman, 2009, p.347). It is counterintuitive to become publicly visible, to organize collective actions, and to make contentious political claims regarding the precarious situation. Arguably, these actions, which seem to contradict to what we might expect such individuals to otherwise do, show that these rejected asylum seekers are not doing what is expected. By doing the unexpected, they can be said to exercise agency. It is the agency of members of 'We Are Here' that is the central starting point of this thesis.

Since 'We Are Here' appears to exhibit the characteristics of a social movement, the concept of 'Contentious Politics' seems the appropriate theoretical frame with which to analyse the empirical case. However, it will become apparent that the contentious politics model cannot fully explain the unexpected emergence of the 'We Are Here' social movement, for it does not place enough emphasis on the agency of activists. Therefore, this thesis will instead use the 'Strategic Action' frame. In order to situate this approach in the broader academic debate on social movements and claim-making, it is necessary to briefly review the theory of Contentious Politics.

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official documents to reside legally in the country of residence. Rejected asylum seekers can thus be placed under the notion of undocumented migrants.

[5] For example: "political organisations, cultural groups, institutional allies, and service and advocacy organisations, as well as individual constituents who are not necessarily part of any movement-associated organization" (Meyer & Staggenborg, 2012, p.13).

Contentious politics is a dominant paradigm in collective action research. It specifically focusses on the emergence of social movements and aims to explain *how* people mobilise[6] (Demmers, 2017, p.92). In the words of Tilly and Tarrow (2015) contentious politics "involves interactions in which actors make claims bearing on other actors' interests, leading to coordinated efforts on behalf of shared interests or programs, in which governments are involved as targets, initiators of claims, or third parties" (p.7). This theory thus aims to uncover the intersections between contention, politics, and collective actions and focusses on the interactions between agency and structure (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015, pp.12-14).

In order to examine the interactions between agency and structure, contentious collective actions are the essential units of analysis. According to Tarrow (2003) these contentious collective actions are the "basis of social movements" (p.3). Collective actions are "coordinating efforts on behalf of shared interests or programs (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015, p.8). "The forms of collective actions taken by movements actors" are tactics: "the specific means of implanting strategy" (Meyer & Staggenborg, 2012, p.8). The wide variety of tactics that are currently known to activists are clustered into a 'repertoire of contention' (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015, p.14, 21; Smithey, 2009; Taylor & Van Dyke, 2004).

However, most scholars have focused on the political windows of opportunities – the structural conditions that permit collective actions to arise – rather than the action itself (Smithey, 2009, p.661; Jasper, 2012a, pp.7-8). This examination of structural conditions is necessary to understand social movements, yet this focus on political opportunities is often criticised to take the activists behind the collective actions for granted (Jasper, 2015, p.21). As a reaction on this criticism, contentious politics theory seemed to abandon the emphasis on the political opportunity structures in "favour of a mechanisms approach that specifies smaller causal chucks that can be concatenated to explain complex processes and outcomes" (Jasper, 2012a, p.9; Tilly & Tarrow, 2015, p.14). As a result, the political context is approached in a less structural way, it is instead viewed as a dynamic environment (Jasper, 2012a, p.10).

Nevertheless, the contentious politics theory still leans mostly to the structural side within the interactional process of claim-making. As a result, the agency dimension is still partly ignored within this theory. How activists in social movements make strategic choices within the available repertoire of tactics remains elusive (Jasper, 2004, p.2; Jasper, 2012a, p.10; Jasper, 2017, p.294). Thus, the contentious politics theory does not provide a complete theoretical analysis to explain why rejected asylum seekers started to mobilise and how these activists

[6] The other paradigm is the 'resource mobilisation approach' which is "attentive to questions of individual motivation and strategies of actions based on clear rational choice approach" (Demmers, 2017, pp.91-92).

subsequently make strategic choices within their contentious claim-making process.

In order to emphasise more on agency dimension and to overcome the focus on structural conditions within the contentious politics theory, this thesis will use the strategic action approach. This approach focusses on the micro-foundations of social and political interactions which are allowed or encouraged through different arenas – the available rules and resources[7] – and aims to explain why and how actors intend to change existing structures (Downey & Rohlinger, 2008; Jasper, 2004; Jasper, 2015, p.9; Jasper, 2017, p.294).

Thus, as Jasper (2017) claimed "scholars have not paid much attention to how groups of activists make [strategic] decisions" (p.294). Therefore, this thesis aims to focus on the rejected asylum seekers who are at the centre of the mobilisation making strategic choices in the hope to achieve their pursued claim. Hence, this thesis aims to answer the research question formulated as follows:

How do the members of the social movement 'We Are Here' make strategic choices within the available repertoire of contention, regarding their visibility, as they navigate through a state of liminality, in Amsterdam from the end of 2012 until May 2019?

This research question is divided into four sub-questions:

1. What is the situation of the members of 'We Are Here'?
2. What strategies do members of 'We Are Here' use in order to make claims?
3. What is the available repertoire of contention of 'We Are Here'?
4. What effects do the rules and resources available in the liminal situation have on the strategic choices made by the members of 'We Are Here'?

The significance of this research is two-fold. Firstly, this research is theoretically significant since it intends to contribute to addressing a theoretical gap in the literature on collective action: namely, a lack of understanding how activists strategically choose between tactics and strategies (Doherty & Hayes, 2018, p.282; Jasper, 2017, p.294).

Through the focus on the under-researched strategic choices of activists in social movements, this research contributes to the identified gap. In particular, this research intends to inductively identify components that have an impact on the strategic choices of the activists. These components could contribute to theories that emphasis on the agency dimension in

[7] "An arena is a bundle of rules and resources that allow or encourage certain kinds of interactions to proceed, with something at stake" (Jasper, 2015, p.14).

collective action research and may advance existing theories on how strategies develop and how activists strategically choose in their available repertoire of contention.

Secondly, this research is significant in a social matter as it gives a voice to the rejected asylum seekers of 'We Are Here', who are legally "deprived of a public stage [..] and are locked in a position of political invisibility" (Gibney, 2000, p.3). As stated by Ragin (2011, p.43), one of the major goals of social research is to contribute to the expressed voice of marginal groups in society. This thesis aims to objectively present the story of these rejected asylum seekers in order to enhance their visibility in society (ibid, p.43).

This thesis is constituted as follows. In Chapter One an empirical contextualisation of how the members of 'We Are Here' ended up in the liminal situation – an in-between phase – will be provided and a brief history on the emergence the social movement will be provided. Subsequently, in Chapter Two the empirical case will inductively be embedded in the theoretical debate concerning agency and strategies within the mobilisation of social movements. It will become clear that the strategic action approach is the most appropriate theoretical approach to use in order to answer the research questions. This thesis is therefore built on the theoretical framework proposed by Meyer and Staggenborg (2012) in order to analyse the strategic choices of activists. Chapter Three describes the research design – research strategy and sampling method – along with the method of data collection and the ethical considerations during this research. In Chapter Four it will be clarified why the concept 'liminality' is an appropriate term to use in order to refer to the precarious situation of the members of 'We Are Here'. Thereby, their strategy to become publicly visible will be analysed along with how collectively stepping out of the shadows can contribute to a shared sense of 'we-ness' or collective identity, which is of vital importance to the further made strategic choices. In Chapter Five, the collective claim of 'We Are Here' will be thoroughly described and it will be analysed how the members of 'We Are Here' strategically aim to reach this claim. It will become evident that the communication of the claim and how the members of 'We Are Here' represent themselves – based on their collective identity – is important to justify and increase the credibility of their claim. In Chapter Six the available repertoire of contention of the members of 'We Are Here' will be presented. The effects of the rules and resources in the liminal situation will be discussed. Firstly, three frequently used tactics will be thoroughly analysed in order to elaborate on the strategic choices made within this repertoire of contention. It will be concluded that the 'taste' in tactics is in line with the strategies of the refugee collective and reflects their collective identity. Thereafter, it will become apparent that due to the liminal situation the illegalised migrants have limited resources to make contentious claims.

Therefore, the illegalised migrants are dependent on supporters and this consequently constrains the strategic choices of the members of 'We Are Here'. Lastly, a conclusion will be drawn on how the members of 'We Are Here' make strategic choices within the repertoire of contention while several inductively derived components that are important to the strategic choices will be given.

Chapter 1. A ‘Policy Gap’ and the Emergence of ‘We Are Here’

This chapter will contextualise the empirical case of ‘We Are Here’ in order to understand the precarious situation of rejected asylum seekers and how they landed in this situation. Firstly, the legal situation of undocumented migrants in the Netherlands – and rejected asylum seekers in particular – will be discussed. Afterwards the recent history of the refugee collective will be elucidated, from the moment of its foundation in 2012. During the fieldwork period, it became apparent that ‘We Are Here’ did not solely consist of rejected asylum seekers. A fair part of the members consisted of so-called ‘Dublin Claimants’, other asylum seekers who also lack formal documents. Since both groups fight for injustice to be redressed, they both make strategic choices in the tactical repertoire of contention. Therefore, the difference between the members of the group will be set forth in this chapter. This differentiation will become relevant when discussing the reasons to join the social movement in Chapter Four. Lastly, the decision to use the term *illegalised migrant* throughout this thesis will be clarified. This term is useful since it encompasses all the members of ‘We Are Here’ and the terminology incorporates the precarious legal status of the migrants.

1.1 Legal Conditions

There are three ways in which people become undocumented and thus an unlawfully residing person on Dutch territory; some cross the border illegally, others overstay their visa or do not return to their home country after their request for asylum has been rejected (Plascencia, 2012, p.87). The latter manner will be further clarified.

The Netherlands was one of the first countries in Europe that started to systematically implement law enforcement policies and introduced legislations to improve the control on irregular migration (Van der Leun & Bouter, 2015, p.137; Engbersen & Broeders, 2009, p.869). As a consequence, the situation of undocumented migrants gradually changed with the implementation of specific legislations. After the 1990s, it was no longer possible for undocumented migrants to legally work and rent a house in the Netherlands. The implementation of the Law of Identification in 1993 made obtaining an identification certificate obligatory and thus essential in daily practices. In addition to this, the Benefit Entitlement Act, better known as the ‘Linking Act’ (Koppelingswet), was executed in 1998 and connected work and access to public provisions to a legal status. An exception was made for medical emergencies and children until the age of eighteen were allowed to attend school (Kos, Maussen,

& Doomernik, 2016, p.7). The Benefit Entitlement Act aimed to retrain and discourage illegal employment and as a result it became extremely difficult to legally work and live in the Netherlands without a residence permit (ibid, p.7; Van der Leun & Bouter, 2015, p.137). The idea behind these regulations was to encourage 'illegals' to return to their country of origin by excluding these practices (Kos et al., 2016, p.7). It thus reinforced the state's control on undocumented migrants in the Netherlands (Van der Leun & Bouter, 2015, p. 137).

Over the past decade, the Dutch government pursued a "restrictive, yet just' immigration and asylum policy, and this approach inevitably entails an active and consistent return policy" (Kos et al., 2016, p.3). With the implementation of the New Aliens Act (Vreemdelingenwet) in 2000, the consequences of the former regulations became even more prominent. The New Aliens Act was introduced in order to shorten asylum procedures and decrease repatriation costs. Rejected asylum seekers were required to leave the Netherlands within a period of 28 days. After this period, governmental support and national shelter facilities were no longer available to them. As a consequence, rejected asylum seekers could neither stay nor await the outcome of a second asylum application (ibid, p.7-8; Versteegt & Maussen, 2012, p.25). In addition, rejected asylum seekers who are able to return to the country of origin due to the possession of a 'laissez passer'[8] could, according to the Act, be preventively imprisoned[9] for a maximum of six months[10] in order to guarantee repatriation (Versteegt & Maussen, 2012, p.25). As a result, the Dutch deportation infrastructure has expended over the past years[11] (Kalir & Wessink, 2016, p.7). These different laws and 'preventive' detention are instruments of policy of exclusion to manage and maintain public order (ibid, p.7) and have made it extremely challenging for undocumented migrants to live in the Netherlands (Kos et al., 2016, p.3).

There is a discrepancy, however, between the immigration control policies and its practical implementation (Kos et al., 2016, p.1). In the Netherlands, everyone whose request for asylum is rejected is obligated to return to their country of origin. Initially this is on a voluntary basis, but if the person in question does not leave the country forced deportation can be executed. This policy was made with the underlying assumption that all rejected asylum seekers are able to repatriate (ACVZ, 2013, p.71). However, it has been found remarkably

[8] 'Permission to enter': the country of origin provides a travel document to be able to enter the country of origin and these rejected asylum seekers can thus be deported to their home country. https://www.dienstterugkeerenvertrek.nl/binaries/Begrippenlijst%20okt%202016_tcm49-138213.pdf

[9] Rejected asylum seekers are imprisoned in a foreigner detention this is different from a criminal detention. The point of a foreigner detention is to assure that individuals leave the Netherlands and do not have the opportunity to 'disappear' and not return to their country of origin.

[10] http://www.stichtinglos.nl/content/vreemdelingendetentie-algemeen.

[11] The Dutch deportation infrastructure "includes four detention centres, 44 limited-free-movement-location centres, a special deportation unit and a substantial allocation of police forced" (Kalir & Wessink, 2016, p.7).

difficult for European countries to deport rejected asylum seekers (McGregor, 2011, p.599). In order to deport a person, it is necessary to determine one's nationality. Due to several reasons, such as the loss of identification papers and/or the lack of cooperation of the country of origin, the determination of identity is extremely challenging. As a consequence, unidentifiable asylum seekers are difficult to repatriate to their home country, since deportation can only be executed when a persons' nationality is identified and when the receiving state acknowledges the migrant as a national citizen (Engbersen & Broeders, 2009, p.872; McGregor, 2011, p.599; (Van der Leun, 2003, p.108).

There are thus circumstances in which reliable evidence of identification is absent and, as a consequence, deportation cannot be executed in these cases. An exception is made when a rejected asylum seeker can prove that he or she has fully cooperated to leave the country but is still not able to return to the country of origin due to reasons beyond his or her control[12] (Versteegt & Maussen, 2012, p.25). In this case, the rejected asylum seeker could make use of the 'beyond your control' regulation (buitenschuldvergunning) and restart an asylum procedure to apply for a residence permit. However, the requirements for this regulation largely overlap the reasons due to which rejected asylum seekers cannot return to their home country[13], making it hardly impossible to meet these requirements. Due to the paradoxical requirements, residence permits are thus rarely provided based on this exceptional regulation (ACVZ, 2013, p.11; Kos et al., 2016, p.5).

Thus, it still results "in considerable numbers of rejected asylum seekers who, while they cannot be expelled from the country, are excluded from government support and from opportunities to work in the belief this should encourage voluntary departure" (Kos et al., 2016, p.1). They are therefore positioned in an extremely precarious situation due to the discrepancy between asylum policies and its practical implementation (ibid, p.5). In scholarly literature, this discrepancy has been identified as a 'policy gap' between the "immigration control policies and the reality on the ground" (Kos et al., 2016, p.5). Throughout this thesis the term 'policy gap' will be used to refer to the paradoxical requirements in which certain policies fail to deport rejected asylum seekers or provide residence permits.

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[12] For example, if the country of origin does not provide a laissez-passer (permission to enter) the rejected asylum seeker that although he or she fully cooperated will still be rejected at the border. Therefore, the person cannot return to the home country. In this case, a rejected asylum seeker can re-apply for an asylum procedure based on the 'beyond your control' regulation (buitenschuldvergunning).

[13] Often rejected asylum seekers cannot return to their country of origin due to the absence of reliable evidence of identification. However, determination of identity is a requirement of the 'beyond your control' regulation.

1.2 'We Are Here'

As a result of the 'policy gap', rejected asylum seekers are left alone without any governmental support or work opportunities and are "basically denied an existence"[14] (Mensink, 2018, p.6). This harrowing situation led to the decision of a group of rejected Iraqi asylum seekers to gather in several tents in front of the national asylum centre in Ter Apel at the beginning of May 2012. This self-created campsite was established to demonstrate the consequences of the 'policy gap' or, in their words, the asylum gap[15] (Kos et al., 2016, p.2). Two weeks later, the 'tent camp' was removed by the police. However, instead of hiding again in illegality, other camps were set up throughout the country (ibid, p.2).

The manifestation in Ter Apel formed the inspiration for another 'tent camp' in Osdorp, Amsterdam in September 2012. The group residing in Osdorp decided to call themselves 'We Are Here' and organised a large demonstration in the city centre of Amsterdam. It was the start of a new social movement. The demonstration turned out to be a successful one and led to great national media attention. This was mainly because undocumented migrants' protests were unprecedented in the Netherlands (Mensink, 2018, p.6; Dadusc, 2017, p.275), as a result of "the dominant idea of the undocumented person as somebody who is unknown and invisible" (Mensink, 2018, p.6). However, this idea was "challenged by the approximately 60-80 refugees who chose to expose themselves as a political group" (ibid, p.6). Yet, a few days later the 'tent camp' in Osdorp was removed by officials, since, according to the police, it became a concern of public order (Kos et al., 2016, p.2). The demonstrating migrants were arrested, to see themselves released again the next day[16].

The months passed by and the days were getting colder while the municipality of Amsterdam tried to find a solution, but only short-term solutions were provided. In a former prison temporary shelter and basic facilities were provided for about 60 rejected asylum seekers (Kos et al., 2016, p.2). However, after two months the rejected asylum seekers had to leave the shelter. They found themselves in the same situation again, and nothing had changed[17].

Nevertheless, the visibility of the rejected asylum seekers drew the attention of many Dutch volunteers of non-governmental organisations, church organisations, and individual supporters. With the aid of these engaged supporters, the refugee collective remained visible and organised an ample of collective actions in the hope for a solution. At the same time, the

[14] Nowadays there are shelters were undocumented migrants can go to. Yet, in 2012 when 'We Are Here' started there was no governmental support.
[15] http://wijzijnhier.org/over-het-asielgat/
[16] Based on http://wijzijnhier.org/who-we-are/ and informal conversations with Thomas and supporter Jerry.
[17] http://wijzijnhier.org/tijdslijn/geschiedenis-van-wij-zijn-hier/

rejected asylum seekers started to squat empty buildings throughout the city to guarantee themselves a shelter.

Due to their mobilisation, fundamental changes in regard to the situation of the rejected asylum seekers have been established, though their demand for a 'normal life' has not yet been accomplished. After seven years, 'We Are Here' is still actively demonstrating their precarious situation and moving from one place to another[18].

Over the course of seven years, the members of the refugee collective have changed. Nowadays, the group does not solely consist of rejected asylum seekers. It also hosts other migrants that lack formal documents, mainly the so-called 'Dublin Claimants'. Asylum seekers who arrive in Europe today are not able to decide in which European country they are to request asylum. This is due to the Dublin III Regulation, which obligates asylum seekers to apply for asylum in the country in which they entered Europe first[19]. At the borders of Europe, asylum seekers are registered with fingerprints in a European database called 'EURODAC'. This database helps to identify which European state is responsible for the examination of the asylum request[20].

The majority of asylum seekers arrives in Italy or Greece but often these countries are not the place asylum seekers aim to apply for asylum. This is mainly due to the relatively bad circumstances for refugees in these countries[21] and the aim to unite with relatives in other European countries[22]. As a consequence, there are asylum seekers who travel further through European countries to start an asylum request somewhere else. However, if these asylum seekers are registered in the European database it is not possible for them to start an asylum procedure in a different country than the country of arrival. This compels them to return to their country of entry[23].

However, after 18 months the fingerprints of asylum seekers are removed from the European database. Consequently, the Dublin III Regulation does no longer apply to asylum seekers after this period. This provides them the opportunity to request an asylum procedure in another European country. Yet, during their first 18 months in Europe the asylum seekers are illegally residing in a European country and need to survive without governmental support[24].

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[18] Informal conversations and participant observation.
[19] https://openmigration.org/en/analyses/what-is-the-dublin-regulation/
[20] https://www.europa-nu.nl/id/vh1ijmxsczzs/nieuws/europees_systeem_voor_vingerafdrukken
[21] e.g. https://nos.nl/nieuwsuur/video/2295619-op-samos-slapen-de-migranten-tussen-de-ratten.html
[22] https://openmigration.org/en/analyses/what-is-the-dublin-regulation/ and based on informal conversation.
[23] https://www.vluchtelingenwerk.nl/sites/default/files/u25001/Dublin_2015_1.pdf
[24] https://www.groene.nl/artikel/het-is-beter-om-niet-te-veel-te-weten and based on two interviews with a judicial worker who is specialised in the asylum policies.

These asylum seekers remain under the radar for 18 months while travelling to another European country, and are so-called 'Dublin Claimants'. These 'Dublin Claimants' are as well positioned in a precarious situation as the rejected asylum seekers. They are neither allowed to study or work, nor can they request governmental support. For these reasons, many 'Dublin Claimants' are joining 'We Are Here'[25].

1.3. 'Illegalised Migrants'

The term 'illegal migrant' is often used in the media, the public, and in politics (Bauder, 2013, p.3). However, this term is problematic since "a person cannot be illegal, only the actions of a person can contravene existing laws" (ibid, p.3). Since the explanation of the 'policy gap' and the associated consequences for rejected asylum seekers, it is essential to reflect on the terminology in regard to the rejected asylum seekers who do not possess the right documents to legally reside on Dutch territory. As Bauder (2013) stated, "language matters in public discourse and everyday exchange: terminology can imply causality, generate emotional responses, and transmit symbolic meanings" (p.2). Terminologies may evoke actual consequences such as influencing public opinions, political leaders and their voters, which can result in new policies and regulations (ibid, p.2). Therefore, it is vital to be conscious about the use of certain terminologies and the associated messages.

Fortunately, the term 'illegal migrant' is nowadays rarely used in academic literature. In current literature, frequently used adjectives to describe migrants without legal documents are for instance irregular migrants (Broeders, 2007; Amaya-Castro, 2015), non-status people (Nyers, 2010), unauthorized or undocumented migrants (Ellerman, 2010; Anderson, 2010). In this thesis, the members of 'We Are Here' are referred to as *illegalised migrants.* This term underlines the judicial process that renders these rejected asylum seekers as 'illegal' persons. As beautifully explained by a rejected asylum seeker: "We are victims of the system, we are not victims by ourselves."[26] According to Saad (2013), the criminalisation of migrants and the related 'illegal' position is established by governmental institutions who reinforce immigration control policies and refugee laws. Since the members of the refugee collective are positioned in a precarious situation as a result of the 'policy gap', I argue that *illegalised migrant* is the most appropriate term to use in this case. Even though the term refers to 'migrants' instead of

[25] Based on several interviews with Dublin Claimants.
[26] Interview with Thomas [former rejected asylum seeker] former spokesman of 'We Are Here', 17-04-2019.

rejected asylum seekers, it is still correct to use since the term does not differentiate between the different members of ‘We Are Here’.

1.4 Summary

As a result of a gap in the immigration control policies, there are cases in which rejected asylum seekers are neither eligible for a residence permit, nor able to return to their country of origin. Due to this situation, a group of rejected asylum seekers decided to step out of the shadow and publicly demonstrate their precarious situation in which they are captured. This demonstration led to the establishment of the social movement called ‘We Are Here’ in 2012. After seven years, this movement is still making contentious claims in the hope to change their position in society.

Currently, the social movement consists of rejected asylum seekers and so-called ‘Dublin Claimants’. There is a difference between these two groups. Rejected asylum seekers, as the name already connotes, completed their asylum procedure which led to rejection, while ‘Dublin Claimants’ did not yet apply for an asylum procedure. However, both groups are positioned in the same precarious situation without governmental support and without the possibility to work or study.

I chose to refer to the members of ‘We Are Here’ as ‘illegalised migrants’ in this thesis, due to the precarious situation of the members of ‘We Are Here’ and since the refugee collective consists of two groups. This term emphasises the fact that the members of ‘We Are Here’ themselves did not choose to become illegal but were forced into illegality as a consequence of the ‘policy gap’.

Chapter 2. Theoretical Framework

In the previous chapter, the salient empirical features of 'We Are Here' were illustrated. As the state increases its control on undocumented migrants and the associated legal regulations, rejected asylum seekers[27] are being positioned in an extremely precarious situation in which they can neither return home nor reside legally in the Netherlands. In 2012 these rejected asylum seekers decided to make themselves visible and expose their precarious situation. Even though there is still a high chance to be detained and/or deported, the rejected asylum seekers chose to become visible. How can we understand what appears to be a counterintuitive and illogical choice of action, which an 'instrumental rationality' clearly cannot explain? For reasons that will be explained below, this thesis will explore this empirical complication through what is known as the 'Strategic Action approach'. To understand this particular approach to making sense of the strategic agency of choice, we will first situate the empirical case study in a broader academic debate on social movement and collective action.

'We Are Here' can be described as a social movement. As Tilly (1999) stated, social movements can be best understood not as groups or networks but as assemblages of multiple continuous associated events or actions. In addition, Tarrow (2011) described collective action as "the basis of social movements [..] because it is the main and often only resource that most ordinary people possess" (p.7). The way in which claims are made are thus central to the study on social movements (Taylor & Van Dyke, 2004, p.263). It is therefore necessary to firstly elaborate on contentious politics framework, a dominant theory in collective action research (Jasper, 2012a), that provides definite conceptual explanations of contentious forms of collective action.

As pointed out earlier in the introduction, the way how scholars are doing contentious politics analysis – focussing on the structural political conditions – partly ignores the agency dimension within social movements' collective actions. This theory does not provide theoretical understanding of how activists in social movements actually make strategic choices within the available repertoire of contention.

By contrast, Game theory (Camerer, 2003; Lichbach, 1998) emphasises the agency of the activists, and their associated strategies. However, the emergence of 'We Are Here' is

[27] After the emergence of 'We Are Here', Dublin Claimants joined the social movement. I refer in this section specifically to the rejected asylum seekers due to the fact that they were the starters of the mobilisation. Nevertheless, Dublin Claimants are also positioned in a precarious situation and together both groups – rejected asylum seekers and Dublin Claimants – are 'fighting' to change their position in society.

counterintuitive – given the high risk of detention and/or deportation and the 'illegal' position in society – and can due to the 'illogical' choice of action not be understood and analysed according to Game theory since this approach is based on rational-choice assumptions.

The Strategic Action approach is part of a reaction on both theoretical approaches, due to the lack of emphasis on cultural meanings, moral sentiments, and emotions that actors ascribe to strategic choices (Jasper, 2004, p.10). In order to better understand the suitability of the Strategic Action approach to the case at hand, I will situate it within a broader academic debate with contentious politics theory, and Game theory.

2.1 Contentious Politics Theory

The contentious politics theory aims to uncover the intersections between contention, politics, and collective actions, and focusses on the interactions between agency and structure (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015, pp.12-14). Contentious politics is defined as "interactions in which actors make claims bearing on someone else's interests, leading to coordinated efforts on behalf of shared interests or programs, in which governments are involved as targets, initiators of claims, or third parties" (ibid, p.7). These contentious interactions differ enormously between social movements and across time and space. The focus therefore lies on the wide variety of contentious forms of collective action (ibid, p.14; Tarrow, 2011, p.8).

Collective actions are defined as "coordinated efforts on behalf of shared interests or programs" (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015, p.8). It refers to the wide variety of methods to promote a claim, but, as Tilly (2008, p.14) underlined, activists are constrained by the previous established relations between different actors and by the existing structures in the social and political environment. This ample of methods known to the activists are clustered into a 'repertoire of contention' (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015, p.13). As a result, activists' choices in collective actions are limited and "drawn on a long history of previous struggles" (ibid, p.15).

According to Taylor and Van Dyke (2004, p.263), the use of unconventional methods or the repertoire of contention to coerce or persuade authorities in order to achieve a claim is conceivably the most crucial aspect that differentiates social movements from other conventional political actors. They categorised actions such as voting, lobbying, manifestos, and court trials as conventional methods. On the contrary, unconventional methods are all other forms of actions that use the "strategic use of novel, dramatic, unorthodox, and noninstitutionalized forms of political expression to try to shape public opinion and put pressure on those in positions of authority" (ibid, p.263). Unconventional methods are thus actions such as demonstrations, strikes, sit-ins, and marches, that "disrupt the day-to-day life of a community"

(ibid, p.263) but also theatre spectacles, poetry, art, and music (ibid, p.263). These unconventional methods that differentiate social movements from other political actors refer thus to the *way* in which activists make their claims. In other words, it refers to the forms in which claim-making takes place.

In the scholarly literature, however, different terminologies are used to refer to the forms of collective actions, “the coordinating efforts on behalf of shared interests or programs” (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015, p.8). For instance, Tilly and Tarrow (2015) referred to public ‘performances’, as where Meyer and Staggenborg (2012) used the term ‘tactics’. Performances are defined as “relatively familiar and standardized ways in which one set of political actors make collective claims on some other set of political actors” (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015, p.14). These performances are identified based on three criteria: (1) the action must be *collective*, (2) the action must *support a claim* that either challenges or maintains the system, and (3) the actions need to be *public* (Taylor & Van Dyke, 2004, p.267). Due to the fact that performances must be public, often solely ‘reported events’ (e.g. newspaper, social-media) are incorporated in the analysis of collective actions (ibid, p.268; Zald, 2000).

In order to also encompass less publicly known actions that are not explicitly reported but do incorporate the first two criteria, Taylor and Van Dyke (2004) therefore argue that it is better to use the term ‘tactics’. These scholars describe tactics using three criteria: (1) the involvement of contestation, (2) intentionality, and (3) the construction of collective identity. The use of the concept of tactics rather than performances ensures not to omit less publicly known events and thus broadens the “range of contentious actions” (ibid, p.268).

Contentious collective actions are not self-contained. Instead, they are constrained by the political opportunity structures, the ‘features of the regime’ (McAdam, Tarrow & Tilly, 2009, p.263) that affect the choice of tactics and subsequently influence the impact of social movements (Kriesi, 2004, p.68). Tactics are observable outcomes of interactions and, according to Tilly (2003), are collectively constructed and therefore do not belong to any specific actor since they are produced through interactions (Mische & Tilly, 2003 *in* Doherty & Hayes, 2018, p.280). Tilly (2003), therefore, argued that it is better to emphasise these observable interactions, since it is too difficult to gain information about the motivations and strategic choices behind executed collective actions (ibid, p.280). As a result, a lot of attention has traditionally been paid to the concept of political opportunity structures in order to observe interactions and analyse social movements and their collective actions.

Due to the emphasis on political structural constrains in collective action research, the contentious politics theory leans mostly towards the structural side within the interactional

process of claim-making. This emphasis has received a lot of criticism and should not be taken for granted, since the concept of political opportunity structures has its drawbacks (Kriesi 2004, p.68). Namely, the conceptualisation has become too extensive and encompasses all the conditions and circumstances that shape the environment of collective action (Gamson & Meyer, 1996, p.275). In addition, Jasper and Goodwin (2012) criticised the contentious politics theory because it overlooks the potential impact of activists on the existing structures. These scholars criticised Tilly (1995) in particular, who tended to 'read' the actions and intentions of actors "from the stakes in a given arena" (Jasper & Goodwin, 2012, p.19). As a consequence, the agency of the activists was neglected along with their choices and desires. In the words of Jasper (2010), "potential participants were taken for granted as already formed, just waiting for opportunities to act" (p.966). Thus, the main critique on the theory is that it privileges structure and does not account for the agentive power of activists within social movements.

The contentious politics theory serves solely as the starting point of analysis in this thesis. 'We Are Here' is involved in contentious politics, yet the theory does not provide theoretical support to the question "how participants actually make choices within the available repertoire of contention?" (Jasper, 2004, p.2). On the contrary, the Game theory does provide an answer to this question and is discussed in the following section.

2.2 Game Theory

Opposing to the contentious politics paradigm, Game theory is attentive to the individual, and to related strategies of action (Jasper, 2004, p.3). The Game theory will be discussed as it sheds light on the personal reasons and motivations of activists to join social movements and claim societal change. In this section, however, it is clarified why this theory is not satisfying in order to examine the strategic choices of the members of 'We Are Here'.

Game theory practically monopolised the study of strategic decisions for decades and was used interchangeably with the concept of strategy (Jasper, 2017, p.294). Osborne (2004) described Game theory as one that aims to explain the social strategic interactions among decision-makers in social movements and analyses the behavioural interactions between multiple actors. Every actor has preferences and choices to make, which are affected by the decisions of other actors in the field (ibid, p.1). Game theory is based on the assumption that the actors in play are rational beings (Snidal, 1985, p.35). This implies that the approach starts from the proposition that individual actors are objective utility maximisers and, therefore, it takes an individualistic ontological stance. The strategic choices of individuals are thus based

on weighing the costs and benefits to subsequently choose the most beneficial outcome (Demmers, 2017, p.108; Opp, 2013, p.1; Jasper, 2010).

This strategic approach, however, has been criticised by multiple scholars due to the rational-based assumption. As Larson (2013, p.866) argued, strategic tactical choices cannot be seen as purely driven by the intention to maximise efficacy and efficiency but are also affected by other factors such as emotions, cultural norms, and values. In addition, Fligstein (2001) argued that Game theory misses the essential point that actors have “many constituencies to balance off their choices and they must continuously be aware that they have to produce arrangements to induce cooperation with both their allies and opponents” (p.112). Likewise, Polletta (2012) claimed that rational choice-based understandings of strategy are lacking in their explanation of “what people want to achieve, why they want to achieve it, and their expectation regarding how change will take place” (p.xvii). The Game theory, based on individualistic and rational-based assumptions, thus, narrows down the possible strategic choices and outcomes (Jasper, 2010, p.94).

In relation to the empirical case study, numerous scholars have expressed that contentious collective actions of undocumented migrants are rather unexpected, since they do not seem to be based on rational trade-offs (e.g. Nicholls, 2013; Freedman, 2009; McGregor, 2011). As Nicholls (2013, p.18) and Freedman (2009, p.347) claimed, based on logical reasoning, the individual costs of collective actions – the detention and possible deportation – outweigh the potential beneficial outcomes of the collective contentious claims – the desire for a legal residence permit. In addition, Laubenthal (2007) explained that these mobilisations appear to be ‘improbable in principle’, since undocumented migrants “lack the rights of democratic participation that would enable them to put demands on the state” (pp.101-102). Despite the fact that these arguments substantiate the unexpectedness of undocumented migrants’ mobilisation, the empirical case study shows that the opposite is happening. Thus, as Larson (2013) stated, the rational based tradition does not offer solutions to the question: “why do actors in social movements sometimes behave in non-rational ways?” (p.869). It is therefore evident that the Game theory is not sufficient to examine the strategic choices of the rejected asylum seekers in the Netherlands.

2.3 Strategic Action Approach

“Although we often do not act ‘rationally’ and outcomes are often unintended, we do act purposefully” (Ganz, 2000, p.1010). Strategies are crucial to claim-makers, especially since they make choices in situations that do not conform to the rational choice-based propositions.

A purely strategic approach omits the 'why' of collective actions (Smithey, 2009, p.662) and consequently misses 'how' activists make decisions within social movements (Jasper, 2017, p.294). As Doherty and Hayes (2018) identified, "in an age where protest seems to be ubiquitous, our understanding of decisions that activists make about tactics and strategy remains underdeveloped and disputed" (p.282). As the emergence of 'We Are Here' is counterintuitive, this empirical case study is an interesting one to analyse in order to understand the strategic choices of activists. To examine these choices, the Strategic Action approach will be used, which will be thoroughly discussed in the upcoming section.

Recently, North American scholars have been reacting to the increase in criticism against structural and rational choice explanations of collective actions by paying attention to the concept of strategy (Doherthy & Hayes, 2018, p.280). Among these scholars is James Jasper who has written extensively on the strategic interactions between actors and social movements. Because of this increased criticism, Jasper provided an alternative Strategic Action approach that aims to understand the motivations actors have in regard to their tactics through capturing the cultural meanings, the moral sentiments, and emotions that actors ascribe to strategic choices in their constant struggle for societal change (Jasper, 2004, p.10). This alternative approach thus rejects the idea that strategic choices are simply based on rational reasoning and due to the emphasis on activists' agency, the approach aims to overcome the main criticism on collective action research.

It is essential to focus on strategy within collective action research since it restores the balance between structure and agency in the analysis of social movements' actions and claim for social change (Downey and Rohlinger, 2008, p.5). According to Downey and Rohlinger (2008, p.5), strategy broadly entails the connections that activists make between their claims and collective actions in order to achieve the social change pursued. Or as Ganz (2000) defined: "strategy is the conceptual link we make between places, the times, and ways we mobilise and deploy our resources, and the goals we hope to achieve" (p.1010). "Strategy is how we turn what we have into what we need" (ibid, p.1010) by transforming resources in collective action plans that intend to achieve a goal in a particular environment (Maney, Andrews, Kutz-Flamenbaum, Rohlinger, & Goodwin, 2012, xvii). Strategy, thus, encompasses selections and related decisions about "tactics, claims, targets, and alliances" (Meyer & Staggenborg, 2012, p.4) within social movements' mobilisations.

However, Meyer and Staggenborg (2012, p.4) pointed out that sociologists in social movement studies lack a consensual definition of strategic choices. Therefore, I constructed my own theoretical definition based on the previous descriptions of strategy. Strategic choices are

defined as: choices made by political actors based on a strategy that contributes to the efforts of getting others to do what they want them to do. Ultimately, the intention is to accomplish a perceived beneficial outcome, or goal, within a particular context in which contentious claims are being made.

Strategic choices and decisions, however, do not occur in a vacuum and are influenced by structural conditions and interactions with other actors in the field of contention (Meyer & Staggenborg, 2012, p.4). Jasper (2015, p.14) therefore claimed to examine the context of mobilisations as multiple arenas in order to include the agency of actors and the related interactions. Jasper (2015) defined arenas as "a bundle of rules and resources that allow or encourage certain kinds of interactions to proceed, with something at stake" (p.14). These may refer to officially constituted rules, as well as moral norms. There is a wide variety of arenas, from institutionalised arenas, such as law courts, to informal practices and expectations within the amorphous arena of public opinions (ibid, p.15). The conceptualisation of arenas apprehends the political constraints which were captured in the name of structure but distinguishes itself from the concept political opportunity structures, since it also entails physical, cultural, and strategic constraints present in arenas (Jasper, 2015, p.16; Jasper, 2012b, p.28). Arenas are further clarified when relevant in this thesis.

Jasper (2004) underlined the necessity for an alternative strategic approach and discussed the conceptual features that the approach must entail. However, he did not provide a clear theoretical framework. This thesis is, therefore, structured on the basis of the theoretical frame constructed by Meyer and Staggenborg (2012) in order to understand and evaluate social movements' strategies and associated choices. As earlier stated, strategic choices are decisions with a purpose and a particular goal in mind. To analyse the strategies and choices of the rejected asylum seekers, it is vital to examine the "choices about claims, issues, allies, frames, identity, and (re)presentation" (Meyer & Staggenborg, 2012, p.4). Hence, the theoretical framework differentiates between three fundamental components of strategic choices: demands[28], tactics, and arenas. These three components will provide the structure on which this thesis is build and will be further elucidated when relevant in the following chapters.

Meyer and Staggenborg (2012, p.18) clearly stated that "we are not suggesting a mechanical framework for the study of strategy. Any empirical study needs to depict the complexity and emotionality of strategic choices and ongoing interactions involved in collective action". Hence, to describe and analyse these three fundamental features, other

[28] Meyer and Staggenborg (2012, 7) use the concepts demand and claim interchangeable. However, in this thesis I will refer to claims since it is consistent with the Strategic Action approach of Jaspers.

associated theories will be addressed in the upcoming chapters, in order to demonstrate the complexity of social movements' mobilisations. As a consequence, this thesis will combine the narrative- and integrated approach to thoroughly analyse the empirical case study.

2.4 Summary

In sum, social movements make use of contentious collective actions to articulate their claims and to achieve societal change. As became apparent, the majority of the choices of activists are affected by the existing structures in the cultural and political environment. However, the empirical case study is a great example to witness that activist do have agential power and can make strategically unexpected choices to surprise the opponents. It is, therefore, necessary to observe and analyse these strategic choices of the members of 'We Are Here' within the tactical repertoire of contention. These strategic choices are examined through the use of the Strategic Action approach. This alternative approach aims to overcome the criticism of the one-sided focus on political structural constraints and rational based-assumptions in the collective action research. This approach therefore focusses on the micro-foundations of social and political interactions and thus explains why and how actors aim to change structures. This theoretical approach is thus useful to understand and analyse the strategic choices of the member of 'We Are Here' who are positioned in a liminal situation[29] and the seemingly counterintuitive choice to become visible. However, before moving on to the analysis of the strategic choices, it is necessary to elaborate on the operationalisation of the earlier theoretical discussed concepts and to discuss the methods of data collection that are used during this research and the associated research design.

[29] In-between phase; neither eligible for a residence permit, nor able to return to their country of origin.

Chapter 3. Research Methodology

In this chapter, the methodological choices of this research will be discussed. In the first section, the research strategy and the sampling method will be explained. Thereafter, the research method and the method of analysis will be presented, and lastly critical reflections on the fieldwork experience and research limitations will be given.

3.1 Research Strategy

In this section the ontological, epistemological, and methodological strategy of this thesis will be explained. As it has been argued in the theoretical chapter, the strategic choices of activists are not self-contained. They are rather influenced through interactions with other actors in the field (Meyer & Staggenborg, 2012, p.4). As a result, the strategic choices cannot be examined independently and therefore the relation with other actors in the field will be discussed in this thesis. Hence, the ontological nature of this research is structurationist, which is in line with the strategic action approach that studies the strategic choices of the activists and the associated interactions between structure and agency. This ontological stance is built on the widely accepted theory of Giddens (1984, p.25), who argues that the relation between structure and agency is dialectical and mutually constitutive. In this thesis the emphasis will be on the agency-side within the interactional process, as there is an underdeveloped understanding of activists' strategies and tactical choices (Doherty & Hayes, 2018, p.282).

Epistemologically, this research takes an interpretative stance, since it does not aim to solely explain human behaviour, it also aims to understand the logic behind human behaviour (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.16). As Jasper (2017) clearly pointed out, tactics are not merely actions to accomplish a certain goal but need to be analysed as having "moral and emotional value", since activists "all have culturally shaped 'taste in tactics' that guide their choices (p.294). Thus, to comprehend *how* strategic choices are made, it is necessary to understand the meaning of collective action and associated perceptions of the activists (Demmers, 2017, p.17; Jasper, 2017, p.294). Hence, this research analyses the refugee collective from 'inside out', since it focusses on what strategy means from the perspective of the rejected asylum seekers and the strategic choices based on their interpretations of the social world around them (Doherty & Hayes, 2018, p.282).

Consistent with the structurationist interpretative stance, a qualitative research strategy is most appropriate. Qualitative research is predominantly used to research "the ways in which

individuals interpret their social world" (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.27). This research strategy in particular makes use of data collection techniques such as participant observation and (in-depth) interviewing in order to comprehend the participants' perspective of the world (ibid, p.30; Boeije, 2010, p.33). Qualitative research is also often preferred to inquire other persons' experiences and emotions (Boeije, 2010, p.33). Thus, the qualitative research strategy provides the opportunity to get an understanding of *how* strategic choices are made, since it provides the possibility to "unpick the intuitive or taken-for-granted features of strategic actions" (Doherty & Hayes, 2018, p.283). In addition, qualitative research takes an inductive approach to the relation between research and theory. It therefore corresponds with the significance of this research, namely the aim to inductively derive components that are essential to make strategic choices within a social movement (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.27). In sum, this thesis is based on a qualitative research strategy in order to examine the empirical social movement case of 'We Are Here' and to generate qualitative data which is in line with the structurationist interpretative research stance.

3.2 Sampling Method

In this section, the sampling method of this research will be discussed based on the 'where, when, what, and who' questions. 'Where' and 'when' refers to the fieldwork location and the research period, whereas 'what' and 'who' refers to the unit of analysis and the research population.

In terms of 'where', the location of the research is Amsterdam, the Netherlands, because the refugee collective 'We Are Here' is based and active in and around this particular city. In regard to 'when', the qualitative ethnographic fieldwork I conducted took place from the middle of March until the end of May 2019 (nine weeks in total).

Initially, a research time frame from the beginning of 2018 until May 2019 was chosen based upon my expectation that the current members of 'We Are Here' were not able to share information about tactics and strategies used in previous years. New people were constantly joining the refugee collective as well as leaving the group. The information on the frequent change in members was gathered during two preliminary meetings previous to the actual research period[30].

[30] During the time of writing the research proposal in January and February, I have visited the weekly organised meetings of 'We Are Here' on two occasions.

However, while conducting fieldwork it became evident that former rejected asylum seekers[31] who were previous coordinators and/or spokesmen of 'We Are Here' before 2018, were still taking part in the social movement. No longer as members of 'We Are Here' since eventually they got a residence permit, but as supporters or as friends of the illegalised migrants. Due to their presence and through the snowball technique which "involves asking people who have already been interviewed to identify other people they know who fit the research population" (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls & Ormston, 2013, p.94), I was able to interview former members of 'We Are Here' who possessed knowledge about the emergence of the social movement and who were deeply engaged in the claim-making process during previous years. As a result, I also gained information about the emergence of the social movement outside of the initial time frame of the research question. As a result, I changed the time frame from 2018 to the start of the emergence of the social movement in 2012 in order to include the conducive data about strategies of former members of 'We Are Here'.

In regard to the 'what' and 'who' of the research, the units of analysis are the strategic choices of the members of the 'We Are Here' social movement and the collective actions organised by the refugee collective. Before the research, I anticipated that 'We Are Here' solely comprised rejected asylum seekers. However, during my fieldwork period I was confronted with the fact that also 'Dublin Claimants'[32] had joined the social movement. Since both groups are involved in the mobilisation of the refugee collective and consequently make strategic choices, I decided to include both groups to have a greater representation of reality. Throughout this thesis, however, the difference between the members will only be underlined when relevant. When irrelevant, I will refer to the members as illegalised migrant, since they initiated the social movement.

Furthermore, in order to understand the strategic choices of the members of 'We Are Here', a non-probability sampling method is required. This method is commonly referred to as 'purposive sampling' and implies that the research population is intentionally selected according to the salient features of the research statement because the selected population "can teach us a lot about the issues that are of importance to the research" (Boeije, 2010, p.35). It would be wrong to use a probability sample which implies that the unit of analysis is randomly selected, and each unit has an equal chance of being included in the research (Bryman & Bell,

[31] After the establishment of 'We Are Here', more than 100 rejected asylum seekers did after all receive a residence permit based on their individual cases. www.wijzijnhier.org.
[32] The difference between rejected asylum seekers and Dublin Claimants is explained in the Chapter 1. A 'Policy Gap' and the emergence of 'We Are Here'.

2011, p.179). This sampling method often aims for statistical inference which is not the purpose of this research (Boeije, 2010, p.35). Thus, a non-probability method is therefore consistent with the interpretative epistemological stance of this research, which aims to interpret the social phenomena 'from within' (Demmers, 2017, p.17).

As explained above, 'We Are Here' is organised in and around Amsterdam. Because of their precarious situation, the movement squats empty buildings in order to establish temporary shelters. Since not all members suite in one building, the refugee collective is subdivided into smaller groups. There are at the moment five different groups under the name of 'We Are Here'. Via a former spokesman of 'We Are Here', I came in contact with one of the groups. A group of fifty men, who warmly welcomed my presence. Fortunately, this particular group was also the most active and visible one. During the research period, this group engaged with the neighbourhood, the media, and the municipality. The illegalised migrants and supporters were sampled according to the snowball technique. This implies that the sample frame is member-identified and was helpful to amplify the units of analysis.

3.3 Research Method for Data Collection

The research method, the way in which the data is collected, is subdivided into four phases and will be discussed in the separate sections below.

3.3.1 Phase 1: Description of Context

The aim of this phase is to describe and understand the living situation of the rejected asylum seekers, based on two reasons. Firstly, in order to understand why the rejected asylum seekers chose to make themselves visible in 2012, it is essential to understand their 'liminal' position in society. This liminal position refers to an in-between stage, neither eligible for a residence permit, nor able to return to their country of origin.

Secondly, related to the choice to become visible, it is important to examine the liminal position from which the illegalised migrants organised collective contentious actions. This enables me to analyse how their liminal situation influences the strategic choices they make. To this end, I conducted informal conversations, visited multiple times a week their temporary 'house' to observe the day-to-day situation, and conducted six semi-structured in-depth interviews with former and current members of the refugee collective. Moreover, I interviewed a judicial worker, specialised in asylum regulations, on two occasions in order to understand

how the rejected asylum seekers ended up in the liminal situation. Additionally, I read relevant academic articles and reports to better understand the legal background of liminal position.

3.3.2 Phase 2: Cataloguing the Repertoire of Contention

Before the strategic choices of the members of 'We Are Here' can be explored, it was first necessary to know the available repertoire of contention. In this phase I collected data about different organised forms of collective actions, or tactics. These tactics were identified based on the three criteria: (1) the involvement of contestation, (2) intentionality, and (3) the construction of collective identity (Taylor & Van Dyke, 2004, 14). These criteria of tactics are clear and researchable indicators and were therefore fruitful to examine the repertoire of contention of 'We Are Here'. As explained in the theoretical chapter, these criteria also include events that were open for the public but were not held in public (e.g. squatted buildings, community shelter). All these different tactics are assembled in an event catalogue, covering the initial time frame of the research question – from the beginning of 2018 until May 2019[33] (See Appendix 1. Event Catalogue).

The data in this phase was partly gathered through the use of documentary analysis: "Documentary analysis involves the study of documents and is particularly useful where the history of events has relevance" (Ritchie et al., 2013, p.35). I also examined public online resources that reported on the events of the refugee collective, such as local newspapers, as well as their website and their Facebook page on which their events were promoted. In addition, through informal conversations and participant observation I succeeded to include also less-publicly known events. Through the use of multiple data collection techniques, I triangulated the yielded data in other words to "double- or cross-check the collected and/or partially analysed data from another method" (Curtis & Curtis, 2011, p.70). Thus, through the use of various data collection techniques, I aimed to achieve the most accurate and comprehensive information.

3.3.3. Phase 3: Collection of Strategic Choices

The aim of this phase was to identify data on the strategic choices made within the earlier identified repertoire of contention. This implies yielding data that reflect the illegalised

[33] The event catalogue is based on the initial research time frame since I could not guarantee the specific dates of earlier events. However, I changed the time frame of the research after the research took place and therefore I did not incorporate earlier events.

migrants' perspective, experiences, and emotions linked to the strategic choices made (Boeije, 2010, p.33).

The data in this phase was gathered based on the earlier provided definition of strategic choices[34]. This definition provides clear and researchable indicators which enables me to analyse the strategic choices of the members of 'We Are Here'. The definition shows that it is necessary to pay attention to the plan of collective action, the perceived beneficial outcome, the claim that is articulated, the target of the claim, and the alliances activists have. These aspects are thus researched in this phase, with the aim to understand the strategic choices made in the repertoire of contention and to capture unexpected emergence of the refugee collective.

The data collection technique in this phase has been threefold. Firstly, I observed and participated in weekly meetings in order to get an understanding of the organisational structure of the social movement. Secondly, I conducted five in-depth interviews with former and current coordinators since they possess broad knowledge about strategies and decision-making processes, and four in-depth interviews with actively engaged supporters. In order to capture the motivations and the reason of strategic choices, I chose in-depth interviewing as the most appropriate data collection technique (Ritchie et al., 2013, p.58).

Thirdly, I arranged a focus group with three coordinators to discuss standardised strategic dilemmas which the illegalised migrants may encounter during their mobilisation (See Appendix 3. Focus Group: Strategic Dilemmas). According to Jasper (2015) "individuals are not always fully conscious of all their goals and projects, and they certainly do not always articulate them to others [whether to articulate them publicly as a dilemma] [..] but would probably recognize them if [they] were challenged or interrogated about them" (p.13). Therefore, I choose to organise a focus-group session that offered me the "opportunity to explore how people think and talk about a topic, how their ideas are shaped, generated or moderated through conversation with others" (Ritchie et al., 2013, p.37). During the focus group I made use of the dilemma analysis which "brings into focus respondents' reactions to situations that have no right answer, that is dilemmas" (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p.128). Dilemma analysis consists of two different types of dilemmas: 1) real-life, respondent-generated dilemma and 2) hypothetical, researcher-generated dilemma (ibid, p.129). The latter was used foremost. During the organised focus group, eleven standardised dilemmas were discussed, and the participators were asked about "what they would do and what would guide

[34] Strategic choices are defined as: choices made by political actors based on a strategy that contributes to the efforts of getting others to do what they want them to do. Ultimately, the intention is to accomplish a perceived beneficial outcome, or goal, within a particular context in which contentious claims are being made.

their decision-making" (ibid, p.129) regarding the proposed dilemmas. These standardised dilemmas derived from the strategic dilemma list provided by Jasper (2004; 2006), which he inductively constructed from empirical research (ibid, p.2) (See Appendix 2. Interview List). In sum, the focus group was a fruitful data collection technique apart from in-depth interviews, since it activated conversations about demands, tactics, and strategic choices that are made on a, sometimes unconscious, basis.

3.3.4. Phase 4: Classification and Data Analysis

In the last phase of the research I organised, classified, and analysed the yielded data. Throughout the fieldwork period, I transcribed the conducted interviews, extended my field notes, and kept the event catalogue up to date by adding new organised events or actions. Nevertheless, the gathered data was organised and classified mainly in the last phase of the period. Subsequently, it was possible to identify missing information and gather more specific data in order to analyse and interpret the yielded data.

During the analysation phase, I used the qualitative data analysis software of NVivo, which allowed me to code and categorise m y data efficiently. After inserting all the transcripts and field notes, I openly coded the yielded data. "Open coding is the process of selecting and naming categories from the analysis of the data" (Curtis & Curtis, 2011, p.44). It allowed me to inductively analyse and identify categories that appeared from this data by reviewing the information in search of recurring subjects and inherent patterns (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2011, p.183; Curtis & Curtis, 2011, p.43). As a result, I identified themes that were case-driven and of importance for the members of 'We Are Here', rather than constructing categories prior to the data collection (Curtis & Curtis, 2011, p.43).

Through the case-driven categories, I could identify small gaps in the data that was collected up to this point. For instance, it became apparent that the supporters played an important role in the mobilisation of the refugee collective. The presence of the supporters affected the strategic choices of the members of 'We Are Here'. Therefore, I decided to include more questions with regard to the relationship with supporters in the interviews with illegalised migrants. Additionally, I chose to interview several supporters since it became apparent that these supporters possessed important information on strategies and tactics of the refugee collective. As a result of the identified gaps, I was able to specifically gather information with regard to these gaps in order to guarantee that I obtained sufficient data to cover the research topics. This was mostly done through informal conversations and short interviews with

previously interviewed informants with the intention to create a greater "detailed subject coverage" (Ritchie et al., 2013, p.36).

After all research topics were covered, I continued analysing the yielded data, making use of axial and selective coding to identify relationships between categories and to distinguish 'core' codes from the previously created codes in open and axial coding (Curtis & Curtis, 2011, p.45). In NVivo, this led to a structured diagram with core codes and multiple sub-codes. This diagram allowed me to identify connections and link the data to a broader theoretical frame.

To summarise, my data collection method consisted of four interrelated phases in which I interviewed eleven former and current members of the refugee collective, four supporters of the group, and a judicial worker. Furthermore, I organised a focus group with the coordinators of 'We Are Here' (See Appendix 2. Interview List). The duration of these interviews varied from twenty to ninety minutes. It is essential to point out that all the names in this thesis are pseudonyms in order to guarantee full anonymity of the interviewees. Additionally, multiple quotes have slightly been adjusted to construct grammatically correct sentences.

3.4 Ethical Considerations and Research Limitations

It is essential to critically reflect on the conducted research. Therefore, the limitations of this enquiry will be discussed in this section. Due to the interpretative nature of this research I, as a researcher, am confronted with the 'double hermeneutic'. The 'double hermeneutic' relates to the researcher's aim to acquire knowledge through academically interpreting how the subjects under research understand and perceive their social world (Demmers, 2017, p.17). Since I am the researcher conducting fieldwork, I am the research instrument as well, choosing which topics are perceived to be relevant in regard to answering the research questions. As a consequence, my position as a researcher might have affected the gathered data and the drawn conclusions in this thesis since it is a result of my own interpretation of the interpretations of my informants, based on their understandings and construction of their social reality (Curtis & Curtis, 2011, pp.47-8). Therefore, my findings are not be generalisable for the whole refugee collective 'We Are Here' and as a consequence, I do not aim to, and cannot claim to represent all the experiences and strategic choices of the members of 'We Are Here'.

Furthermore, it is important to address some ethical issues that usually arise in qualitative social research. One of the ethical principles is the 'do no harm principle'. But who defines what harm is? According to Bryman and Bell (2011), "harm can entail a number of facets: (1) physical harm; (2) harm to participants' development or self-esteem; (3) stress; (4)

harm to career prospects or future employment; and (5) inducing subjects to perform reprehensible acts (ibid, p.128). The precarious situation of the illegalised migrants already creates quite a lot of stress and, in some cases, damages the self-esteem of the individuals[35] (further explained in Chapter Four). Therefore, I predominantly focussed on the mobilisation and strategic choices of the members of 'We Are Here' in the interviews, rather than on personal stories and experiences. Questions about the reasons why the illegalised migrants left their country of origin or how they arrived in the Netherlands are irrelevant in order to answer the research question. Consequently, these questions were not part of the interview questions, in order to minimise possible harm to the interviewees. In addition, during the research I noticed that the illegalised migrants appreciated my interest in their situation and mobilisation. I am therefore confident to say that in my opinion I confirmed to the do no harm principle.

Another ethical principle is to obtain informed consent from informants, an issue that is closely related to the do no harm principle. With the intention to do no harm, it is essential to be open and clear about the purpose of the research (Curtis & Curtis, 2011, p.92). From the beginning of my fieldwork, I have been open about the reason why I was daily 'hanging out' in the squatted building and why I participated in organised events. At the beginning of each interview, I explained the purpose of the interview and the purpose of the research in general. I underlined the possibility to refuse to answer specific questions, and explicitly asked consent of the interviewee to use his or hers answers as data in the research. Additionally, I use pseudonyms instead of real names in order to guarantee full anonymity of the informants (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.129). In sum, I aimed to conduct my interviews with fully informed and consenting participants.

Furthermore, as Curtis and Curtis (2011) stated, "it is possible that members of the community or group under observation become so used to the researcher's presence that they allow illegal or immoral activities to be witnessed" (p.93). During the research period, I witnessed the squatting of a building in Amstelveen. Squatting, however, has been a criminal act since 2010[36]. As Curtis and Curtis (2011) pointed out, in certain situations the research is legally compelled to report the criminal act to the police, but in other instances the researcher "needs to weigh up the severity of the act and its consequences against the implications for the research" (p.93). In this case, I chose not to become involved in the squatting itself and decided to not report it to the police since the members of 'We Are Here' always directly contact and

[35] Several illegalised migrants underlined the emotional effect of their precarious situation in interviews.

[36] https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/huurwoning/vraag-en-antwoord/is-het-kraken-van-een-woning-strafbaar

inform the police after a 'successful' squat[37].

Moreover, besides the fact that this research is built on the information gathered from one sole group – a subgroup of the 'We Are Here' refugee collective – this group also solely consisted of men. It is a limitation of this research that I was not able to incorporate the vision, decisions, and choices of female rejected asylum seekers. There are two reasons for the absence of female input in this thesis. Firstly, it appeared difficult to establish rapport with members of the female counterpart of 'We Are Here'. Although I visited a squatted building of their group once, further cooperation was not forthcoming since they preferred not to share contact details. In addition, the female group was not as actively engaged in contentious collective actions as the male group and thus less 'useful' in regard to the research question. Nevertheless, as a suggestion for further research, it would be interesting to compare the collective actions and strategic choices of the male and female group.

Another limitation of this research is the limited amount of time in which the research was conducted. It was only possible to conduct the research from March until the end of May 2019. However, due to the fact that I had the opportunity to meet and interview former members of 'We Are Here', I could extend the time frame of the research question to the start of the social movement. In addition, since the research location was in the Netherlands, I had the ability to visit 'We Are Here' outside the formal research period to gather the last data and to cover all the research topics.

[37] The members of 'We Are Here' always directly contact the police, who always visit the 'newly' squatted building. Due to the fact that the social movement has been squatting for seven years, the police are familiar with the refugee collective and know that 'We Are Here' moves from one place to another. Consequently, the police have knowledge of the precarious situation of the illegalised migrants and therefore rarely arrest them. The members of 'We Are Here' can only be arrested when caught during the 'action'.

Chapter 4. Liminality and the Strategy of Visibility

As became clear in Chapter One, there is a ‘policy gap’ in the immigration control policies between its ambitions and the reality on the ground. As a result of this ‘policy gap’, rejected asylum seekers are positioned in a precarious situation in which they are neither eligible for a residence permit nor able to return home. This chapter provides an answer to the first sub-question: “what is the situation of the members of ‘We Are Here’?” by describing this precarious situation of illegalised migrants based on their lived experiences. This situation is conceptualised as a ‘liminal’ position in society. Since liminality refers to an in-between stage, it is necessary to briefly touch upon the concept of citizenship because in the end that is what the illegalised migrants aim for. Subsequently, the reasons to join the social movement are presented. This is relevant in order to understand the forthcoming analysed strategic choices of the illegalised migrants to become visible and operate publicly. As becoming publicly visible is one of the strategies of ‘We Are Here’, it partly provides an answer to the second sub-question: ‘what strategies do members of ‘We Are Here’ use in order to make claims?’. Thus, this chapter first conceptualises the precarious situation of the illegalised migrants and subsequently analyses the strategic choice to become visible. This analysis is essential to understand ‘We Are Here’s claim and their strategic choices to achieve this claim will be discussed in the upcoming chapters.

4.1 Liminality

As became apparent from previous chapters, there are illegalised migrants residing within the territorial boundaries of the Dutch nation-state without possessing the formal legal status of citizenship. Although citizenship[38] is a complex and continuously questioned concept, it generally refers to a legal status, established and provided by the nation-state, that recognizes individuals as citizens with general rights and responsibilities towards the state (Holston & Appadurai, 2003, p.297). This national membership shapes the understanding of the individuals’ place in society (Menjivar, 2006, p.1003). It is part of the immigration control policies to determine who can be granted this national membership and thus can participate in society, and who does not legally belong and therefore cannot claim general citizens’ rights (ibid, p.1002).

The illegalised migrants are not recognised as national citizens but do reside within the Dutch territorial boundaries. Therefore, they are positioned in a precarious situation because

[38] See for more information: Isin (2017); Oboler (2017); Plascenia (2012).

they are not able to claim governmental support and do not have the opportunity to work. This position is conceptualised as a 'liminal' situation. This concept is increasingly used in academic literature on migration and theorises this 'place' of illegalised migrants in society in regard to the notions of political and social belonging (Brun & Fabos, 2015, pp.10-11). In this thesis, therefore, it will be used to encompass the precarious situation of the members of 'We Are Here'.

Liminality is a classic anthropological concept that was usually employed to capture the middle phase of the social or sexual transition of life stages in societies such as adulthood. This transition is indicated as *rite de passage* and includes three phases: separation, liminality, and incorporation. The focus in this thesis lies on the middle phase, liminality, which implies that there will be a shift towards another state of being (Menjivar, 2006, p.1007; Brun & Fabos, 2015, p.10). It is defined as a situation in which a person is "neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law" (Turner, 1969, p.359). According to Turner (1969, p.359) liminality denotes structural invisibility since a 'liminal *persona'* does not match any classifications and thus stands outside legal and social categories (Brun & Fabos, 2015, p.10). It is especially because of this liminal status that illegalised migrants are extremely vulnerable to "abuse, detention, and deportation [..] because they are neither citizens of the countries of residence nor registered refugees" (ibid, p.11). Although the 'liminal *persona'* is extremely vulnerable, it is important to note that he or she is not static and powerless but rather an agentive individual (ibid, p.11). 'We Are Here' is a valuable example of this agential power since they chose to become visible and demonstrate their liminal position in society.

4.2 Experienced Liminality

To understand how the members of the refugee collective make strategic choices in their repertoire of contention, it is necessary to comprehend the experienced liminal position from which they make these contentious claims. As earlier clarified, the refugee collective consists of two groups of illegalised migrants. Even though there is a difference between status – the former has a refused asylum application and the latter did not yet start an asylum procedure – both groups are caught in a liminal situation. The quotes below show the consequences of the 'policy gap' of the illegalised migrants.

> "We call the Netherlands an open prison. We cannot go back home, we cannot cross the border, and in the Netherlands we do not get the opportunity for a stable life."[39]

> "We cannot leave, there is no chance to go forward and there is no chance to go backwards, we are in the middle. It is like a circle and we are in the middle. We cannot go anywhere."[40]

These quotes clearly refer, in their own words, to the description of liminality, being "betwixt and between" (Turner, 1969, p.359) and thus justify the use of this concept in this thesis. The following statements illustrate how it feels to be positioned outside the legal and social categories in the Dutch society.

> "I am a shadow person."[41]

> "It feels like we are not human beings, because of how the situation is. [..] "We do not fit in the society. [..] 'We Are Here', but we are not among the people."[42]

> "It is a disaster; it feels like I am still at war."[43]

The liminal position in society and the absence of fundamental governmental solutions in regard to their situation results in a feeling of lacking a 'shared humanity' (Michalowski, 2007, p.68). This is illustrated by the quotes above, in which it becomes apparent that a consequence of their liminal position is that these illegalised migrants do not feel part of the society and some even have the feeling of no longer being treated as human beings. In academia, this lack of shared humanity is referred to as the perception of 'dehumanisation' (ibid, p.68). According to Haslam (2006, p.256), the experience of dehumanisation takes place when the features that constitute 'humanness' are denied to people. One way of taking these humanness features away is to compare certain groups of people to animals (2006, p.252). As one of the informants expressed: "A human being cannot sleep outside. Even dogs and cats are not sleeping outside in the

[39] Interview with Abu [rejected asylum seeker] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 09-04-2019.
[40] Interview with Seiko [former rejected asylum seeker] former coordinator of 'We Are Here', 14-04-2019.
[41] Interview with Abu [rejected asylum seeker] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 09-04-2019.
[42] Interview with Eze [Dublin Claimant] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 08-04-2019.
[43] Interview with Malik [rejected asylum seeker] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 25-04-2019.

Netherlands, so why should we, as human beings?."[44] As Opotow (1990) argued, the feeling of unconnectedness and the perception of inattention to someone's suffering leads to the sense of being dehumanised (Opotow, 1990 *in* Halsam, 2006, p.254).

My goal here is not to argue that the illegalised migrants are dehumanised, but to emphasise that they experience a feeling of dehumanisation. In sum, as a result of the 'policy gap' the illegalised migrants are positioned in a liminal situation in which they are denied basic rights and therefore lack a sense of shared humanity, leading to the experience of being dehumanised. It is important to discuss these experienced feelings since it makes it easier to understand *why* illegalised migrants make themselves visible. This is further clarified below.

4.3 Reasons to Become Visible

While the previously explained liminal situation may seem hopeless, the illegalised migrants are not powerless individuals who are "just waiting for opportunities to act" (Jasper, 2010, p.966). On the contrary, the illegalised migrants decided to become visible and to raise awareness for their precarious situation in the hope for change. In this section, the reasons to step out of the shadow and join the refugee collective are discussed. Here, it is relevant to distinguish between the rejected asylum seekers and the 'Dublin Claimants', since their reasons to join 'We Are Here' differ.

One of the rejected asylum seekers, Thomas, who was engaged in the mobilisation from the start, metaphorically describes what his reason was to 'unexpectedly' become visible and join the 'tent camps' in Amsterdam.

> "At the end I had nothing to lose. I was ready for everything because sometimes when you are suffering long time… for example: some people who have cancer, after a long time of suffering from the pain, will reach to a point that they will say, 'I do not want to live anymore'. That does not mean they give up life, but the pain is too much. [..] For me, it was the same feeling but in a different way. I was on the streets and if they [government] send me back, I will get killed, but to suffer like this for more than 10 years, it is enough. I reached up to the point that I had nothing to lose. I did not care if I was alive or if I died. [..] You are like okay, what kind of life do I have now? I do not care anymore." [45]

[44] Interview with Dave [Dublin Claimant] member of 'We Are Here', 17-04-2019.
[45] Interview with Thomas [former rejected asylum seeker] former spokesman of 'We Are Here', 17-04-2019.

This quote shows that becoming visible was the last resort for Thomas. As other rejected asylum seekers confirmed, it did not feel like a choice to become visible. In their opinion, there was no other solution after suffering for several years. In their opinion, the situation could only change if they revealed the gap in the immigration control policies[46].

In contrast to the rejected asylum seekers, the 'Dublin Claimants' expressed other reasons to become part of the refugee collective, as the following quotes highlight:

> "I joined the group because I had no place to sleep. I had no choice, because I cannot sleep outside."[47]

> "I did not have a choice; I did not want to go back to the streets, and I did not want to go back to another country. [..] Somebody directed me to this place and told me that there were some other undocumented people who also have Dublin in Italy."[48]

'Dublin Claimants' expressed that their reason to join the refugee collective is primarily to have a temporary place to sleep, rather than a perception of a last resort. This can be clarified based on two reasons. Firstly, they do not experience the liminal situation as endless, due to the fact that 'Dublin Claimants' – eighteen months after their first appliance for asylum – have the possibility to start a new asylum application. Secondly, the necessity for a place to sleep is the result of the fact that in most cities 'Dublin Claimants' are not 'welcome' in shelters[49] for undocumented migrants. In the case they are welcome, there are often limited places[50]. This is due to the assumption of the Dutch immigration control policies that if no shelter is provided, 'Dublin Claimants' will return to their country of entry, the country where they are obliged to start their asylum procedure[51]. To summarise, 'Dublin Claimants' are positioned in a liminal situation for a maximum of eighteen months. However, their reason to join 'We Are Here' differs from rejected asylum seekers. The majority predominantly expressed first the need for shelter rather than demonstrating their precarious situation.

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[46] Based on interviews with Seiko, Malik, Abu, and Touré.
[47] Interview with Dave [Dublin Claimant] member of 'We Are Here', 17-04-2019.
[48] Interview with Sefu [Dublin Claimant] member of 'We Are Here', 13-05-2019.
[49] There are shelters for undocumented migrants where a bed, bath, and bread are provided. In the following chapter more information is given.
[50] Based on the interview with judicial worker, 05-06-2019 and https://www.groene.nl/artikel/het-is-beter-om-niet-te-veel-te-weten.
[51] Interview with judicial worker, 05-06-2019.

Although, the reasons to join 'We Are Here' differed between the various members, it is important to note that the illegalised migrants themselves do not differentiate between the members. This became apparent when during the focus group[52], the 'extension dilemma' was thoroughly discussed. This dilemma refers to "whether your membership will be restricted or open [..], the further you expand your group, the less coherent your goals and actions can be" (Jasper, 2004, p.7-8). The reaction of one of the rejected asylum on this dilemma was as followed: "I do not see the difference between us and them, the only difference is that we arrived in different countries."[53] Thomas added to this statement: "We accept them because they are in the same situation as we are."[54]

Extending social movements' population may increase the diversity of activists and it may therefore be difficult to maintain a sharp collective identity (Jasper, 2004, p.7). Collective identity of a social movement refers to: "a shared sense of 'we-ness' that 'derives' or 'emerges' from shared cognitions, beliefs, and emotions among a group of individuals actively pursuing social or political change" (Smithey, 2009, p.659). A consequence of a less specific collective identity may reduce the strength of the actions and the pursued claim (Jasper, 2017; Taylor & Van Dyke, 2004).

However, in the case of 'We Are Here', the extension of members does not seem to have an effect on the shared collective identity. As Malik highlighted in an interview: "All of us are passing through the same situation. So, we are like a family. 'We Are Here' is family."[55] This idea of being a family, which was also expressed by other informants[56], underlines that there is a sense of a shared collective identity.

Thus, even though the 'Dublin Claimants' have a different reason for joining, they are welcomed as members of the refugee collective and they share a collective identity since all members experience a liminal situation. The next chapter further elaborates on the importance of this collective identity in the representation of their claim.

4.4 Powerful Agents

In the previous sections, the experienced liminal situation and the reasons to become visible and join the refugee collective were presented. In this part, it becomes clear that the choice to

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[52] As explained in the methodological chapter, one focus group is held with three coordinators of 'We Are Here' based on the inductively constructed list of strategic dilemmas by Jasper (2004).
[53] Interview with Malik [rejected asylum seeker] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 25-04-2019.
[54] Interview with Thomas [former rejected asylum seeker] former spokesman of 'We Are Here', 17-04-2019.
[55] Interview with Malik [rejected asylum seeker] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 25-04-2019.
[56] Other informants that experienced 'We Are Here' as a family are Eze, Abu, Seiko, and Alex.

become visible is a strategic one as a reaction to the precarious situation the members find themselves in.

According to Whittier (2012), becoming publicly visible is “a strategy for social change” (p.146). The emergence of the ‘tent camps’ in several Dutch cities depicts perfectly the agential power of the illegalised migrants and their strategic choice to become visible. This is well explicated by Thomas:

> “[..] the only way that was left was the freedom of speech. [..] We do not have any other weapon to use, only the one to speak and create visibility. To try to find a solution to our situation, that is why we came together.”[57]

Becoming publicly visible and making the choice to ‘no longer hide’ is strategy to change the current situation. This strategy of becoming visible or ‘coming out’ was clearly observable in the early 1970s with the gay and lesbian liberation movements and therefore this strategy is still often associated with similar movements. However, in academic literature this is strategy of ‘coming out’ is as well recognised in other social movement such as the mobilisations of undocumented migrants in which these migrants also choose to ‘no longer hide’ (Whittier, 2012, p.146; Enrique & Sanguy, 2015, p.110; Corrunker, 2012). Thus, ‘coming out’ of the shadow was the only option left in the case of the rejected asylum seekers in order to change their liminal position in society.

Furthermore, an important aspect of the visibility strategy is the collectively of stepping out the shadows or as Thomas said: “[..] that is why we came together [to become visible] [..] people started to look around because there were a lot of asylum cases that have been rejected and people were send out on the streets and some were unlucky and send to detention centres.”[58] Finding each other and making the choice together to publicly demonstrate the precarious situation attracted other rejected asylum seekers. This is beautifully illustrated in the quote of Touré:

> “I know how it is to hide if you do not have the right papers. But then I thought, I am not going to hide anymore, and I will join the group [‘We Are Here’] because these people are not afraid. [..] By being together, I really felt that I am not alone.

[57] Interview with Thomas [former rejected asylum seeker] former spokesman of ‘We Are Here’, 17-04-2019.
[58] Interview with Thomas [former rejected asylum seeker] former spokesman of ‘We Are Here’, 17-04-2019.

[..] That is the reason I joined the group, to fight with other undocumented refugees and to not be ashamed because you do not have papers."[59]

According to Taylor and Van Dyke (2004, p.270), one of the most crucial tasks of social movements is to establish opportunities and foster incentives to overweigh the costs of participation by creating solidarity and a shared sense of 'we-ness'. The quote of Touré underlines that the collectiveness of their visibility approach reduced the fear of not having the right papers and thus overweighs the costs of taking part in the mobilisation. The strategic choice to step out of the shadows is thus as Enrique and Sanguy (2015, p.112) stated based on a shared understanding of the necessity to overcome and reduce fear.

Moreover, the quote of Touré shows that being together with other individuals who are in a similar situation reduces the feeling of shame. Additionally, in several informal conversation with rejected asylum seekers, it became clear that this feeling of shame was replaced by a feeling of deserving dignity[60]. According to Whittier (2012), 'coming out' is inherently linked to identity strategies which "includes individual or group disclosure of identity with the aim of producing change in how individuals understand and feel about their identity" (p.147). On the basis of the conversations, it could be concluded that collectively 'coming out' changed the way how rejected asylum seekers would perceive themselves. It changed from feeling shame about the lack of documents towards a feeling of having "the right to life."[61]

Furthermore, Touré further explained: "We were not afraid, we thought let's come together and see if they can deport us all together. They could not put all of us in detention, we were with so many people."[62] This quote shows that becoming collectively visible ensures a degree of safety. In his article Amaya-Castro (2015) refers to the case of 'We Are Here' in order to give "a brief account of what happens when undocumented migrants become activists" (p.154). He stated that "the collectivity of their approach is what makes it possible for them to become visible" (ibid, p.163). It may seem contradictory, becoming collectively visible makes the rejected asylum seekers even more visible and could therefore increase the change of detention. However, this collectiveness of their approach also provides a degree of security as Touré highlighted (Amaya-Castro, 2015, p.163).

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[59] Interview with Touré [former rejected asylum seeker] former spokesman of 'We Are Here', 19-04-2019.
[60] Informal conversations with Seiko, Malik, and Abu.
[61] Interview with Malik [rejected asylum seeker] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 25-04-2019.
[62] Interview with Touré [rejected asylum seeker] former spokesman of 'We Are Here', 19-04-2019.

In conclusion, collectively becoming visible influences the way how illegalised migrants perceive themselves. At the same time, the collectiveness of their approach established a degree of security and encouraged other illegalised migrants to join, which made them even more visible and contributed to a shared sense of collective identity (Whittier, 2012, p.145; Amaya-Castro, 2015, p.163; Mensink, 2018, p.8).

4.5 Summary

To summarise, it is argued that the concept of 'liminality' is appropriate to use in order to describe the precarious situation of the illegalised migrants based on their experiences. Due to the liminal situation, the illegalised migrants do not feel part of the Dutch society and some individuals therefore have the feeling of being dehumanised. It is exactly because of this liminal situation that the rejected asylum seekers decided to collectively become visible. This 'visibility act' underlines the fact that these illegalised migrants are not powerless individuals but definitely have agency.

The collectiveness of their 'coming out' strategy made it possible to overcome the fear of detention and/or deportation and stipulated a degree of security. Coming out of the shadow can thus be viewed as the main strategy of 'We Are Here' in order to find a solution for their precarious position in society. In the words of Whittier (2012), "activists use visibility as a strategy for influencing mainstream culture, institutions, and public policies" (p.146). As became evident from the empirical data, the coming out action affects individual's perceptions on identity and adds to the construction of a shared collective identity. As illustrated in this chapter, the collective identity is based on the shared experiences in the liminal situation. The following chapter presents *how* this collective identity influences strategic choices in pursuing their claim.

Chapter 5. Strategic Claim-Making

As discussed in the previous chapter, becoming visible is considered the core strategy of the refugee collective to achieve policy reforms[63]. However, the refugee collective does have another strategy in order to make claims, namely attracting supporters. Therefore, this chapter will also provide an answer to the second of sub-question. However, the exact claim that drives their activism has not yet been discussed. Therefore, the claim of 'We Are Here' will be clarified in the first section of this chapter. Subsequently, the second strategy of the refugee collective will be discussed. Furthermore, it will be analysed *how* the claim of 'We Are Here' is communicated with the government and the society. The evidence shows that gaining societal support is essential in order to achieve the pursued claim. A crucial aspect to gain supporters is to communicate the seriousness of the problem with public, i.e. the Dutch society. This communication is analysed in regard to the collective identity of the refugee collective since it affects the way in which the claim and the problem is framed towards the society. I argue that the choices made in the manner of communicating the claim are strategic choices based on the perceived collective identity of 'We Are Here'. This chapter will conclude with a short summary of the accomplishments of 'We Are Here' over the past seven years. The analysis in this chapter is relevant since it is necessary to first explore the claim that is proclaimed by the refugee collective in order to be able to observe and understand the strategic purpose of the chosen tactics, which are discussed in the following chapter.

5.1 What Are We Fighting For?

As expressed in multiple conversations, on banners, and on their website, the claim of 'We Are Here' is to have a 'normal life' (See Appendix 4. Banner). As one informant clarified: "We come together to fight for our rights because of the lack of peace and justice."[64] As another member pointed out: "Our right is for a basic life, for freedom so we can do what we want, to be a free person. [..] This is our goal because we are all human beings."[65] Based on informal conversations and interviews, it can be argued that the members of 'We Are Here' define a 'normal life' as being a 'free person', to have the right to work or study, to be able to maintain yourself financially and to participate in society. The illegalised migrants thus became visible

[63] Interview with Malik: "We have to change the policy". Coordinator of 'We Are Here', 25-04-2019.
[64] Interview with Thomas [former rejected asylum seeker] former spokesman of 'We Are Here', 17-04-2019.
[65] Interview with Abu [rejected asylum seeker] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 09-04-2019.

to protest against their precarious living conditions in which they are structurally denied basic rights (Dadusc, 2017, p.278).

To achieve the claim to have a 'normal life', certain immigration control policies need to be reformed. 'We Are Here' is therefore making claims bearing on the governments' interest. As described in the theoretical chapter, social movements make contentious claims, in the hope to change the current situation. Contentious claims refer to "calls for action on the part of some object that would, if realised, affect that object's interests" (McAdam, Tarrow, & Tilly, 2009, p.261). This implies that the claim-making process always contains a subject – the initiator of the claim – and an object – the actor who receives the claim. In most cases, however, there are more actors involved in this process. For instance, there could be allies who support the subject (Tilly & Tarrow, 2015, p.8). Moreover, claims become collective when "they depend on some sort of coordination among the people making the claims" (ibid, p.12). These collective claims turn into political ones when governments are involved as a target, subject, or third actor, as in the case of 'We Are Here' (ibid, p.12).

According to Meyer and Staggenborg (2012, p.7), one fundamental choice activists are forced to make is which claim to promote to the public. Social movements often have multiple issues which they aim to address, and they therefore have to make strategic decisions about which issue should be stressed at what time (ibid, p.7). Thus, strategically, activists aim to choose and highlight an issue that has the greatest probability to achieve their claim. This choice is based on their cultural meanings, emotions, and available resources in order to influence specific policies, mobilise individuals, and maintain supporters (ibid, pp.7-15; Jasper, 2004, p.10). In the following sections, it will be analysed how the members of 'We Are Here' strategically communicate their claim towards the Dutch society.

5.2 How to Articulate the Claim for a 'Normal Life'?

During an interview, Thomas explained *how* the refugee collective aims to remain visible and reach the claim for a 'normal life'. "To create more awareness we demonstrate, we create workshops, other events, we give speeches and presentations, that is how it is."[66] Malik, one of the coordinators, complemented Thomas: "We create events to show we exist, to explain our situation, to find supporters, and to fill the gap in the system because we want politicians to recognise our situation."[67] Aside from these quotes, other members indicated that another

[66] Interview with Thomas [former rejected asylum seeker] former spokesman of 'We Are Here', 17-04-2019.
[67] Interview with Malik [rejected asylum seeker] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 25-04-2019.

strategy is to 'find supporters' through creating awareness by sharing and explaining the situation towards the public aiming to attract supporters.

The strategic choice behind the strategy to find supporters is clearly substantiated by Thomas: "[..] because the government is not going to listen to us, but when we create pressure [with the aid of supporters], they will listen."[68] Sefu adds to this explanation: "We cannot fight the government alone so we have to gather, that is why we need more supporters, to join us."[69] In addition, throughout the research period it became apparent that, besides building up pressure on the government, there are two additional reasons why attracting supporters is essential. Firstly, the members of 'We Are Here' aimed to reach the public and show their living conditions in order to win sympathy and gain solidarity to receive basic utilities, such as food, blankets, and matrasses. This support is desperately needed since they lack governmental support and do not have the opportunity to work[70]. Secondly, the illegalised migrants also need resources in order to be able to continue making collective claims. Resources, as defined by Tilly and Tarrow (2015), are "the available means to actors [..] and include energy, ideas, practices, and material objects" (p.241). Since the illegalised migrants are deprived of basic necessities and are not extremely familiar with the Dutch state of affairs, their resources are quite limited. Therefore, supporters are vital to set up and join in collective actions since they have often more skills and resources than the migrants themselves[71].

One way to attract supporters is to create awareness through the use of social media. As Thomas explained: "We make use of social media to reach people, sharing and exchanging information about refugees and the asylum policies."[72] According to Taylor and Van Dyke (2004), activists in technological developed societies strive to "influence decision-makers primarily through indirect channels, such as the mass media and the Internet" (p.269). This thus corresponds with the way 'We Are Here' shares and exchanges information through social media with the aim to attract supporters.

Consequently, it becomes apparent that to win sympathy and support, the illegalised migrants do not only need to choose *which* claim to pursue but also need to decide on *how* to present and communicate this claim towards the public, since the claim needs to be legitimate (Meyer & Staggenborg, 2012, p.7; Santoro, 2008, p.1396). The construction and the

[68] Interview with Thomas [former rejected asylum seeker] former spokesman of 'We Are Here', 17-04-2019.
[69] Interview with Sefu [Dublin Claimant] member of 'We Are Here', 13-05-2019.
[70] Based on observations and interviews with Malik, Abu, Seiko, Eze, and Peter.
[71] Based on observations and interviews with two supporters Harry and Jane and interviews with Thomas, Malik, Abu, Touré, Dave, Alex.
[72] Interview with Thomas [former rejected asylum seeker] former spokesman of 'We Are Here', 17-04-2019.

representation of the collective identity is fundamental in convincing the public of the legitimacy of the claim (Taylor & Van Dyke, 2004, p.270). Therefore, in the following sections, the way in which the illegalised migrants represent and frame themselves in order to establish more sympathy and attract supporters will be analysed.

5.2.1 'We' Are a Collective

Since all illegalised migrants are positioned in the same problematic situation, their shared difficulties create a collective identity[73]. As an interviewee stressed: "The connection is here because we all have the same problem, the same situation."[74] In addition, another member of 'We Are Here' underlined: "We are dealing with the situation together, because all of us have suffered in the same situation."[75] Their marginalised position in society creates a shared sense of 'we-ness' and as a consequence, in the words of the illegalised migrants, 'We Are Here' is family."[76]

The construction of a collective identity within social movements is not only an important feature of recruiting other members. It is as well fundamental in establishing and sustaining solidarity and commitment towards a movement (Polletta & Jasper, 2001, p.291; Taylor & Van Dyke, 2004, p.270). This is because a social movements' collective identity makes contentious actions credible, evokes emotional responses of the public, and helps placing claims on the political agenda. Yet, this is only established when the collective identity resonates with the public (Whittier, 2012, p.150; Santoro, 2008, p.1396). According to Enriquez and Saguy (2015, p.11), the strategy of 'coming out' is not enough to create resonance. It is therefore important to analyse how the illegalised migrants represent and frame themselves in order to create solidarity and subsequently attract supporters to achieve their claim. Hence, in the next section the representation of 'We Are Here' towards the government and the society will be analysed.

5.2.2 Framing: Who Are We?

Generally, framing refers to the representation of a particular issue (Van Gorp, 2005, p.486). According to Benford and Snow (2000), this representation connotes "an active, processual

[73] As explained in the previous chapter: The collective identity of a social movement refers to "a shared sense of 'we-ness' that 'derives' or 'emerges' from shared cognitions, beliefs, and emotions among a group of individuals actively pursuing social or political change" (Smithey, 2009, p.659).
[74] Interview with Thomas [former rejected asylum seeker] former spokesman of 'We Are Here', 17-04-2019.
[75] Interview with Malik [rejected asylum seeker] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 25-04-2019.
[76] From interviews with several illegalised migrants: Abu, Malik, Seiko, Eze, and Thomas.

phenomenon that implies agency and contention at the level of reality construction" (p.614). Agency is implied since the construction of reality is the work of activists. The process is contentious since the interpretive frame involved is not only different from the "existing ones but may also challenge them" (ibid, p.614). In essence, it is about selecting the most salient features of the observed social reality and, in a certain way, communicate these aspects to others (Entman, 1993, p.52).

The members of 'We Are Here' aimed to counter and challenge the existing stigmatising frame about undocumented migrants. One of the coordinators explained: "The image we try to show them is that we are not criminals."[77] In the media, illegalised migrants are namely often clustered together as undocumented migrants[78] who are often framed as the 'other', if not criminals, who do not belong in the Netherlands[79] (Enriquez & Saguy, 2015, p.109). This process of 'othering' relates to the "relationship between race and nation" and "discriminates between the 'us' and the 'them', or the 'self' and the 'others'" (Balibar, 2005, p.20).

The image they intend to communicate is clarified by Abu: "We are innocent people, being victim of the constitutions."[80] Additionally, Hakim pointed out: "We are human beings like everybody."[81] According to Knox (2018), "self-identifying with term victim does not necessarily imply passivity as some [academics] suggest" (p.42). In this case, the self-representation as victims may have established a greater understanding of the 'policy gap' and the associated liminal situation in which illegalised migrants reside. This understanding can empower the illegalised migrants to further narrate the experiences and at the same time strengthen their agency in the claim-making process of claiming injustice to be redressed (Knox, 2018, p.42; Brysk, 2013).

The representation of the collective identity of the illegalised migrants can be divided into two frames. On one hand, they depict themselves as 'decisive victims' – stepping out of the shadow – while on the other hand they stress that they are 'innocent human beings'. As Hagan (2010) stated, framing possesses agency and "the power lies in the construction and distribution of information [..] it can make a major difference in how target audiences receive

[77] Interview with Malik [rejected asylum seeker] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 25-04-2019.
[78] There are three ways in which people become undocumented and thus an unlawfully residing person on Dutch territory; some cross the border illegally, others overstay their visa or do not return to their home country after their request for asylum has been rejected (Plascencia, 2012, p.87). Not all undocumented migrants are thus illegalised migrants.
[79] Media e.g.: https://www.dagelijksestandaard.nl/2019/07/illegale-tuigkrakers-we-are-here-ramkraken-weer-nieuw-pand-in-amsterdam-geen-vluchteling-op-straat/ or https://www.powned.tv/artikel/de-brutaliteit-krakersgajes-we-are-here-probe
[80] Interview with Abu [rejected asylum seeker] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 09-04-2019.
[81] Interview with Hakim [Dublin Claimant] member of 'We Are Here', 22-03-2019.

claims” (p.578). Therefore, it is essential to analyse this twofold frame constructed by the refugee collective.

a. ‘Decisive Victims’

According to Entman (1993), framing contains four functions: “defining a problem, assigning responsibility, passing a moral judgement, and reaching possible solutions” (p.52). These functions are clearly recognisable in the representation of the collective identity of ‘We Are Here’. Their choice to frame themselves as ‘decisive victims’ aims to attract attention to their liminal situation and to emphasise that they are in need of help. For example, this representation is reflected in the name of the refugee collective, ‘We Are Here’, and consists of two dimensions which will be further elaborated.

The slogan “We Are Here’’ underlines the visibility strategy of the refugee collective and expresses a claim that automatically identifies a problem. As Touré explained: “If we would have said, we are refugees, then people would say, ‘no if you were a refugee you would have had a residence permit’. Then we thought ‘We Are Here’, it means we are refugees and ‘We Are Here’, *we cannot do anything*, *but ‘We Are Here’* (my emphasis).”[82] In other words, as Amaya-Castro (2015) clearly indicated, the slogan “challenges the invisibility that the political [..] illegality regime imposes on these irregular migrants” (p.163). The slogan thus connotes the visibility strategy which cannot be ignored.

Furthermore, the slogan ‘‘We Are Here’’ reflects a claim. As Touré further stated: “‘We Are Here’, so do something about it [the situation].”[83] The name ‘We Are Here’ denotes that it is not possible to ignore ‘our’ situation since ‘we’ make the invisible visible. As Amaya-Castro (2015) expressed, “their visibility makes their presence undeniable” (p.164). As a consequence, the state is confronted to recognise the problem and, based on ethical considerations, needs to take some responsibilities (ibid, p.164; Mensink, 2018, p.8). This thus implies that the slogan denotes the first two features of the framing process, defining a problem and assigning a responsibility, in this case to the government.

To summarise, the representation of being ‘decisive victims’ is clearly reflected in the name of the refugee collective and incorporates the first two functions of framing. Becoming visible is an extremely decisive act and, additionally, the name reflects a claim: recognise our involuntary precarious situation. This reflects being victims of the discrepancy between the ambitions of the immigration control policies and the reality on the ground.

[82] Interview with Touré [rejected asylum seeker] former spokesman of ‘We Are Here’, 19-04-2019.
[83] Interview with Touré [rejected asylum seeker] former spokesman of ‘We Are Here’, 19-04-2019.

b. 'Innocent Human Beings'

The claims the members of 'We Are Here' make towards the government for a 'normal life' is also expressed through the image of 'innocent human beings', who deserve to have their human rights respected. As Dave clearly explained: "We are living here, we are human beings and we need a better life. We need equal rights and justice."[84] This representation of 'innocent human beings' incorporates the two last features of framing indicated by Entman (1993, p.52), namely passing a moral judgement and reaching possible solutions. How these features are reflected is clarified in this following section.

In the words of Hakim, "We are human beings like everybody."[85] This claim emphasises the similarities rather than differences between them and the Dutch citizens. This emphasis underscores the ability to participate in society or, in the words of an illegalised migrant, "to be able to give back to the society."[86] According to Polletta and Jasper (2001, p.294), an aspect that affects how activists strategically frame their identity is based on the opponents' perspective on the activists. Since the illegalised migrants are often portrayed as the 'other', focussing on similarities such as being a human being can thus be viewed as a strategic decision. In the hope that citizens establish a feeling of solidarity towards them as 'innocent human beings' based on supporters' moral judgements that rely on fundamental values of justice and humanity[87].

The statement of 'we are human beings' inherently links to the assumptions to have the 'right to have rights.'[88] Malik clearly underlined what numerous other illegalised migrants expressed in their interviews: "We are asking for our rights, to recognise us as a human being."[89] In this case of 'We Are Here', the members did specifically claim the right to have universal human rights, rather than civil rights. As Dave stated: "We have to fight our right, human rights."[90] This claim is built on the human rights discourse that connotes "universal standards of behaviour and treatment that individuals and communities are entitled to by virtue of being human being" (Knox, 2018, p.1). It contributes to normative agreement on minimal standards and rights (Brysk, 2013, p.3). According to Henderson and Schneider (2019), "the emphasis on human rights [..] allows individuals to claim rights independent of their status as citizen of a particular state" (p.13). This human rights-based claim of the illegalised migrants can thus be

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[84] Interview with Dave [Dublin Claimant] member of 'We Are Here', 17-04-2019.
[85] Interview with Hakim [Dublin Claimant] member of 'We Are Here', 22-03-2019.
[86] Interview with Malik [rejected asylum seeker] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 25-04-2019.
[87] Based on interviews with Touré, Malik, and Seiko.
[88] For further information about 'the right to have rights' see for instance the work of Hannah Arendt.
[89] Interview with Malik [rejected asylum seeker] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 25-04-2019.
[90] Interview with Dave [Dublin Claimant] member of 'We Are Here', 17-04-2019.

viewed as a strategic decision since it legitimises the claim for a 'normal life' and may therefore attract more solidarity and supporters. In contrast to claiming civil rights which would not strengthen their claim, but it would emphasise their illegal status instead.

The refugee collective thus strategically claims the right to have human rights, as a normative aspiration, to pursue their claim. In essence, this representation as 'innocent human beings' also contains a solution – the last feature of the framing process – since human rights obligate the state to provide basic needs or in other words "to fulfil minimum elements necessary for human dignity" (Knox, 2018, p.35). As a result, this representation incorporates the last feature of the framing process.

5.3 What Did We Achieve?

The refugee collective has been active since 2012, which creates the possibility to determine the effectiveness of their claims and actions by analysing the outcomes of the previous discussed strategic choices. At the beginning of 2012, the Dutch government provided no shelter to undocumented migrants. Yet, with the demonstrations of the rejected asylum seekers, the municipalities were confronted with the presence of these 'illegal' migrants. Therefore, on a local level, municipalities and non-governmental organisations offered assistance – legal assistance, food, clothes, in some cases shelters – to the undocumented migrants (Kos et al., 2015, p.8; Van der Leun & Bouter, 2015, pp.144-5). From 2012 on, a lot has changed due to the public visibility of the illegalised migrants.

The 'tent camps' in 2012 created a lot of national media attention. As a result, many supporters and lawyers became involved in the mobilisation and started to claim basic facilities for these illegalised migrants. In 2014, the European Comity of Social Rights concluded that the Netherlands had violated the fundamental rights of undocumented migrants by excluding them from social governmental support and shelter. As a consequence, the Dutch government was obligated to provide undocumented migrants shelter, food, and clothes. This led to the establishment of the 'bed-bath-bread' shelters (bed, bad, brood opvang)[91].

However, according to the illegalised migrants these shelters are still far from a proper solution for their situation[92]. In December 2018, the government, along with several municipalities[93], agreed on a five-year pilot to create 24-hour shelters for undocumented

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[91] https://www.mensenrechten.nl/nl/nieuws/europees-comite-inzake-sociale-rechten-veroordeelt-nederland
[92] This will further be explained in the next two chapters and is based on interviews with the members of 'We Are Here' and supporters.
[93] Amsterdam, Utrecht, Groningen, Eindhoven, and Rotterdam.

migrants, partly as a result of the collective actions of 'We Are Here'. The aim of these 24-hour shelter is to provide a stable place for undocumented migrants in which they can work towards a future in the Netherlands or abroad. While residing in these shelters, social and judicial workers analyse the individual cases in order to decide whether a person should still acquire a residence permit, should continue travelling to another European country or should prepare for deportation[94]. According to several supporters[95], the agreement of the 24-hour shelter is a concrete result of the mobilisation of 'We Are Here' and probably the most realistic option within Dutch legislation[96].

5.4 Summary

In this chapter, the question *how* the claim of 'We Are Here' is communicated is discussed. To resume, the refugee collective strategically framed and deployed their collective identity – as 'decisive victims' and 'innocent human beings' – in order to win sympathy and attract supporters. This is reflected in the slogan of the refugee collective, established by the emphasis on 'being human beings', and articulated in the argumentation to possess the right to have human rights. These representations are part of the strategy to find supporters and consequently to establish more pressure on the government, in the hope to change the precarious position in society. Thus, this empirical analysis corroborates the argument of Polleta and Jasper (2001, p.292) that claims based on social movements' collective identity can be considered a strategic choice in order to accomplish social change.

Moreover, it became apparent that the strategies and associated strategic choices of 'We Are Here' have helped to accomplish fundamental changes in their situation. At the start of the mobilisation, there were no shelters for undocumented migrants. Seven years later, the municipality, along with the government, has established 24-hour shelters for undocumented migrants in order to work towards a future in the Netherlands or abroad.

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https://doktersvandewereld.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/1.-Uitvoeringsplan-24-uursopvang-ongedocumenteerden.pdf

[94]https://www.amsterdam.nl/zorg-ondersteuning/ondersteuning/vluchtelingen/24-uursopvang

[95] Based on informal conversations and four interviews with supporters.

[96] Own translation: Interview with Harry [supporter of 'We Are Here'], 16-04-2019.

Chapter 6. Strategic 'Taste' in Tactics

In the previous chapter the claim of 'We Are Here' was illustrated, and the associated strategic choices on how to represent this claim to the government and the society were thoroughly analysed. They strategically choose to represent themselves as 'decisive victims', who deserve universal human rights by virtue of being humans. They frame themselves in this manner to create more awareness of their situation within the Dutch society, but also to attract more supporters who can help to put pressure on the government to install policy reforms. In the process of framing their demand, the agency of the illegalised migrants became apparent. However, their demand for a 'normal life' is not only achieved through framing themselves in a certain way, the demand is conveyed through a wide variety of tactics. This chapter provides an answer to the last two sub-questions: What is the available repertoire of contention? And: What effects do the rules and resources available in the liminal situation have on the strategic choices made by the members of 'We Are Here'? Firstly, three frequently used tactics of the refugee collective will be analysed in relation to the arenas, where interactions and the collective identity of the social movement are situated. Thereafter, the liminal situation of the members of 'We Are Here' will be discussed since due to this situation they have limited available resources which subsequently affect their strategic choices in the repertoire of contention.

6.1 Tactics and Arenas

> Demonstrations, squatting buildings, exchanging information, using social media, public speeches, neighbourhood invitations, inviting journalists, lobbying, confrontations with cops, court cases, theatre, guest lectures, campaigning, sharing photo's, benefit concert, published manifestoes, 'We Are Here' academy, petitions, post-card actions, cooking classes, press conference, creating awareness, distributing grocery lists, solidarity meals, making music, writing songs, distribute flyers, documentaries, cook-book, co-operation with students, official soccer team, making radio, sticking posters[97] (See Appendix 6. & 7.)

[97] This list is not exhaustive by any means, yet it shows that social movements encompass an ample of tactics to pursue social change.

This enumeration of tactics is a list of collectively organised tactics used by the refugee collective. This list is based on data gathered from informal conversations, interviews, (participant) observations, and the Facebook page of 'We Are Here'. During the fieldwork period, three tactics appeared to be the most salient ones since they were repeatedly pointed out in interviews as the main tactics in order to remain visible and to attract supporters. The three most frequently used tactics are: the usage of (social) media, the squatting of buildings, and the organisation of neighbourhood 'parties', an invitation to the neighbours to visit the members of 'We Are Here' in the squatted place. In this section, a deeper understanding of the strategic choices of the illegalised migrants is obtained through an examination of these three tactics. While elaborating on these three tactics, the associated arenas, rules and resources that permit actions to take place and the link between tactics and the social movements' collective identity will be included. Yet, a short theoretical background of tactics and arenas will first be given.

Meyer and Staggenborg (2012) defined tactics as "specific means of implementing strategy, the forms of collective action taken by movement actors" (p.8). Tactics are thus the ways in which activists press their claims in various arenas. The repertoire of contention comprehends the wide variety of tactics that are available to 'We Are Here'. These tactics vary from substantial conventional strategies to persuade political actors, such as "lobbying, voting, or petitioning" (Taylor & Van Dyke, 2004, p.263), to more confronting tactics such as "marches, strikes, and demonstrations" (ibid, p.263). They also vary from violent actions that lead to disruption resulting in "material, and economic damage, and loss of life" (ibid, p.263) to more cultural forms of action such as "rituals, spectacles, music, art, poetry, film, literature, and cultural practices of everyday life" (ibid, p. 263). Taylor and Van Dyke (2004) claimed that tactics contain three common features; tactics that are *intentional* attempt to establish social change, which implicates *contestation* with other actors in the field and relates to the *collective identity* of the social movement (pp. 264-7). Tactics are thus interactive actions that are in service of a strategy to achieve a claim, are (publicly) performed, and transfer a message to other actors such as allies, the government or the public [society] (Larson, 2013, pp.866-70; Tilly, 2004).

Tactics are organised in a wide variety of settings with their own conditions, in which different actors interact with each other. These settings are referred to as arenas. Jasper (2015) defined arenas as "a bundle of rules and resources[98] that allow or encourage certain kinds of

[98] Resources include money, members, supplies, knowledge, skills, energy, ideas, and practices (Larson, 2013, p.868; Tilly & Tarrow 2015, 241; Meyer & Staggenborg, 2012, p.16).

interactions to proceed, with something at stake" (p.14). Tactics often take place in arenas such as the courts, the media, and the public (Meyer & Staggenborg, 2012, p.8). Each arena is linked to different actors (e.g. government, allies, the public) and compels different "skills, styles of rhetoric, and actions" (ibid, p.8). For instance, when litigation is a strategy of a social movement, the activists need to have legal expertise to be able to write formal letters and make lawful claims. Arenas are thus the settings where certain rules and norms govern, and specific resources are essential in order to interact. Therefore, arenas may constrain or encourage certain tactics to take place (Jasper, 2012; Jasper, 2015).

The question that arises from these theoretical concepts is: how do the members of 'We Are Here' strategically make use of arenas to pursue their claim? Therefore, in the following sections the three tactics most frequently used by the refugee collective – usage of media, squatting of buildings, and organising neighbourhood 'parties' – will be discussed in relation to arenas and collective identity. Since the liminal situation of the illegalised migrants can be viewed as an arena, an answer will be sought to the question: What is the effect of the limited resources in the liminal arena on the strategic choices of the members of 'We Are Here'?

6.1.1 Usage of Media

One of the tactics to remain visible and to attract attention is "to make use of social media; sharing and exchanging information about refugees and the asylum policies."[99] Through 'using' mainstream media channels (e.g. new articles, television, radio) the illegalised migrants are influencing and aiming to change the dominant 'negative' image of undocumented migrants in the Netherlands by sharing a different story. As will be elucidated in the following section, these arenas – media and social media – are thus a strategic choice since they create the opportunity to present the precarious situation of undocumented migrants and communicate a counter image to the Dutch society.

Several coordinators of the refugee collective underlined that making use of media channels is a strategic decision. "They [the media] worked so hard to create a negative media, but then we used them also. Because I know what kind of media you are, how you are going to frame it, and that is okay but at the same time that gives us the opportunity to create more visibility. Because we can reach people, maybe we are able to change people's minds. If we said that we are not going to talk to the media because they talk bad about us, we miss a

[99] Interview with Thomas [former rejected asylum seeker] former spokesman of 'We Are Here', 17-04-2019.

change."[100] Malik, another coordinator complements this argument: "Any moment the media says our name, positive or negative, they promote us. So, we do not see the media as our enemy, we work with any media that wants to talk with us, we talk to them."[101] In addition, Seiko underlined another aspect of making use of the media: "Media is important because this is our situation and we only have ourselves [to show] and you have to share it to everyone. We share [our situation] and we get maybe more support that is also important."[102] These quotes show that the illegalised migrants are aware of the possible impact of the media on the public opinion and aim to influence the information flows in directions that will enhance their claim. Additionally, it seems that the illegalised migrants strategically choose to make use of mainstream media channels since they have limited resources due to their precarious situation, instead they make use of the resources of the media (e.g. money to broadcast) to share their story.

The strategic use of the media tactic is in line with what scholars have found in previous studies. Activists with little resources and few skills are expected to strategically choose tactics that will attract the attention of the public in order to establish support and increase their available resources (Meyer & Staggenborg, 2012, p.13). Additionally, Chadwick (2017) argued that activists "create, tap, or steer information flows in ways that suit their goals and in ways that modify, enable, or disable the agency of others, across and between a range of older and newer media settings" (p.5). This is exactly what the members of 'We Are Here' are strategically aiming to do since they make use of traditional media channels and social media.

The refugee collective did not only use mainstream media channels to obtain visibility, they created an own Website and Facebook page[103] as well. "You need to share, use social media, create Facebook, reach more people and invite people and use whatever you can in this time."[104] On the website, background information is provided, including the history of 'We Are Here' and an explanation of the 'policy gap'. A wider public is addressed through this Facebook page and it is used to announce organised activities and to share the most accurate information about the group. The use of an own Internet page and social media is a strategic choice, since in regard to their resources both are inexpensive and influential tools that create opportunities to challenge and resist the dominant discourse as it permits the illegalised migrants to gain visibility and to present alternative perspective on their liminal position in society.

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[100] Interview with Thomas [former rejected asylum seeker] former spokesman of 'We Are Here', 17-04-2019.
[101] Interview with Malik [rejected asylum seeker] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 25-04-2019.
[102] Interview with Seiko [former rejected asylum seekers] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 14-02-2019.
[103] http://wijzijnhier.org and https://www.facebook.com/WijZijnHier/
[104] Interview with Thomas [former rejected asylum seeker] former spokesman of 'We Are Here', 17-04-2019.

The use of these online channels seems to be a logical choice for the illegalised migrants. According to Lievrouw (2011, p.1), the manners in which media providers and media consumer functioned have changed fundamentally with the arrival of new digital communication channels. Media consumers are no longer merely audiences, they also function as producers. This change has raised unprecedented opportunities for activists to participate and independently express and share 'raw' information which is not framed by mainstream media channels (ibid, pp.1-2; Knox, 2018, p.58).

In sum, the usage of media is a tool for 'We Are Here' to create visibility, to share information about their precarious situation, to communicate their perception of the reality, and to counteract dominant discourses in the media. The mainstream media arena is used strategically to reach a broader audience, to create more awareness, and to challenge the 'negative' image which they are often associated with. Digital media, such as the website and their Facebook page, are accessible tools that enable illegalised migrants to present and exchange information and to announce activities, invite supporters and reach new people. This underlines that the illegalised migrants are not passive agents but are exercising agency and are 'manipulating' the media as a tactic to remain visible, counter the dominant frame, in the hope to even evoke sympathy from the public.

6.1.2 Squatting buildings

In this section, three salient empirical features of squatting in relation to the strategic choices of the members of 'We Are Here' will be analysed. Firstly, it will be illustrated how the act of squatting buildings corresponds with the collective identity – 'decisive victims' and 'innocent human beings' – of the refugee collective. Secondly, it will be discussed that over the course of years, squatting is no longer solely an act out of necessity but also a strategic choice in the available repertoire of contention to strengthen their claim towards the government. How the members of 'We Are Here' act out a 'normal life' while being in a liminal situation will be clarified in the last part of this section.

a. Collective Identity Reflection

In 2010, squatting became a criminal act with a sanction of one-year imprisonment at the most[105]. However, squatting became necessary for 'We Are Here' when the 'tent camp' in

[105] https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/huurwoning/vraag-en-antwoord/is-het-kraken-van-een-woning-strafbaar

Osdorp was evicted which left them no shelter to endure the winter. Over the course of seven years, the refugee collective has squatted more than fifty different buildings throughout the city of Amsterdam[106]. As a consequence, some media outlets portray the illegalised migrants as violent squatters[107], moving from place to place around the city.

Although squatting became a criminal act in 2010, according to some of the illegalised migrants[108] this tactic still confirms their collective identity. Malik namely explained: "We create events in order to stand for our rights, without no crime, we are exposing ourselves according to the law. When there is no law that has accepted our life, we have to deal with it and explain ourselves. We squat a house, we have a lawyer, we know the rights to squat a house, and we know why we squat. We work according to the rules."[109] In Maliks' opinion: "To squat a house is not normal, but it is the reality."[110] Another illegalised migrant stated: "I never crossed my boundaries. I do only the things that are legal for me to do."[111] This idea of acting out of necessity and 'exposing ourselves according to the law', corresponds with their collective identity of being victims and 'innocent human beings' rather than violent squatters or even criminals[112].

Even though squatting is a criminal act, due to the necessity to have shelter, several illegalised migrants do not pursue squatting as an illegal act. This corresponds with the insight of Maney (2012, p.175) who claimed that different actors can attach various meanings to identical tactics. In addition, according to Taylor and Van Dyke (2004) activists' choice in tactics "resonate with their belief, ideas, and cultural frames" (p.277). Other scholars argued that activists select tactics that corresponds with 'who they are' (Polletta & Jasper, 2001, p.292; Jasper 2017, p.295). In the case of 'We Are Here', it seems that the illegalised migrants legitimise the criminal act due to the necessity of shelter as a consequence of their liminal position in society. Thus, the illegalised migrants conformed their choice to squat to their collective identity. 'We' are 'decisive victims' who squat buildings since we lack governmental support, but we still have the right to shelter because we are 'innocent human beings'.

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[106] Interview with Jerry [supporter and communication advisor of 'We Are Here'], 16-04-2019.
[107] See for example: https://www.powned.tv/artikel/gewelddadig-vertrek-asielkrakers-we-are-here
[108] Based on interviews with, Malik, Hakim, Thomas, and Dave.
[109] Interview with Malik [rejected asylum seeker] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 25-04-2019.
[110] Interview with Malik [rejected asylum seeker] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 25-04-2019.
[111] Interview with Thomas [former rejected asylum seeker] former spokesman of 'We Are Here', 17-04-2019.
[112] "We are not criminals" interview with Hakim [Dublin Claimant] 22-03-2019; "I do not fight, I do not do anything wrong, I am not a terrorist" interview with Sefu [Dublin Claimant] 13-05-2019.

b. Squatting a Strategic Tactic

In the case of the refugee collective, squatting became a consequence of a 'policy gap' since there was no governmental support provided for rejected asylum seekers that were neither able to return to their home country, nor eligible for a residence permit. The illegalised migrants thus squatted buildings in the need for shelter. This is clearly underlined by one of the members: "Of course it is very necessary, otherwise we sleep outside."[113] At the same time, as one of the coordinators explained: "To squat a house is not normal, but it is the reality [and] the government does not like it. It is also to disturb them. A strategy of 'We Are Here' is to interfere with the system."[114] These quotes illustrate that squatting is an act out of necessity to guarantee a place to sleep. Yet, it is not solely necessary, it also aims to 'disturb' the system since squatting is an illegal act. It therefore is a contentious tactic which strengthens the claim for 'normal life' towards the government and articulates recognition of human dignity.

The latter point – recognition of human dignity – requires some extra explanation. As stated in the previous chapter, the visibility of 'We Are Here' led to the establishment of shelters for undocumented migrants. However, even though the illegalised migrants have the option of using these shelters where basic needs are provided, the refugee collective strategically chose to not make use of them. As one of the coordinators explained: "So that time we fight for the 24-hour shelter but Van der Laan [former mayor of Amsterdam] refused so he opened bed-bread-bath shelter. [..] Then we fight [..] this is not what we need, that is not what 'We Are Here' for in this country, to sleep in the night and in the morning to go out every day."[115] In addition, Malik another coordinator pointed out: "24-hour shelter is not a solution, it only means a roof and food but nothing for our future. We need freedom, the rights to work or study, to have a normal life."[116] The choice to refuse making use of the shelters and continue to squat instead is clearly a strategic one. It ensures visibility – the core strategy – and it articulates the message towards the government that shelters are not the solution, that 'we' [illegalised migrants] deserve more than bed, bath, and bread. This strategic choice thus demands human dignity and a more equitable society.

The above analysis presents that squatting articulates a message towards the government, this is also recognised by Bouillon (2017). In his study in France, Bouillon observed that "squats occupied by migrants can be said to be truly political issues for at least three reasons" (p.74).

[113] Interview with Eze [Dublin Claimant] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 08-04-2019.
[114] Interview with Malik [rejected asylum seeker] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 25-04-2019.
[115] Interview with Abu [rejected asylum seeker] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 09-04-2019.
[116] Interview with Malik [rejected asylum seeker] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 25-04-2019.

Firstly, squatting is the result of the excluding immigration policies (p.74). Secondly, squatting exemplifies the need to have a roof and "the need for a more equitable society" (ibid, p.74). Thirdly, occupied places become social and cultural meeting places for migrants and other individuals (p.75). These three reasons are also seen in case of 'We Are Here'. The last reason will be further clarified in the following section based on the concept of prefigurative action.

c. Prefigurative Tactic

Squats are not merely places where the illegalised migrants can sleep. The squat rather becomes an arena where social, cultural, and political interactions take place. These squatted places become open spaces where supporters, students, media, and politicians are being welcomed and where the illegalised migrants are able to physically show and discuss their situation. As Thomas expressed: "I am not free, but I can create a place where I can be free."[117] In this section, it will be argued that while the illegalised migrants are 'fighting' to reach their claim, the illegalised migrants also perform their claim for a 'normal life'[118].

During the time of this research, more than fifty illegalised migrants resided in a tenantless and former work office in Amstelveen[119]. In an interview, Eze explained: "There a lot of people who have talents and different skills. They really want to improve their talents, but they cannot, because of the situation, they cannot fit in the country yet."[120] But instead of waiting for a change to happen, the illegalised migrants exercise their agential power. When the mayor of Amstelveen visits the squatted building one of the coordinators proposed to use the place for more than only a shelter. "What are we using the house for? Keep people busy. We can make Dutch lessons, a hairdressing, a barbershop, food, music, football."[121] Not only were these ideas proposed, some have actually been set into action. For instance, djembe sessions were organised, Dutch lessons were organised and provided by Dutch students, and cooking classes have taken place[122]. This shows that the refugee collective organised activities that diminished the barrier between the political claim for a 'normal life' and the resources to reach this claim. In addition, it illustrates that the occupied place is used to invite people (e.g. the mayor, students, supporters) and therefore it becomes social, cultural, and political meeting place for the members of 'We Are Here' and others. This therefore corresponds to the third

[117] Interview with Thomas [former rejected asylum seeker] former spokesman of 'We Are Here', 17-04-2019.
[118] By no means I aim to argue that the living situation of the illegalised migrants comes close to a normal life.
[119] A city adjacent to Amsterdam.
[120] Interview with Eze [Dublin Claimant] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 08-04-2019
[121] Malik [rejected asylum seeker] during a meeting with the municipality, 03-04-2019.
[122] Based on participant observation and informal conversation with illegalised migrants and students.

reason of Bouillon (2017) that squats turn into places where interactions take place between "people from other social environments" (p.75).

As a result of the organised activities inside the squat, the squat becomes an arena where social, cultural, and political interactions are taking place. For instance, during the djembe session several students, who lived across the squatted place, participated in the session[123]. At such a moment, skills are exchanged, and interaction takes place with a goal at stake. One of the goals behind these activities – djembe session, cooking classes, Dutch lessons – was to demonstrate the skills and talents the illegalised migrants have which they could offer to the Dutch society if they had a chance. As Dave namely explained: "We all have a professional it is because the government made this situation people think that we do not have talents."[124] Another member said: "To be able to give back to society, what I am doing now but then in a proper way."[125] At the same time, another goal behind these activities was to establish a sense of solidarity and attract new supporters who could support them in basic needs[126]. This shows that these tactics create cultural and social arenas in which networks are established 'with something at stake' and where aspects of living a 'normal life' are performed in the 'here and now' (Engler & Engler, 2014).

The examples above can be viewed as alternative tactics outside the subject – object relation in the claim-making process, since acting out a claim does not directly bear on someone else' interest. Scholars refer to this alternative tactic as prefigurative activities (Yates, 2015, p.4). Prefiguration is often broadly defined, but in essence it denotes: "to anticipate or enact some feature of an 'alternative world' in the present" (ibid, p.4). Or as Mensink (2018) described: "prefiguration is about actively living out the change one would like to see, [..] rather than simply demanding that change from others" (p.5).

Prefigurative activities were often analysed as the opposite of strategic actions (Engler & Engler, 2014). According to Engler and Engler (2014), strategic actions are focused on establishing an organisation that becomes powerful in order to reach out to the media and the society to pursue structural changes. In contrast to strategic actions, prefigurative actions are more related to the values and beliefs of activists and create room for the social and emotional needs, rather than directly contributing to the social movements' claim (ibid, 2014). Engler and

[123] Based on participant observation.
[124] Interview with Dave [Dublin Claimant] member of 'We Are Here', 17-04-2019.
[125] Malik [rejected asylum seeker] during a meeting with the municipality, 03-04-2019.
[126] Based on informal conversations with two coordinators of 'We Are Here', Abu and Malik.

Engler (2014) argued that, even though these actions are not always mutually exclusive, these tactics have contradictory principles about the behaviour of activists at a certain time.

However, recently scholars have recognised that social movements combine prefigurative and strategic actions (Mensink, 2018, p.6). Yates (2015, p.19), along with Bailey et al., (2018, p.17), stated that social movements, while organising strategic attempts to pursue the political claim, act out 'alternative' changes. Mensink (2018) claimed to see both approaches as "concurrent and constantly shifting orientations" (p.8). These actions are thus less ideologically opposed as previously thought (ibid, p.8).

According to the prior distinction between prefigurative and strategic action, the previous empirical illustrations of the prefigurative tactics of the refugee collective could indeed confirm that prefigurative actions are different from strategic actions. This can be viewed as two manners of mobilisation that can co-exist. However, it became apparent that prefigurative actions had two goals at stake – attracting supporters and showing capabilities – which contribute to the intention of accomplishing the claim. Therefore, I argue that the purpose of prefigurative actions should not be considered different from strategic actions. Hence, on the basis of this empirical case-study, I claim that enacting the change you aim to accomplish is a strategic action. The illegalised migrants strategically chose prefigurative tactics to demonstrate that they are decisive and agentive individuals who are able to participate in society. This therefore automatically reinforces their claim. In this case, it was a strategic choice to use prefigurative tactics in order to pursue the beneficial outcome.

6.1.3 'Neighbourhood party'

> "As some of you may have already noticed, we, undocumented refugees of the collective "'We Are Here'", have temporally occupied the unused building at [address]. Unfortunately, this occupation is out of extreme necessity because we do not have a stable place to stay. In the last passing years, we have moved from building to building to assure at least a roof above our heads.
>
> We would like to invite you upcoming Sunday, [date], to meet us and give you the opportunity to ask questions about our situation. With this invitation we hope to take away any concerns and raise attention for our situation." [127] (See Appendix 5. Flyer).

[127] Written text on a flyer that was distributed to invite the neighbours.

Small flyers are distributed in the neighbourhood with this text as an invitation to come and see the newly occupied building. While moving from one place to another, the housing situation of 'We Are Here' is unstable. However, the 'neighbourhood party' is a tactic that is frequently – if not always – used when moving to a new place. As Malik underlined: "[..] to try to express ourselves and everywhere we are living, we do not hide ourselves." [128] The neighbourhood party is an invitation to their 'new' neighbours who are welcome to visit the newly occupied place. In an interview, Abu explained how this event is organised: "For an open day, we plan for the flyers, we arrange five or six persons who go in the neighbourhood to put the flyers and all these things. When there is an open day [..] everyone gets his own position: some people cook the tea, some people talk and explain about the situation."[129]

However, the neighbourhood party is more than only 'getting to know each other'. Malik further explained: "We try to create a good environment and create a good communication with the neighbourhood. It is very good to invite people, to let them know who you are, and they are able to understand your situation, not to listen to news."[130] In alignment with Malik, Thomas expressed: "We want a different image, a neighbourhood party. This is how we are able to fight the negative image of the society."[131] Aside from showing that they "are not bad people"[132], Abu pointed out: "We need the neighbourhood for trust, and maybe we have a good change to stay."[133] Further up the interview, it became clear that Abu hoped that, when the neighbourhood would see that they are 'good and nice' people, they would possibly support them in convincing the owner of the building to let them stay for a while, instead of being evicted. In addition, a good relationship with the neighbourhood is important since neighbours may will occasionally provide food and/or basic utilities, and some may even turn into engaged supporters. Eze explains what the neighbours did in the time of research: "There are no problems [with the neighbourhood] and they even given us some food and freezers and televisions. They are a nice neighbourhood and support us a lot."[134]

The choice to invite neighbours also reflects the importance of the representation of the illegalised migrants' collective identity – as 'decisive victims' and 'innocent human beings'. Abu, a coordinator, expressed: "We have the responsibility to establish respect in the

[128] Interview with Malik [rejected asylum seeker] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 25-04-2019.
[129] Interview with Abu [rejected asylum seeker] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 09-04-2019.
[130] Interview with Malik [rejected asylum seeker] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 25-04-2019.
[131] Interview with Thomas [former rejected asylum seeker] former spokesman of 'We Are Here', 17-04-2019.
[132] Interview with Dave [Dublin Claimant] member of 'We Are Here', 17-04-2019.
[133] Interview with Abu [rejected asylum seeker] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 09-04-2019.
[134] Interview with Eze [Dublin Claimant] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 08-04-2019.

neighbourhood."[135] From the interview, it became clear that it implies that the illegalised migrants aim to show that the neighbourhood that they are innocent and respectful neighbours. This is in line with the earlier conclusion that the neighbourhood party is organised partly to challenge the negative image about 'illegal' migrants. This underlines that their collective identity plays a central role in the choice of tactics. This complements similar insights of academics who claim that tactics are statements about identity (Polleta & Jasper, 2001; Jasper, 2017; Taylor & Van Dyke, 2004). In other words, collective identities are used as criteria to make strategic choices in the available repertoire of contention and are vital in determining strategies.

To summarise, this tactic is strategically chosen in order to be able to explain their situation, to challenge the 'negative' image, and to attract new supporters. The illegalised migrants believe that a good relationship with the neighbours may lead to the possibility of postponed eviction. This tactic reflects the collective identity of the illegalised migrants as 'innocent human beings'. In addition, the tactic is in alignment with their strategy to find supporters through creating awareness by sharing and explaining the situation towards the public, aiming to attract supporters.

6.2 Arenal Constrains

> "Sometimes we have a different situation; in some situations, we have to stay in the street for one week, in some situations we resist to leave a place, in some situations we have a stable place and then we can do more things. The motivation is related to the situation at the moment, we can create different events. Like to invite the neighbourhood, go to a conference, try to engage with party leaders, try to invite some students, try to express ourselves in a diplomatic way. But when we do not have a place, we are in the streets, at that moment... [pause] What we do is also good, because we do more demonstrations and express ourselves in this condition. Every condition is the moment to show what is going on. So, we take every negative and positive situation to express ourselves."[136]

[135] Interview with Abu [rejected asylum seeker] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 09-04-2019.
[136] Interview with Malik [rejected asylum seeker] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 25-04-2019.

As this quote highlights, the different arenas in which the illegalised migrants find themselves in have impact on their strategic choices they make within the repertoire of tactics. It is widely known that the forms of collective actions are constrained by arenas in which different actors interact and activists make claims (Jasper, 2004; Jasper, 2015). The liminal situation of the illegalised migrants can be viewed as an arena where certain rules and norms govern, specific resources are available, and where interactions take place with actors that have certain goals. In this arena, illegalised migrants have limited resources (e.g. money, material objects, numbers of people, and expertise[137]) due to their precarious situation in the Netherlands. During the time of research, it became salient that the illegalised migrants are largely relying on the solidarity of supporters, as a consequence of their precarious situation. In this section, therefore, the interaction in the liminal arena between the members of 'We Are Here' and the supporters will be discussed.

The refugee collective collaborates with many different organisations in order to strengthen their claim for a 'normal life'. Malik pointed out in an interview: "We collaborated with more than eighty organisations, to speak the voice of injustice about the refugee policies."[138] Abu further explained: "We help each other, sometimes we go for a demonstration, it is not about the issue of the 'We Are Here' group, [..] but we must help them, because they helped us also with the political issue."[139] This shows that these collaborations provide them with support, resources, and networks in order to increase their visibility, strengthen their claim, and, in some cases, give them the possibility to expose themselves in new arenas.

However, on a daily basis the most salient relation of the illegalised migrants the one with a group of engaged supporters[140]. As Abu explained in interview: "We do not have documents, but still we survive. Why we survive? Because of the supporters. [..] They bring education, lawyers, contact persons, stand with us, bring also food, clothes, if we move to another building they help us with the car to carry our matrass or blanket so we need supporters."[141] Seiko underlined the importance of supporters as well: "If there a no supporters 'We Are Here' is not here. We eat because it comes from supporters and the money comes from the supporters, and donations, also the actions, and also to find a house comes from supporters.

[137] As earlier explained, arena-relevant-skills are useful to enhance a claim in a specific arena. The illegalised migrants however lack certain basic knowledge. For example, the majority cannot speak or write in Dutch and have less knowledge of cultural values and norms in certain arenas in comparison to Dutch citizens.
[138] Interview with Malik [rejected asylum seeker] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 25-04-2019.
[139] Interview with Abu [rejected asylum seeker] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 09-04-2019.
[140] Based on day to day observations.
[141] Interview with Abu [rejected asylum seeker] coordinator of 'We Are Here', 09-04-2019.

That makes ‘We Are Here’ strong, if they are not here nobody can stay.”[142] These quotes illustrate that supporters are essential to the illegalised migrants in order to ‘survive’ and to continue making contentious claims.

The wide network of supporters is mostly based on solidarity and the supporters’ need to strive for injustice. Jane, a committed supporter, explained that in the winter of 2017 ‘We Are Here’ sought refuge in a church nearby her house. One day she passed by to donate some money, but she was shocked by the situation she encountered. “It was freezing cold, the windows of the church were broken, and people had constructed huts of canvas and sheets in the hope to keep themselves warm.”[143] It was nearly Christmas, and Jane felt the need to aid and support this group. From that moment on, Jane is visiting ‘We Are Here’ multiple times a week[144]. This is just a single example of the multiple non-governmental organisations and churches that weekly support the group with food and basic utilities[145].

Furthermore, throughout several interviews and observations, it became evident that supporters, most often unintentionally, are affecting and sometimes even constraining the strategic choices of the illegalised migrants. As one of the coordinators stressed: “Supporters need to be in the back, supporting the way we want. We are now supporters. We support them. They decide what they want, is not [always] the way we want it.”[146] A supporter explained during an interview why illegalised migrants sometimes have the feeling that supporters ‘decide what they want to do’. “Of course, there is an enormous gap between our knowledge and that of the refugees. We have specific knowledge on how to do things in the Netherlands. Of course, they [members of ‘We Are Here’] notice [the difference between knowledge], it makes them suspicious. It takes a lot of time to communicate everything you do and sometimes I fail in this communication [towards the members].”[147] This example shows that the illegalised migrants depend on the aid of the supporters, but may also have the feeling that supporters are not supporting them the way they would like them to do.

Through observations, however, it sometimes appeared to be problematic to express other ideas, tactics, or opinions than those of the supporters because they the illegalised migrants are highly reliant on the supporters. This situation could be understood with the analytical observation of Jasper (2015), who claimed that individuals and groups can also be

[142] Interview with Seiko [former rejected asylum seekers] coordinator of ‘We Are Here’, 14-02-2019.
[143] Own translation: Interview with Jane, supporter of ‘We Are Here’, 08-05-2019.
[144] Based on observations during the research period.
[145] Based on informal conversations and observations (e.g. church organisation Caritas and Human Aid Now).
[146] Interview with Abu [rejected asylum seeker] coordinator of ‘We Are Here’, 09-04-2019.
[147] Own translation: Interview with Harry [supporter of ‘We Are Here’] 16-04-2019.

seen as arenas, “when we look at their internal procedures” (p.12) In this case, supporters can thus be considered an arena, since they provide certain moral norms, skills, knowledge, and resources (ibid, p.14). Arenas encourage or constrain certain interactions to proceed (ibid, p.14). As a consequence, supporters may constrain the strategic choices of the illegalised migrants and, as a result, reduce the agency of the illegalised migrants. This empirical observation ratifies what has previously been underlined in other studies. The relationships with supporters and allies constrain subsequent choices (Meyer & Staggenborg, 2012, p.10,13; Larson, 2013; Smithey, 2009).

All in all, the liminal arena, in which the illegalised migrants have limited resources, causes a great reliance on supporters in order to continuously make contentious claims. Consequently, the supporters are engaged in the mobilisation and may constrain certain strategic choices of the members of ‘We Are Here’. Supporters can thus be viewed as arenas which allow or discourage certain interactions to take place.

6.3 Summary

In this chapter, the three most frequently used tactics by the refugee collective – usage of media, squatting of buildings, and organising neighbourhood ‘parties’ – have been discussed and analysed. It became apparent that the ‘taste’ in tactics of the members of ‘We Are Here’ is in line with the strategies to remain visible and to attract supporters in order to increase the pressure on the government. For instance, the illegalised migrants are strategically ‘using’ the mainstream media arena, to reach a broader audience, to create more awareness, and to challenge the ‘negative’ image which they are often associated with, in the hope to even evoke compassion from the public.

Furthermore, the refugee collective has a wide variety of tactics. These tactics are mostly conventional and confronting tactics, whereas some may be viewed as disrupting (e.g. squatting buildings). However, no violence is used to make contentious claims since the collective identity of the refugee collective is reflected in the choice of tactic. The illegalised migrants chose tactics in which they could expose themselves as ‘decisive victims’ and ‘innocent human beings’. For example, the tactic to squat buildings emphasises the need for shelter and articulates being a victim of the ‘policy gap’. In addition, acting out the claim for a ‘normal life’ – a prefigurative action – shows that the illegalised migrants are not just victims but ‘decisive victims’ who are exercising agency. The neighbourhood party reflects the collective identity as ‘innocent human beings’ who are no ‘criminals’ and can establish good relationships with the neighbours.

Moreover, the liminal situation of the illegalised migrants can be seen as arena, where specific rules and norms govern, and certain resources are available to allow interactions to take place. Yet, the members of ‘We Are Here’ have limited resources (e.g. money, material objects) and are therefore quite dependent on the resources of supporters to continue contentious collective actions. Consequently, the supporters may enhance certain choices but may as well constrain the choices of the illegalised migrants in the repertoire of contention. As a result, it seems that the liminal arena restricts the agency of the illegalised migrants in their mobilisation and therefore affects the strategic choices that are made.

Conclusion

In 2012 a group of rejected asylum seekers started to build 'tent camps' in front of the national asylum centre in Ter Apel, the Netherlands to demonstrate the precarious situation they found themselves in. These migrants could neither return to their country of origin nor were they allowed to stay in the Netherlands. This was a consequence of the discrepancy between the immigration control policies and its practical implementation, the so called 'policy gap'. Despite the high risk of detention and deportation, these rejected asylum seekers decided to collectively become visible and strived to redress injustice. Several other 'tent camps' emerged in other cities, leading to the establishment of a new social movement in Amsterdam under the name of ''We Are Here''. This movement aimed to achieve a 'normal life', in which the migrants are allowed to participate in society. After seven years, the social movement has achieved fundamental changes. However, their claim for a 'normal life' has still not been accomplished and the refugee collective therefore continues to actively make contentious claims.

This thesis attempted to analyse the strategic choices of the members of the social movement through the use of the Strategic Action approach. It aimed to answer the following research question: *How do the members of the social movement 'We Are Here' make strategic choices within the available repertoire of contention, regarding their visibility, as they navigate through a state of liminality, in Amsterdam from the end of 2012 until May 2019?* In order to answer the research question, this thesis firstly provided an understanding of the precarious situation of the members of 'We Are Here'. Subsequently, three theoretical features – the claim, strategies and tactical choices, and arenas – were analysed based on the proposed theoretical framework by Meyer and Staggenborg (2012).

The members of 'We Are Here' are positioned in a problematic situation. Beyond their control, these rejected asylum seekers are placed in a situation which makes them illegal. During the research period, it became apparent that so called 'Dublin Claimants' also joined the social movement. In contrast to the rejected asylum seekers, these 'Dublin Claimants' have somewhat of a perspective, since they are still able to apply for asylum in the future. Hence, to capture both groups of migrants the term 'illegalised migrant' is appropriate to use. Their situation, in which they lack governmental support and are deprived of basic human rights, can be described as a state of liminality. As a reaction to this liminal situation, the mayor claim of

the illegalised migrants is to be able to lead a 'normal life', which implies the ability to participate in society.

The members of 'We Are Here' make use of two strategies to pursue their claim for a 'normal life'. Firstly, despite the high risk of detention and deportation, the illegalised migrants decided to collectively become visible. This 'visibility act' – remaining visible – can be viewed as the core strategy of 'We Are Here' in order to find a solution for their precarious position in society. The collectiveness of their approach influenced the way in which illegalised migrants perceive themselves and made it possible to overcome the fear of detention and/or deportation. At the same time, the collectiveness guaranteed a degree of security and established a sense of a collective identity. Secondly, it became evident that, in order to achieve the claim for a 'normal life', it is essential to pressurise the government and force policy reforms. To create pressure, they used a strategy of attracting supporters by sharing and explaining their situation, and thereby creating awareness among Dutch citizens.

It became apparent that the collective identity, represented as 'innocent human beings' and 'decisive victims', plays a vital role in the strategic choice to communicate the claim for a 'normal life'. This claim is strategically based on the entitlement to basic human rights – 'the right to have rights' – rather than on civil rights. Civil rights only apply to legal citizens, whereas human rights are universal and are granted by the virtue of being a human being. 'We Are Here' strategically used the collective identity – 'decisive victims' – to evoke a feeling of solidarity and compassion in order to attract supporters in the hope to enhance their position in society.

The illegalised migrants use an ample of tactics in order to pursue their contentious claim. These tactics, or forms of collective actions, are usually legally permitted (e.g. petitions, demonstrations), but some could be categorised as disrupting (e.g. squatting buildings). However, the members of 'We Are Here' do not make use of violent actions, underlining their collective identity as 'innocent and decisive victims'. In addition, the choice in tactics is in alignment with the two strategies of the refugee collective and therefore strengthens the claim towards the government.

Tactics take place in physical arenas (e.g. court, squatted building) or in amorphous arenas, where certain rules and norms govern and specific resources are essential to establish interactions among actors with certain goals at stake. The liminal situation of the illegalised migrants can be seen as an arena with a limited set of resources. As a consequence, the illegalised migrants are quite dependent on the aid of supporters in order to 'survive' and continue making contentious claims. Since supporters bring about certain ideas, skills,

knowledge, and money they can be perceived as an arena. As a result, it seems that the dependency on supporters constrains the strategic choices of the illegalised migrants since the supporters also have a voice in choosing tactics.

To provide an answer to the research question, four inductively derived components on which the illegalised migrants base their strategic choices appeared to be vital. Firstly, the choices in tactics need to be compatible with the used strategies of remaining visible and attracting supporters. Secondly, the choices in tactics have to reflect the collective identity of the illegalised migrants. Thirdly, due to their precarious position in society the illegalised migrants have limited resources, affecting the choice in tactics. Fourthly, as a consequence of this precarious position, the illegalised migrants depend on the aid of supporters. As a result, the choice in tactics has to be related to the available resources and should be in alignment with the perspective of the supporters. In sum, the members of 'We Are Here' make strategic choices in alignment with their strategies, collective identity, available resources, and the relationship with supporters. However, it became evident that all these four components are affected by the precarious position of the illegalised migrants in society. Thus, in order to understand to what extend these components have impact on the strategic choices of activists, it is necessary to include their position in society.

From this research, it can be concluded that these illegalised migrants are anything but powerless. Although they are positioned in a liminal situation, they exercise agency and made the strategic choice to make use of their voices in limbo.

Discussion and Recommendation

This research aimed to contribute to the lack of understanding about how activists strategically make choices in tactics and strategies. As a result, this research overcomes the structural emphasis within the Contentious Politics theory, by emphasising the agency dimension in the interactional process of claim-making. It is widely accepted that activists do not solely make choices based on the maximisation of efficacy and efficiency but also take cultural and social factors into account, such as emotions, values, identity, and allies (Jasper, 2017; Meyer & Staggenborg, 2012). This research has shown that there are four components – strategies, collective identity, available resources, and the relationship with supporters – that have impact on the strategic choices of the members of the refugee collective 'We Are Here' in the available repertoire of contention. These empirically derived components thus show that activists base their strategic choices not only on maximisation of outcomes and confirms previously identified cultural and social factors that have impact on the strategic choices of activists.

In addition, in this research it became apparent that the strategic choices are strongly linked to the precarious position of the illegalised migrants in society. This may indicate that, in order to understand *how* activists make strategic choices, it is necessary to incorporate the position of activists in society. Since this research used a qualitative research strategy, which makes the findings hardly generalisable, I would recommend further qualitative research to be done on the position of activists in society. Specifically, cross-case analyses in which activists have a marginalised position in society could add to the understanding of the strategic choices of activists. Eventually, this may lead to new insights to activists in social movements. After all, activists devote a lot of energy to carry out and enhance their strategies and collective actions with the hope of realising societal change.

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Appendix 1. Event Catalogue

List of Tactics[148]

Date	Event
22 May 2019	Solidarity meal Amsterdam North
20 May 2019	Thanks to all the supporters 'party'
13 May 2019	Meeting the Mayor of Amstelveen: Facebook Post: a short video about this meeting with a speech of the former spokesman
10 May 2019	Benefit Concert organised by the foundation 'We' (once a month) (See Appendix 8. 'We')
9 May 2019	Dutch lessons provided by students
4 May 2019	Cooking class with students and sharing meals
28 April 2019	'Neighbourhood Party' Amstelveen
21 April 2019	Demonstration: Do not let refugees drown
12 April 2019	Benefit Concert, organised by the foundation 'We' (once a month)
7 April 2019	'Neighbourhood Party' Bijlmerplein
3 April 2019	Meeting with the green left-wing party in Amstelveen.
3 April 2019	Meeting with the mayor of Amstelveen, Bas Eenhoorn.
2 April 2019	Squatted a new building in Amstelveen.
2 April 2019	Meeting with art students who are shooting statement movies of the spokesman of 'We Are Here', to share online.
31 March 2019	'Neighbourhood Party'
25 March 2019	Benefit concert, organised by the foundation 'We' (once a month)
23 March 2019	No man is illegal – demonstration – anti-racism, Amsterdam
22 March 2019	Attendance of the open parliamentary debate about the deportation of an asylum seeker from Bahrein who is sentenced to life imprisonment when
11 March 2019	Benefit concert, organised by the foundation 'We' (once a month)
9 March 2019	Women's March, woman against deportation
1 March 2019	Postcard Action
15 February 2019	'Neighbourhood Party'

[148] This list is based on the research period and the events organised outside this period are collected from the Facebook page of 'We Are Here'.

9 February 2019	Amnesty International Student group Amsterdam: Refugee Story telling night
9 February 2019	Supporters: visiting detention centre Rotterdam
6 February 2019	Postcard action: against forced deportation
30 January 2019	Demonstration The Hague: Sudanese people against deportation
24 January 2019	Petition
16 January 2019	Postcard action: #sudanvijf against deportation
12 January 2019	Demonstration Dam square Support #Sudan
12 January 2019	Free 'We Are Here'* Live music event for support & solidarity with illegalised migrants in detention
6 January 2019	Press conference
5 January 2019	Action: Letter to M. Harbers of the secretary of Migration (Justice and Security)
16 December 2018	From the Sahara to the Sea: Militarizing European Border Zones
28 November 2018	Guest lecture to 60 students from England
24 November 2018	Guest lecture at the UvA
17 October 2018	Symposium: Perspectives on refugee collective 'We Are Here', in cooperation with the faculty of social and behavioural science UvA
25 September 2018	Symposium: Rightless in Amsterdam, cooperation with Pakhuis de Zwijger
19 Augustus 2018	'We Are Here' and have been here tour II
25 June 2018	'We Are Here' court case
2 June 2018	Neighbourhood: Goodbye Party
28 April 2018	Demonstration: Solidarity with Refugees: 'We Are Here'!
26 April 2018	'We Are Here' Court Case: Rudolf Dieselstraat
7 April 2018	Rudolf Dieselstraat 'Neighbourhood Party'
20 March 2018	Demonstration: "Right to Shelter" for 'We Are Here'

Appendix 2. Interview List

	Date	**Informant**	**Status**	**Identified as:**	**Gender**
1	22 March 2019	Hakim	Dublin Claimant	Member of 'We Are Here'	Male
2	8 April 2019	Eze	Dublin Claimant	Coordinator of 'We Are Here'	Male
3	9 April 2019	Abu	Rejected Asylum Seeker	Coordinator of 'We Are Here'	Male
4	11 April 2019	Peter	Dublin Claimant	Member of 'We Are Here'	Male
5	14 April 2019	Seiko	Rejected Asylum Seeker [former]	Former Coordinator of 'We Are Here'	Male
6	16 April 2019	Harry	Supporter		Male
7	17 April 2019	Thomas	Rejected Asylum Seeker [former]	Former Spokesman of 'We Are Here'	Male
8	17 April 2019	Dave	Dublin Claimant	Member of 'We Are Here'	Male
9	19 April 2019	Touré	Rejected Asylum Seeker	Former Spokesman of 'We Are Here'	Male
10	23 April 2019	Alex	Dublin Claimant	Member of 'We Are Here'	Male
11	25 April 2019	Malik	Rejected Asylum Seeker	Coordinator of 'We Are Here'	Male
12	25 April 2019	Gerrit	Supporter		Male
13	29 April 2019	Malik Abu Thomas	Focus Group	Coordinator of 'We Are Here' Coordinator of 'We Are Here' Former Spokesman of 'We Are Here'	Male Male Male
14	8 May 2019	Jane	Supporter		Female
15	8 May 2019	Katy	Supporter		Female
16	13 May 2019	Sefu	Dublin Claimant	Member of 'We Are Here'	Male
17	15 May 2019	X	Judicial Worker		Female
18	5 June 2019	X	Judicial Worker		Female

Appendix 3. Focus Group: Strategic Dilemmas

Discussed Strategic Dilemmas

1. Risk Dilemma (Jasper, 2006, p.18)
2. Victor or Hero? (Jasper, 2004, p.13)
3. Plan versus Opportunity (Jasper, 2004, p.13)
4. Direct or Indirect Moves? (Jasper, 2004, p.13)
5. The Basket Dilemma (Jasper, 2004, p.13)
6. Dirty Hands (Jasper, 2004, p.13)
7. The Media Dilemma (Jasper, 2004, p.13)
8. The Familiar and the New (Jasper, 2004, p.13)
9. The Extension Dilemma (Jasper, 2006, p.127)
10. The Ambitious Leader (Jasper, 2004, p.13)
11. The Radical-Flank Dilemma (Jasper, 2004, p.13)

Appendix 4. Banner

This picture is taken on the 2th of April 2019 by Mads Holm on the day of an eviction. The picture shows a banner of 'We Are Here' and illustrates the claim for a 'normal life'.

Appendix 5. Flyer

UILENSTEDE STAY

We Are Here has settled in the empty office building since the 2nd of April but the owner Zadelhoff has asked for immediate eviction. Due to an appeal to the judge on the human interest of We Are Here against the capitalistic interest of the owner, We Are Here is legally allowed to stay in the building till the 4th of June 2019. The hope is to show the municipality the value that We Ae Here adds to the neighbourhood, so a temporary stay till the 1st of July is allowed awaiting a 24/7 shelter which is planned for that date in new policy by Groenlinks.

MEET US

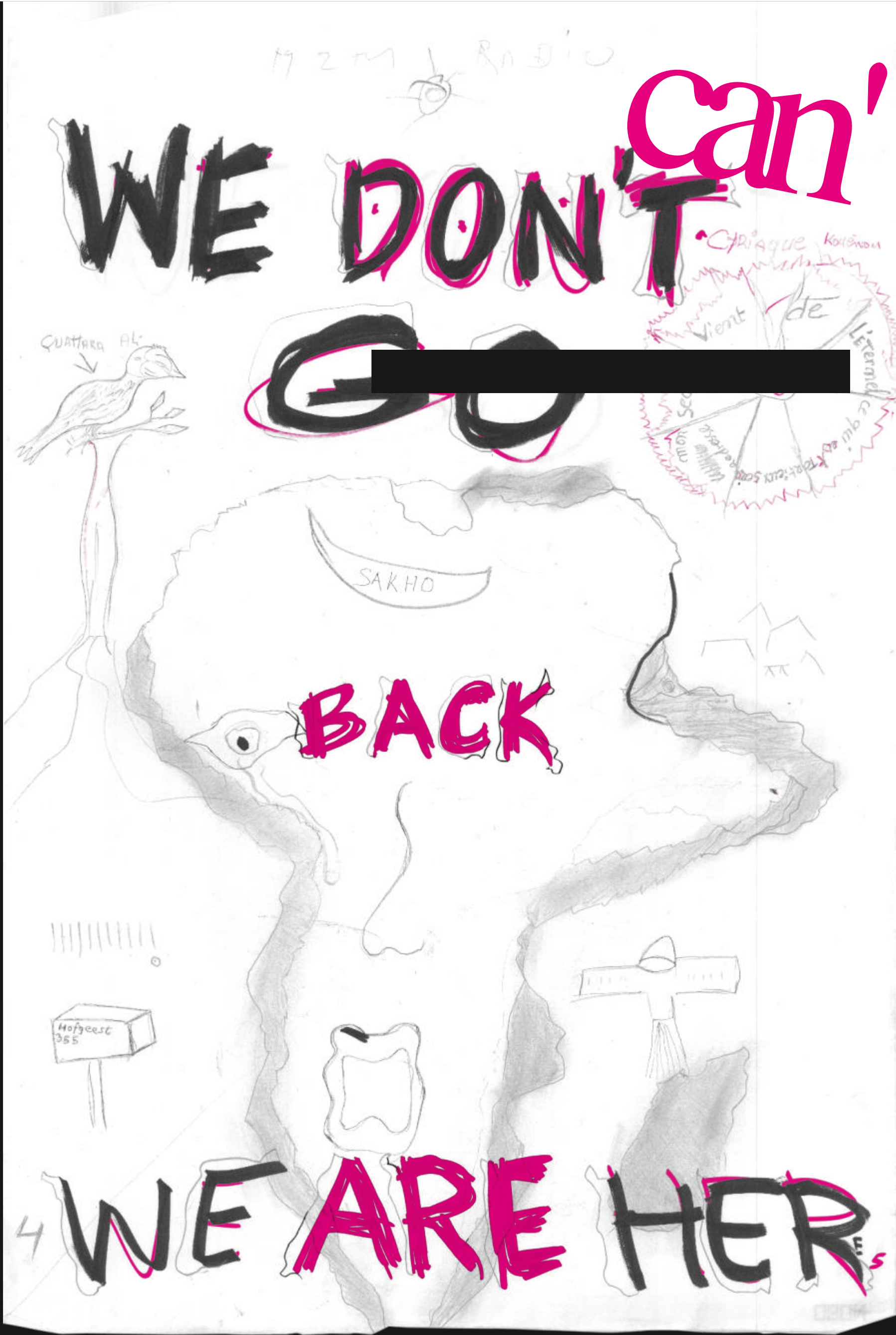
The people of We Are Here are always happy with visitors coming by to show interest so you can walk by any time of the day and you will always get a warm welcome. Due to their living conditions all the help is welcome so if you have any spare clothes, blankets, food etc you would like to bring by, the people of We Are Here would be most grateful.

Donations to: FREE WeAreHere | NL53TRIO03385736.07 | Tnv. St.M2M | Ovv. Free We Are Here

Wijzijnhier.org

/WijZijnHier

Appendix 6. Poster: ‘We Can’t Go Back’



4 REFUGEES RIGHTS
DEMONSTRATION
Friday 2 September 2016 in Amsterdam

START: 10 a.m. from VLUCHTGEMEENTE (Pieter Calandlaan 1)
FINISH: 2 p.m. at DIACONIE (Nieuwe Herengracht 18)

wijzijnhier.org   fb wij zijn hier   06 86 26 33 81

Appendix 7. Logo: ‘‘We Are Here’’

Appendix 8. 'We'

BENEFIET-PARTY & JAM - SESION

VR.7 JUNI 18 tot 23.OO UUR in buurtgebouw:
HENRICK DE KEIJSERPLEIN 45 1073sw amsterdam

D.J.: 00

LEKKER ETEN

GRATIS ENTREE

DJEMBE WORKSHOP 18.30-19.30

OPBRENGST VOOR ONGEDOCUMENTEERDE VLUCHTELINGEN

WE..have a dream…to give undocumented refugees of We Are Here and all others who need it, a chance to live, study and work in peace. To give them a chance to recover from stressful and often scary times, to give them a chance to live instead of surviving. In a living space what is adequate for it!

That's why…WE…every 2the of the month, on Fridays, organize something everybody loves and brings together without language being necessary…..EATING together & Making MUSIC together..JAMMING!

But….there may be conversation…...communication!!!

To join the music, Ibou gives Traditional Rhythm Djembe workshop á €5. Diner €4.50.

Both…who wants to donate more… WELCOME……

Who can't or hardly not…..WELCOME…..

Any donations like money, food, cloths, other useful gifts or other help is welcome and will be used to make the dream come true.

Info: bewithwe7@gmail.com ~ Mob.0654375813 ~ Next party: 12 July