Tracing mobilities regimes: The regulation of drug smuggling and labour migration at two airports in the Netherlands and Indonesia
Kloppenburg, S.
Chapter 2

The airport as a method

Four suggestions on how to trace a mobilities regime

Introduction: Studying transfer points

The methodological challenges of studying globalization, transnational flows, and mobilities have received attention from various angles. In anthropology, Marcus’s call for a ‘multi-sited ethnography’ has been influential (Marcus 1995). Anthropologists have traditionally studied societies by spending a long period at a single site, but Marcus argues they should extend their fieldwork to multiple sites. This would allow researchers to examine complex phenomena through associations and interconnections between sites (see Hannerz 2003). Researchers who adopt this approach ‘connect sites’ by following people, things, metaphors, stories, biographies, and conflicts as they circulate in and through different contexts. In practice, however, the multiplicity of connections the researcher is able to make by tracing people, objects or immaterialities from one site makes it difficult to identify the boundaries of the research site (see Candea 2007; Gille & Ó Riain 2002).

John Urry calls for a new mobilities paradigm that transforms the social sciences in terms of theory and methods. He proposes a list of ‘mobile methods’ with which researchers can ‘track in various ways (including physically travelling with their research objects) the many and interdependent forms of intermittent movement of people, images, information and objects’ (Büscher & Urry 2009, p. 103). One of these mobile methods is the study of transfer points or nodes through which people and material objects move, such as lounges, parks, hotels, stations, harbours and airports. Büscher and Urry point out that these transfer points are sites where ‘“populations” who are mobile can be monitored by various agencies charged with policing that territory; and simultaneously can be researched since they are temporarily immobilized’ (idem, p. 108). Social scientists can thus use these points of temporary immobility as sites from which they can observe and analyse mobilities. Büscher and Urry’s mobile method is a step beyond general accounts of flows and fluidity because it aims at making the people and goods that move through nodes ‘legible’, just as the authorities at some of these nodes seek to make mobilities legible.

But there is more to studying transfer points than the simple fact that this is where mobilities can be found, tracked, and researched. As Peter Adey (2010, p. 78) notes, researchers may examine the points or nodes through which people and goods move as sites that provide a political and social context to mobilities. This allows researchers to view mobilities and border crossings not as abstract flows, but as mobile subjects moving and acting in specific contexts. As an example of this way of approaching mobility, Adey refers to Michael Peter Smith’s argument that no matter how much people’s lives may be
characterized by spatial mobility and border crossings, the actors are still ‘classed, raced and
gendered bodies in motion in specific historical contexts, within certain political formations
and spaces’ (Smith 2005, p. 238). Thinking of nodes as contexts for mobilities is also what
Heyman does in his ethnographic study of flows through ports – in this case land ports at
the US–Mexican border. He calls for a detailed study of ports as nodes in the world system
‘where people and commodities step up and down in value as they move across borders’
(Heyman 2004, p. 303). Transfer points thus allow researchers to ‘get into the flow’ – to be
physically present and see how people and material objects move in particular sites, or even
move along with them. The site and its context may range from the physical space of the
airport and its everyday logistics (see for example Knox et al. 2008) to a land port, all part
of the world system of unequal relations of power between the rich and the poor (Heyman
2004).

Of these transfer points, airports in particular have been proposed as suitable sites
for studying the differential movement of people and material objects (see Adey 2006b;
Cresswell 2006). As Cresswell (2006, p. 224) has argued, ‘very few places are more finely
differentiated according to a kinetic hierarchy than an international airport’. This kinetic
hierarchy is based predominantly on passport type. At European airports, for example,
there are different lines for European and non-European citizens, with the non-Europeans
often moving slower and spending more time at the border checkpoint. It is also based on
membership of frequent flyer programs or fast border passage programs. Schiphol Airport
in the Netherlands has a special airport passage program called Privium, in which registered
travellers can move through an automated border gate where they are identified by an iris
scan and bypass the regular border checkpoint. At airports, different groups of people thus
have different rights and speeds of movement. Some of these differences materialize as
separate infrastructures for particular groups. The special lanes for registered travellers, the
different lanes at passport checks for citizens and non-citizens, and the detention centres
that some airports have on their premises are but a few examples. Airports are places where
some procedures for screening mobilities, such as the passport check, are very visible but at
the same time often taken for granted, in particular by those people who can travel relatively
easily. Several European friends and colleagues told me that they only came to think of the
airport as a place of hierarchies when they travelled together with friends holding less ‘easy’
passports (an African passport, for example), and experienced their differential treatment
upon arrival at a European airport.
In this chapter, the airport becomes my method for studying the regulation of mobilities. I understand a method as a mix of theory and methodology that offers a particular approach to tracing mobilities regimes. By calling the airport a method I mean that the airport is a way to get access to and observe mobilities and efforts to regulate them. Mark Salter has argued that the airport allows for a Foucauldian analysis of how particular social issues come to be defined as problems that governments then need to solve. As Salter (2008, p. xii) puts it, ‘the airport provides a fascinating example of how (inter)national mobility is first problematized and then managed’. This interpretation of the airport is not only a theoretical starting point, but also a methodological principle in the sense that airports are a way for the researcher to trace the differential movements of people and the practices of regulating these movements. So, in this research the goal is not to examine the airport as such, but to trace a mobilities regime via the airport.

Building on this initial justification for tracing mobilities regimes through airports, this chapter discusses some characteristics of airports and at the same time explains methodological choices. In the next section I outline four points of departure that will serve as a ‘sensitizing’ framework (see Blumer 1954) for tracing mobilities regimes. Put differently, in later chapters I analyse the workings and politics of two contemporary mobilities regimes, but in this chapter I explain how I researched them. I use short examples from my fieldwork at the airport to illustrate major themes in this book and also include some reflections on the practicalities and problems of doing fieldwork in and around airports. With the first point of departure, I elaborate on how the nature of the airport as a node and a border makes it an important site for the regulation of mobility. The next two points of departure explain my strategy in tracing mobilities regimes, and the final point of departure justifies my focus on particular case studies and explains the potential and the problems of tracing mobilities regimes in practice.

I) Four points of departure for tracing mobilities regimes

1. The airport is a node and a border

   The airport as a node

   International airports are constitutive of globalization. Mimi Sheller and John Urry (2006, p. 219) call the airport ‘a process of transmission of people into global relationships’. In other
words, airports enable individuals and collective actors to construct and ‘live’ transnational connections (Hannerz 2002). Manuel Castells (2000) calls airports ‘nodes’ in a ‘space of flows’, and Mark Gottdiener sees them as ‘gateways’. He argues that ‘[l]iterally acting as the conduit from one physical location on the planet to another, [airports] facilitate the shrinkage of the globe and transcend both space and time’ (2001, p. 11). For the anthropologist Marc Augé the airport as a transit space is the typical ‘non-place’, a space that unlike places ‘cannot be defined as relational, or historical, or concerned with identity’ (Augé 1995, pp. 77-78).

The airport has also been viewed as a new and important type of public domain (Hajer & Reijndorp 2001). Numerous accounts stress how airports have come to resemble cities (Gottdiener 2001; Burghouwt 2002). In fact, Schiphol Airport is marketed as an ‘airport city’ and at Schiphol people can shop, pray, gamble, marry, eat, drink, and go to a museum. Some authors see the inhabitants of this ‘city’ as global nomads for whom the airport is a space of anonymity and escape from normal life, a space where it is possible to temporarily take on a different identity (Gottdiener 2001). But for these global nomads it can also be a space of boredom and delays, and travel can be experienced as moving through ‘corridors’, with one airport, hotel, and meeting place resembling the next (Lassen 2006, p. 306).

The airport as ‘a symbol of a global, postmodern nomadism’ (Cresswell 2006, p. 224) has received considerable criticism from scholars who have actually done research on and at airports. Within mobilities studies, for example, the view of the airport as a space of global nomads is countered by a view of the airport as the site of the movements of very diverse groups – the kinetic elite, occasional flyers, immigrants, airport workers, and so on (Cresswell 2006). Peter Peters (2006) problematizes the notion that airports are simply nodes for mobility by emphasizing that producing mobilities requires a lot of work. He investigates the everyday practices of employees at Schiphol who need to ensure that airplanes fly on time. In their work these employees experience a constant tension between the rigidity of plans, clocks, and protocols, and the continuous flow of contingencies and everyday problems (Peters 2006, p. 101). These more critical approaches to the airport will return in the points of departure that I set out below. My main comment on the above interpretations is that the airport is not just a space where mobilities are produced, but also a space where they are regulated, controlled, and blocked. In addition to being nodes for mobility, airports are borders too.
The airport as a border

The airport is an international border because it is a place where people and goods enter and leave the territory of a nation-state. At the same time, the airport problematizes viewing a border as a physical line coinciding with the nation-state’s territorial boundaries. The difference between land and airport borders is that at an airport the border is not located at the territorial boundaries of the state, but usually well inside those boundaries. What is more, the international border at the airport is often twofold: passengers face identity checks by the border police at one location and checks of the goods they have brought with them by Customs officials at a second location. Moreover, a large part of the airport terminal building consists of a space where people have formally exited one country, but have not yet formally entered into another country — the international zone. This is the space of newly arrived passengers, of transit passengers changing from one flight to the next, and of departing passengers waiting for their flight to leave. The international zone as a space of being ‘in between’ countries has captured the imagination of artists, filmmakers, and writers (see Laing 2008 on the transit zone). Offering facilities similar to those of a city, this transit zone is a space where a person could stay for a long time — like the main character in the film ‘The Terminal’ (2004), who is not allowed to enter the United States but cannot go back to his home country and ends up living in the international zone for several months.

Contrary to popular accounts, however, the airport’s international zone is not a no-man’s land, and the same is true for the airspace which airplanes cross. In the early 20th century, airspace was considered ‘free’, like the high seas. However, foreign airplanes came to be considered a threat for the territorial integrity of a state, as they could easily cross existing terrestrial borders (Dierikx 2008; Budd et al. 2011). At a conference in Paris in 1919, a convention was signed which recognized airspace as part of the sovereign territory of the subjacent state. In 1944, through the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation, nation-states agreed upon a set of basic principles and arrangements for international civil aviation worldwide, which are still valid today. The first article of the Convention, in line with the convention signed in Paris, establishes that ‘every State has complete and exclusive sovereignty over the airspace above its territory’ (Chicago Convention, Article 1). This means that nation-states can control who flies over their territory and where they may fly (Laing 2008, p. 73). In order to understand what this means for the people on board an airplane, we can take the example of a traveller flying from Jakarta in Indonesia to Amsterdam in

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8 Of course not every airport or airport terminal is a border; there are also airports and airport terminals that only cater for domestic flights. When I use the word airport in this chapter, I mean an international airport.
the Netherlands. As soon as an airplane enters Dutch airspace, that person falls under the jurisdiction of the Dutch state, but also under special jurisdiction of the country of registration of the aircraft (in this case Indonesia) as long as the doors of the plane are still closed. When the doors open after landing, the person falls exclusively under Dutch jurisdiction, even though he has not yet officially passed the border. Only when he has passed the immigration check does he gain formal entry into the Netherlands.

Travellers who are denied entry into a country at an airport border are paradoxically both inside and outside the nation-state. If a person is denied entry, he or she can be held in the transit zone of the airport. As a report by the NGO Human Rights Watch about the transit zone at Roissy Charles de Gaulle Airport phrases it, such people are ‘[p]hysically present within France’s geographical borders, but yet not “in” France according to French law’ (Human Rights Watch 2009, p. 1). Transit zones are ‘designated places where rejected migrants are physically detained until they are returned to a state that is obliged to receive them back, including their country of origin’ (Tóth 2006, p. 1). Therefore, although the transit zone does not fall outside the jurisdiction of the nation-state, people who are in the transit zone may nevertheless be treated in a different way than they would be under the regular legal system of that country. The transit zone is thus a juridical category, rather than a fixed space.

There are also physical borders at airports that make the airport terminal a divided space. For reasons of security, safety, and controlling flows of people and goods in and out of the country, different types of spaces need to be created by means of physical barriers and controls on entry and exit. An airport terminal consists of an area that is public space and an area that is restricted. The restricted area of the airport terminal is accessible only to passengers and people in possession of an airport pass. In addition, the airport terminal consists of ‘clean’ (or sterile) spaces and ‘unclean’ spaces. ‘Clean’ space is produced by a security check in which passengers move through a metal detector or scanner and their hand luggage through an x-ray scanner. The boundaries of the clean area differ by airport.

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9 See Tóth (2006) for more details.
10 The juridical transit zone does not just include parts of the terminal building, but also detention centres and court rooms. The transit zone may also be ‘mobilized’ in order to transport people to a court room or hospital (see Human Rights Watch 2009).
11 This area is also generally referred to as airside. At Schiphol, however, airside refers more specifically to the protected area outside the passenger terminal, namely ‘the airport area used for aircraft landings, take-offs, taxiing, towing, parking and handling’ (Schiphol Regulations 2011).
12 Schiphol Airport workers used the word ‘clean’ (schoon), while Soekarno-Hatta Airport workers used the word ‘sterile’ (steril).
At Jakarta’s Soekarno-Hatta Airport, for example, the check-in desks are located in the security-checked ‘clean’ area, whereas at Schiphol Airport they are in the public part of the terminal. Flows of arriving and departing passengers are often processed at different levels of an airport terminal, with arriving passengers at ground level, and departing passengers on the upper level. And there are other vertical hierarchies: at Schiphol Airport, the airport lounges are situated in an elevated part of the international zone, whereas suspected drug smugglers are taken to a room on a level below the arrival gate. Airports also have separate terminals or sections of a terminal for domestic and for international passengers. At European airports, however, the border at the airport is not only a point of entry into the country of arrival, but a gateway into Europe. Under the Schengen Agreement, there are no border controls for travellers when they travel within the Schengen area; only when they travel into or out of this area13. European airports therefore consist of Schengen and non-Schengen spaces instead of domestic and international sections.

During my fieldwork at Schiphol Airport, I experienced that some of the borders between Schengen and non-Schengen spaces are not fixed. When I walked with an employee at one of Schiphol Airport’s ‘flexible piers’, he explained how these piers can be turned into either Schengen or non-Schengen spaces, depending on whether the airplane that is parked at that particular gate is a Schengen or a non-Schengen flight. If a flight from a Schengen country parks at one of the gates at this pier, its passengers are considered ‘clean’14 and they move by stairway to the Schengen area on the upper floor of the building. But when a flight from a non-Schengen country arrives at the same gate, access to the stairway is blocked by a glass door and the ‘unclean’ passengers stay at ground level. Before the gate can be used as a Schengen space again, the employee explained, the whole room needs ‘sweeping’ to remove any suspicious objects. Here the opening and closing of glass doors creates alternately Schengen and non-Schengen spaces, and, accordingly, clean and unclean spaces.

In addition, there is a recent development in which borders that used to be located at the airport increasingly shift to new places outside the airport. Australia, for example, employs a range of pre-emptive measures by which some people are denied entrance to

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13 The Schengen Agreement of 1985 abolished checks at the internal borders of the signatory states (currently 25 countries) and created a single external border and common rules and procedures with regard to visas for short stays, asylum requests, and border control (http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/justice_freedom_security/free_movement_of_persons_asylum_immigration/l33020_en.htm)

14 There is a common security policy in the EU which means that Schengen passengers are not only considered domestic passengers, but are also considered security-checked passengers (Regulation (EC) No. 300/2008).
Australia when they apply for a visa in their home country or when they attempt to board an airplane for departure, instead of when they present themselves at the physical border at an Australian airport (Wilson and Weber 2008). Some airlines, for example El Al, work with a black list, which allows them to deny boarding to passengers who are considered a ‘security risk’.

Whereas some barriers and checkpoints for regulating mobilities at airports are visible and tangible, others are hidden or even invisible (Adey 2004b; Salter 2007). David Lyon sees airports as data filters where ‘surveillance screens and sorts personal data in order to classify consumers and citizens in terms of relative worth and relative risk’ (Lyon 2003a, p. 13). In political economy and political sociology there is a growing body of studies examining (biometric) borders and surveillance practices related to air travel, such as passenger profiling (Curry 2004), no-fly lists (Bennett 2008), biometrics, (Aas 2006; Amoore 2006), body scanning (Amoore & Hall 2009), and registered traveller programs (Muller 2008; Adey 2008). Together with the observation that borders that used to be located at airports are shifting to new places, this requires that when we trace a mobilities regime we also need to pay attention to hidden regulatory practices, and to practices outside and beyond the physical space of the airport. Although the airport is an interesting starting point for tracing mobilities regimes, the question of where to ‘find’ the regulation of mobilities remains a methodological challenge.

The dual function of airports

 Particularly interesting is the work of scholars who approach airports, or more generally borders, as a place of tensions. Lyon has argued that the twin and seemingly contradictory aims of the airport are to maximize at the same time as regulate mobility (Lyon 2008). More precisely, scholars point to the contradictory imperatives of free mobility and security (Salter 2004b, 2007, 2008; Kellerman 2008; Sparke 2006). The airport is an environment in which security has become increasingly important following the attacks on 11 September 2001, and tighter security checks have led to longer waiting times at airport checkpoints. Adey (2008) has identified the more local contradictory forces of commerce and mobility. Commercial activities are an important source of income for most airports. The management dilemma of airport operators is that they need to increase the efficiency of passenger movement but

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15 Work within this field builds on Foucault in looking at ‘how mobility has become a problematic of security as an object that needs securing’ and seeks to understand how mobilities are controlled through biopolitical security techniques (Adey 2009, p. 276) While this body of literature does not feature as prominently in the theoretical framework of this thesis as mobilities studies and border studies, I do draw on it in analyzing specific technologies and modes of regulation in the next chapters.
also need to create ‘dwelltime’ (Lloyd 2003) that allows people to spend money at shops and restaurants. Airport operators therefore seek to manage the speed and routes of passengers through an airport terminal (see Adey 2008). At Copenhagen Airport, for example, a winding line on the floor makes passengers walk along all the shops. The crisscross staging of retail products discourages passengers from finding shortcuts, or walking to the gates in a straight line. Balancing commerce and security with mobility (Kellerman 2008) is a logistical challenge for airport authorities, but the tensions that result from combining security and mobility also have important normative aspects (as with the contested no-fly lists).

The dual function of the airport as a node and border thus makes airports important sites for the regulation of mobilities. At airports, facilitating mobility goes hand in hand with controlling nation-state borders against undesirable entry of goods, people, and viruses. Procedures used to regulate mobilities often depend on categorizations of movements, which results in differential mobilities, or different rights and privileges of movement and access (see Heyman 2004 for similar observations about land ports). Some passengers are allowed to pass through the airport quickly, while others are questioned and searched. Some are considered ‘trusted’ travellers and others are profiled as ‘risky’. However, the airport should not be seen as an actor in the sense that it is the airport that produces, regulates, and intercepts mobilities. In the next section we take a closer look at what the airport is by entering the operational department.

2. The airport is a constellation of different actors

It is an early morning in December 2008 and I am joining a work shift at Schiphol’s operational department. Today I will follow the Floor Manager on duty, who is responsible for a smooth passenger flow in the terminal. The day starts with a meeting. We sit at a large table with a group of people consisting of a representative of the border police and one of Customs, an operational manager, a security manager, as well as someone from one of Schiphol’s private security companies, the manager of the operations control centre, and someone from the parking section. On the agenda are the passenger forecast models for today and the bottlenecks that may occur. Heavy snow in Canada and the northeastern United States is expected to cause delays in the arrival of planes from there, which will affect all operations in the terminal. After the meeting, when we are back in the operations control centre, the operational manager explains to me that a passenger at an airport ‘belongs to a different
party each time': at the Schengen border he belongs to the border police; walking towards the waiting lounges he belongs to the airport operator; and transiting from one KLM\textsuperscript{16} flight to the next, the airline will take care of him. The daily meetings are a way to coordinate between the different parties to facilitate a smooth passenger flow.

In his article on international airports geographer Aharon Kellerman (2008) looks at the airport from the perspective of passengers. He describes how passengers meet a ‘chain of authorities’ as they move through an airport. If we take the case of Schiphol Airport, a departing traveller for an international flight checks in with an airline employee, who checks the validity of the ticket, but also the passport and visa. In addition the airline employee may ask security questions such as ‘Did you pack you bags yourself?’ Next, the traveller moves through the passport check, where the border police check ticket, passport, and visa. At the gate, security personnel will check for dangerous items: hand luggage goes through an x-ray machine and the passenger moves through a metal detector or body scanner\textsuperscript{17}. Customs too may do a check here to assess whether the passenger is carrying illegal items or large sums of money. Before boarding, the airline does an additional check of boarding passes, and sometimes passports. An arriving passenger will face passport and visa checks by the border police, and goods checks by Customs\textsuperscript{18} (see Kellerman 2008).

This chain of authorities as described above is a far from complete picture of all stakeholders at the airport. At Schiphol Airport, for example, 500 companies and institutions are active (Schiphol Group 2012), among them airlines, catering services, ground handling companies, retailers, Customs, border police, air traffic controllers, aircraft fuel suppliers, and even bird controllers. Whereas at first sight it may seem that transporting people is the responsibility of private companies, and border control and aviation safety and security are the responsibility of governments, the reality of mobility at airports is more complex than that. International, national, and local commercial and public-sector actors all engage in mobility regulation in intersecting ways.

The international nature of air travel requires that aviation and operations at airports in all parts of the world are regulated and standardized. The International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), a specialized agency of the United Nations that was formed under the Chicago Convention, sets international standards and regulations for aviation safety, security, "Koninklijke Nederlandse Luchtvaartmaatschappij, or Royal Dutch Airlines."

\textsuperscript{17} The passport check and security check can also be in the reverse order.

\textsuperscript{18} For passengers it may not always be clear who does what in this ‘chain of authorities’. Dutch people often erroneously use the phrase ‘door de douane gaan’ (literally, moving through Customs) to refer to the process of passport checks by the border police.
efficiency, and environmental protection. The annexes of the Chicago Convention contain standards and recommended practices for handling air travel, with Annex 14 prescribing the use and design of an airport, and Annex 17 setting forth security standards. The ICAO also standardizes travel documents and has recently set standards for machine-readable and biometric passports. Countries have some flexibility in implementing ICAO standards and their regulations may be stricter than the ICAO standards. Schiphol Airport’s security operations are structured by international treaties (for example ICAO, Annex 17), European Union regulations (for example No. 2320/2002), national laws and regulations (for example De Luchtvaartwet) and the local Schiphol Security Handbook.

Airports can be owned and operated by governments, private companies, or a mix of public and private companies. Schiphol Group, the company that owns and operates Schiphol Airport, is a public company owned by the Dutch government and the municipalities of Amsterdam and Rotterdam. Since the establishment of an alliance with Aeroports de Paris in 2008, Schiphol Group is not completely Dutch anymore, as the French government now has an 8% share in Schiphol Group. Schiphol Group has developed into a multinational company that is now active in France, the United States, Australia, Aruba, Sweden, Indonesia, and Italy. An example of their international activities is the fact that a subsidiary of Schiphol Group, Schiphol USA, owns and operates Terminal 4 at John F. Kennedy Airport in New York. This means that an airport terminal in the USA is now owned by a foreign government company.

Governments are responsible for border control and for monitoring security (including preventing terrorism and hijacking), and for safety. There are differences in how border control at airports is organized and operated in different countries of the world. In some countries, such as the United States and the United Kingdom, there are single border control bodies that screen both goods and people, but in most countries, separate Customs checks and passport controls are carried out by two different government agencies. In the USA there is state control over security, with a federal agency (TSA) screening passengers and luggage, whereas the EU has adopted a decentralized model that works with public–private partnerships (Lahav 2008, p. 85). At Schiphol, for example, the government has made the airport operator responsible for carrying out security checks, and the actual screening is outsourced to private security companies.

Increasingly, airlines as commercial actors are involved in border control. At check-in, airline employees not only check the validity of tickets, but also do passport and visa checks.

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19 The airport operator is called Amsterdam Airport Schiphol.
At some airports of departure that are known to be sources of undocumented migrants, Dutch airline KLM scans passengers’ passports and visas. For these flights, the border police at Schiphol often carry out additional checks at the arrival gate. With the help of the scans, passengers who have destroyed their passport during the journey to the Netherlands (with the hope of being granted asylum) can still be identified and sent back to their airport of departure. The last decade has seen a proliferation of public–private partnerships in border and migration control at airports (Lahav 2008). Airlines flying to the United States, for example, are required to make passenger data (Passenger Name Records) available to the American authorities, who use it for pre-screening passengers. The outsourcing of security screening to private parties, as is the case at Schiphol, is another example (Lahav 2008; Salter 2008). In addition, registered traveller programs that allow members to move faster through checkpoints are often introduced and operated by private parties such as airlines or airport operators, under the supervision of government authorities. Hence, public–private partnerships work to facilitate as well as to restrict mobilities.

A quick glance at the actors involved in regulating mobility at airports shows there are public and private actors, as well as public–private partnerships operating at local, national, and international levels. Salter therefore argues that there is not a ‘concerted “controller” of airports’ (2008, p. 23), but that the airport represents ‘an assemblage of multiple actors operating according to different and often conflicting logics’ (idem, p. 9). So, we should not interpret the airport as a bounded, physical space or as a single actor. Many different actors, inside and outside the airport, play a role in the regulation of mobility.

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20 In the United States there was an opposite development. Security screening used to be the responsibility of airlines, but after 11 September 2001, this responsibility was put back in the hands of the federal government through the creation of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA).
3. The airport is linked and grounded

During one of my first fieldwork visits to Schiphol Airport in July 2008, I encountered the artwork ‘Coda’ by Dennis Adams. The work is located indoors at Schiphol Plaza close to the railway station and functions as a meeting point for travellers and their pickup persons. From the outside, the artwork looks like a big square consisting of red-and-white blocks, but I soon found out that it consists of several pillars and that you can actually get inside the artwork. When I did so, I saw panels with pictures of several airport objects – runways, towers, road signs – taken at different locations such as Willemstad and Kralendijk in the Caribbean, and Medan and Jakarta in Indonesia. I noticed that the artwork shows two important yet contradictory features of airports. The red and white colours of the artwork and the interchangeable pictures of runways and towers inside it symbolize that airports are highly standardized spaces. Airports all over the world are designed in similar ways, and the processes at airports – baggage handling, aircraft maintenance, check-in – are subject to international standards. At the same time, this artwork shows the historical roots of Schiphol’s flight network, and thereby the distinctive character of this airport and the people and goods that pass through it. The pictures of standardized airport objects – runways, towers, road signs – were taken in countries that once formed Dutch colonial areas. By making these links explicit, the artwork shows how the airport infrastructure, since
the early 20th century, has facilitated the mobility of people between the Netherlands and its (former) colonies. In this way the artwork also represents the airport as a political space, with the links between airports reflecting geopolitical positions and relations.

The artwork reflects Tim Cresswell’s observation that ‘Schiphol may be a node in a global space of flows, but it is still uniquely Schiphol – still a place’; and ‘Schiphol, like any other kind of place, is situated and has its own history and own sets of connections’ (Cresswell 2006, p. 257). It was only when I stood inside ‘Coda’ that I realized I had chosen my fieldwork sites and cases along the lines of several of these historical connections. Because airport scholarship focuses mainly on airports in Western countries (Brenda Chalfin’s (2008) study of Customs procedures at a Ghanese airport is one of the few exceptions), I had decided to do fieldwork on two different airports: Schiphol Airport in the Netherlands and Soekarno-Hatta Airport in Indonesia. Practical reasons such as access and language proficiency played a role in this selection. As a Dutch person who had visited Indonesia several times for research and other activities, I was more or less familiar with both airports. But apart from that personal experience connecting the two airports, I found out that relations between the two airports go back decades. The history of air travel between the Netherlands and Indonesia is strongly related to the countries' past relationship as colonizer and colony. As such, it is indicative of the changing relationship between the two countries, but also provides an illustration of the historical development of aviation. The service between Amsterdam and Jakarta is the oldest intercontinental scheduled service in the history of aviation. In 1924 the first flight from Amsterdam to Batavia (present-day Jakarta) took off, and made 22 stops before it reached Batavia almost two months later. Two decades later, during the Indonesian war of independence between Indonesia and the Netherlands (1945-1949), airplanes also played an important role. In 1948 a group of Acehnese traders and businessmen donated money to President Soekarno to buy two airplanes. The Dutch had put up blockades to restrict the circulation of people, arms and food between and within the Indonesian islands, and these two airplanes were needed for carrying Indonesian leaders past the blockades. The purchase of these two airplanes was later claimed to be the birth of the Indonesian national carrier Garuda (www.garuda.com). Nevertheless, after the war, the Dutch and Indonesian air industry continued to be connected and KLM assisted Garuda technically and financially until the 1980s. Nowadays, there is a joint venture between the two airport companies Schiphol Group and PT Angkasa Pura II at Soekarno-Hatta Airport. In 2002 the joint venture resulted in the introduction of a fast border passage program at Soekarno-Hatta Airport – Saphire – that followed the example of the Privium program at Schiphol.
It is not just the specific history and set of connections that make an airport unique. Sven Kesselring (2009, p. 48) argues that ‘[on] the one hand, airports are interfaces with global space [...] [b]ut on the other hand, airports are territorial and thus bound by the social, cultural, economic and political norms of their location’. Several months after noticing the ‘Coda’ artwork, during an afternoon when I was observing passengers at Soekarno-Hatta Airport in Indonesia, the airport presented itself to me as a place rooted in its environment. As I wandered around outside the international terminal, I noticed a piece of A4-sized paper posted at the stairs reading ‘It is forbidden to sit down and smoke’. It was clear that this message was not addressed to travellers, as they would prefer to use the benches or stay inside the air-conditioned terminal; it was meant to discourage the presence of those who spend their days at the airport without ever taking a flight. Each day locals carrying out informal economic activities can be found at different places around the airport. In the public part of the terminals peddlers sell perfume or watches to newly-arrived passengers, and young shoe polishers offer their services to people sitting on benches waiting for a connecting bus. The area outside the arrivals terminal is the working environment of unofficial transport providers, such as locals who take people on their motorcycles and illicit taxi drivers. Further away, at the parking lots, men make money by carrying luggage while women peddle food and drinks. And at the domestic departures hall, travellers sometimes come to the airport to try to buy a last-minute ticket from one of the ticket brokers outside the sales offices.

In later talks with airport managers, I listened to them describing the presence of locals as a ‘social problem’ they needed to deal with. The managers explained that passengers felt bothered by the informal airport workers and in particular feared the porter liar – literally ‘wild porters’ – who might take and carry their luggage and charge a fee without first asking permission. Indonesian newspapers, moreover, repeatedly portrayed the airport as an unsafe place resembling a chaotic bus terminal or a marketplace rather than an international airport. As part of a campaign to improve facilities and services at the airport, the airport operator in collaboration with the local police had started to remove from the premises what they called ‘people without any interest in the airport’ (orang yang tidak berkepentingan). The campaign, bearing the rather peculiar name ‘clean airport action’, turned the peddlers, drivers and porters into ‘illicit mobilities’ who were not supposed to be present at the airport.

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21 Abraham and Van Schendel (2006) explain how what is legal or illegal according to state law can differ from what is deemed acceptable behaviour according to social norms (licit or illicit). I use the word illicit and not illegal here, because the ‘clean airport campaign’ did not include any laws or regulations prohibiting the presence of these ‘informal’ airport workers, but relied more on social norms about who should and should not be present at the airport.
airport. During this campaign, the airport managers – inspired by the ‘airport city’ concept – also tried to generate more income from non-aeronautical activities by attracting more non-flyers to the airport. In the recently opened new domestic terminal 3, a large area with shops and restaurants had been created. But although this space was presented as a ‘public area’, only certain types of mobilities – passengers, meeters and greeters, and tourists – were allowed inside. The entrances of the new terminal were guarded by security officers and all visitors had to move through a metal detector and have their bags checked.

One way in which airports are grounded is that they provide a workplace for locals – official as well as unofficial. Airport managers attempted to manage the airport’s local and regional embeddedness through practices of bordering that simultaneously opened up airport spaces to the general public and closed them off to ‘illicit’ mobilities. Where the public area at the older terminals is jokingly called a (traditional) marketplace, the new terminal’s public area resembles an Indonesian mall: a commercial and security-checked space where those who are allowed in are expected to consume, not to sell.

A first glance at the two airports shows that their yearly passenger numbers are almost equal, but that the contexts these airports operate in, as well as the challenges in managing mobilities, are very different. Schiphol Airport is Europe’s fifth-largest airport in terms of passengers, and third-largest in terms of cargo. Schiphol can be called a hub airport: in 2010 the airport was used by 45.2 million passengers, of which 41% were transit passengers (Schiphol Group 2010). Besides facilitating air travel, the airport operator Schiphol Group aims to turn Schiphol Airport into an ‘AirportCity’, which they describe as ‘a dynamic environment integrating and enhancing people and businesses, logistics and shopping, information and entertainment’ with good rail and road connections. This is intended to attract not only travellers, but also tourists and businesses. The airport operator Schiphol Group has promoted the ‘AirportCity’ as a ‘formula’ to be applied at airports worldwide. The activities of the joint venture Angkasa Pura Schiphol at Soekarno-Hatta Airport are an example of these international activities.

Because Schiphol is a European airport, EU rules and regulations govern the regulation of mobilities there. Over the past years, stricter European rules and regulations on security following the attacks of 11 September 2001 have led to longer queues at checkpoints at Schiphol. As a response, the airport operator has introduced a number of new technologies intended to shorten waiting time at checkpoints, such as body scanners. The Schengen Agreement governs Schiphol’s border function and makes the international border at

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22 The other two airport terminals have only a small public area situated mostly in the open air.
Schiphol not just a checkpoint for entering the Netherlands, but also a ‘gateway to Europe’, a slogan also used by the airport itself.

Compared to Schiphol Airport, Soekarno-Hatta is a more ‘local’ airport, as airport managers in Jakarta described it. Most travellers at this airport have Soekarno-Hatta Airport as their airport of departure or destination: in 2008 only 4.8% of the passengers were transit passengers for national and international flights. Moreover, around 73% of the passengers at this airport were domestic passengers (PT Angkasa Pura II 2009a). In the late 1990s the airport was facing a period of decreasing passenger numbers due to the Asian financial crisis of 1997 and the collapse of the Suharto regime a year later. But in the 2000s, economic growth and airline deregulation stimulated the emergence of low-cost airlines and the opening of new flight routes. Although Air Asia’s slogan ‘Now everyone can fly’ is still an aspiration rather than a reality, travelling by air has become cheaper and more Indonesians can afford to buy an airplane ticket. As a result, passenger numbers at Jakarta’s airport have skyrocketed from 14.8 million in 2002 to 37.1 million in 2009 and are expected to keep increasing by 10 per cent per year (PT Angkasa Pura II 2003; PT Angkasa Pura II 2009b). The latest numbers show that in 2010, the airport was used by 44.4 million passengers (PT Angkasa Pura II 2011) and Soekarno-Hatta Airport now ranks 16th on the list of the world’s largest airports in terms of passenger numbers – one place below Schiphol Airport (ACI 15-03-2011).

This rapid growth is putting pressure on Soekarno-Hatta Airport. With the two original terminals designed to accommodate 18 million passengers, the Jakarta airport operator PT Angkasa Pura II faces serious challenges in managing a smooth passenger flow in the terminals. Solutions are sought in increasing the level of services, using the existing space more efficiently, and initiating airport expansion projects. In 2009, the airport operator opened a new domestic terminal for low-cost airlines, Terminal 3, and plans for the future include increasing non-aeronautical income in the spirit of the ‘airport city’ formula, as well as improving transport connections to Jakarta by constructing a railway. The titles of Angkasa Pura II’s recent annual reports reflect the excitement about the airport’s growth and show high ambitions: from ‘Continuing Improvement’ (2006), to ‘Together We Build a Better Future’ (2007), Soekarno-Hatta Airport is now said to be ‘Reborn to Be a World-Class Airport’ (2009).

All this shows that airports are not non-places characterized by an absence of identity, relations and history. Neither do airports necessarily share a standardized ‘airport architecture’ of glass and steel. Edwards (2005, p. 27), in a book about terminal
architecture, argues that ‘the internationalism of air transportation is invariably tempered by regional characteristics in the design of terminals themselves’. Many airports have local characteristics in order to create ‘a sense of place’ (Gottdiener 2001). Soekarno-Hatta Airport, for example, has an architecture that resembles that of houses in local villages and includes large open and garden-like spaces. Like any place, the airport is both grounded and linked. My approach to airports – my ‘Coda’ in other words – is to see the airport as a space that is not apart from, but grounded in a societal and historical context (see also Adey 2006c; Cresswell 2006). Accounting for the societal and historical context of airports also draws our attention to the fact that each airport has its own mix of mobilities of tourists, refugees, migrants, traders, families-in-diaspora, as well as airport employees and other locals. At my two selected airports there were regulations for particular groups of travellers that caught my attention and confirmed my choice of these two airports.

4. The airport is a space containing different kinds of mobile subjects

I am on board flight KL0809 from Amsterdam to Jakarta, where I will be doing my fieldwork for the coming months. We make a stop-over at Malaysia’s Kuala Lumpur Airport, where some of the passengers get off and new passengers get on board. When we take off for the final 1 ½ hours to Jakarta, I have two new neighbours. On my left now sits an Indonesian woman with two large bags, on my right a young woman with a trendy Crumpler shoulder bag who also looks Indonesian. Halfway during the flight, a stewardess comes around to hand out Customs declaration forms for Soekarno-Hatta Airport. All three of us take one, and I start to fill out the form. The girl to my right is done in less than a minute. The woman to my left asks for a pen, in Indonesian, and the girl hands her one. Then the woman asks the girl to fill out the form for her, but the girl refuses and tells her she has to do it herself. Now the woman clearly is in doubt. The girl hands the woman her own Customs form and tells her to use that as an example. As the woman starts writing, the girl turns to me, introduces herself as Ika, and sighs as she begins to explain in English what just happened. Ika tells how other passengers often ask her for help and that she thinks that the woman is one of the many Indonesian migrant workers who work temporarily in Malaysia. Ika says she is annoyed with the woman, who had asked Ika where she worked. ‘I told her I went to a conference in Kuala Lumpur, but she wouldn’t believe me. She asked me in which household I had worked!’ Ika is clearly upset that the woman thinks she is a fellow migrant worker. She goes on to complain in English that migrant workers always assume that you are willing to help them with forms,
luggage, and finding their way at the airport. After Ika and I have been chatting for some time, the woman is done and hands the forms back to Ika. Then Ika calls out in Indonesian: ‘You filled in my name!’ In a shaky handwriting, the woman has copied Ika’s form right up to the third line, where the passenger’s name is asked for, and has left the rest blank. Ika picks up a pen, corrects the name, starts asking the woman questions, and fills in the answers on the form. ‘Nama? (Name), Pekerjaan? (Work). ‘Rumah tangga (Household),’ answers the woman. ‘See,’ says Ika to me in English, ‘I was right, she’s a migrant worker.’

Travelling by air is no longer an activity for the happy few, but the democratization of air travel does not mean that social inequalities have disappeared. My two neighbours in the airplane clearly had different social and economic backgrounds and Ika felt the need to present herself as a conference visitor, and definitely not a migrant worker. In Gottdiener’s account of the airport, people experience the airport as a place of anonymity, ‘where we are free to conduct our lives or to create new ones, to encounter new ideas, to seek out new experiences’ (2001, p. 37). The more burdensome but similarly anonymous ‘life in corridors’ described by Lassen appears upon closer reading to be lived by Danish knowledge workers who need to travel a lot for business reasons. As Mike Crang (2002, p. 571) has argued, it is the airport experience of the ‘forty-something, healthy male business traveller’ that often serves to illustrate the nature of the airport. Whereas the airport may seem to be a typical non-place if we take the perspective of the non-risk traveller with an ‘easy passport’, Crang and Augé too have noted that ‘what is a non-place for one may be a space of employment or exploitation for another’ (Crang 2002, p. 569). Similarly, Sheller (2011b) has argued that in studies on aeromobility (see Cwerner et al 2009), there is a lack of attention to the less privileged travellers who may be subjected to detention or arrest.

What happens if we change perspectives and acknowledge, like Löfgren (2002, p. 265), that what the airport is depends on the kind of traveller one is? ‘The smoothness of one’s entry and exit represents one’s position in the political community,’ Mika Aaltola (2005, p. 275) has said about moving through airports. He argues that airports have a pedagogical function in that they teach people the hierarchical world order and their own position in this order. ‘The trip through an international airport reassures people that they belong to the world; however, there are people whose identities are shaken and whose sense of cosiness (being at home) is taken away’ (idem). Aaltola’s argument thus connects the microscale of movement through an airport to someone’s position in the world order, in a discussion of the ‘geopolitics of mobility at a microscale’ (Cresswell 2006, p. 224). Rather than a space of
anonymity, the airport is a space where numerous authorities – border police, security staff, airline staff, Customs officials – assess a person's identity and her intentions for travelling and where travellers are sorted into different categories. To some extent travellers already are differentiated. The ‘mobilities’ at airports consist of gendered, raced, classed, and aged people. But as Adey (2008, p. 146) writes, airports ‘do not just identify difference, but actually work to make these differences by sorting people into different modalities’. He views the airport as a filter, or a ‘difference machine’ (idem, p. 145). Although one could criticize such phrasing for reifying the airport, it does make clear that the airport is a site where mobility is classified as ‘malafide’ or ‘bonafide’; some travellers are labelled as trusted and others distrusted, and entry is categorised as legal or illegal. Airport scholars have identified the forces that shape these classifications as security concerns combined with more localized concerns with consumption. Lyon (2008), however, shows that security and commercial interests are not necessarily in conflict with each other, or with mobility as such. Commercial programs that facilitate the passage of registered, ‘low risk’ travellers (such as the Privium program at Schiphol) combine fast passage through the airport with greater security. People who want to become a member of this program provide background information and an iris scan when they enrol and in exchange get the status of registered traveller. Moreover, by expediting security checks and automating border checks for registered travellers, these programs allow the border police to focus more intensively on other passengers. The question therefore arises how registered travellers programs, as well as of other procedures regulating mobilities, may have different consequences for different groups of travellers. It has been argued repeatedly that regulatory practices at ports (Heyman 2004), airports (Adey 2006b) and borders (Wonders 2006) not only reinforce already existing inequalities, but may also work to create new inequalities. In some accounts such inequalities of mobility are understood in terms of ‘tourists’ who move freely and of ‘vagabonds’ who are either forced to move or are stuck in place (Bauman 2000). Such a juxtaposition, however, neglects the fact that the ‘kinetic underclasses’ may move in the same network as the elite, for example because they use the same airport. In this respect, Peter Adey distinguishes a kinetic elite who make use of fast lanes, and a much slower moving kinetic underclass (Adey 2004a). And although this is a more nuanced understanding of the politics of mobility, Matthew Sparke (2006) complicates the aspect of differential speed when he describes how business jet aircrafts are used by the United States for the ‘expedited removal’ of suspected terrorists out of the country.
In part, the critique of theories of non-places is also a methodological critique (see Crang 2002). In his discussion of mobile methods, Peter Adey (2010, p. 93) notes that ‘some of the most well-known investigations of the airport terminal have often been written by an academic enjoying a very specific mobile experience of the process and site of travel’ and that this has major implications for what we conclude about such spaces. In choosing my cases I acknowledge what Adey (idem) calls the ‘primacy of position’ and start from the premise that the experience of mobility, or moving through an airport, may differ for different kinds of mobile subjects. Whereas in accounts of kinetic underclasses and kinetic elites, the traveller often remains an abstract mobile subject, I choose to follow particular travellers as actors. More specifically, I study Indonesian migrant domestic workers at Soekarno-Hatta Airport, and people who arrive on ‘risk flights’ for drug smuggling at Schiphol Airport. As border scholars would be tempted to put it, these travellers face more instantiations of the border than most other travellers. In observing the experiences of these particular mobile subjects, my own identity as a young female academic from the Netherlands of course played a role in gaining access to particular sites and subjects. The fact that I could travel to Indonesia for fieldwork had to do with my ‘place in the community’, in Aaltola’s words, and my Dutch passport which allows me to travel easily. The airport operator at Soekarno-Hatta Airport granted access to many sites at the airport, and I often wondered whether a PhD student from an Indonesian university would be as welcome to study the contested regime at Schiphol. Much to my surprise, I was not considered out of place in settings where I had expected to be. When I spent the night inside the terminal in one of the dormitories for returning migrant workers in order to experience what it was like to be stranded there, the first thing an Indonesian cleaner entering the hall the next morning asked me was which country I had worked in. She assumed I was a migrant worker on my way home. I had my age and gender in common with other migrant workers, as well as the fact that I was sleeping in the dormitory, although not my nationality and European appearance. On the other hand, direct access to some airport spaces in my own country, the Netherlands, turned out to be difficult, which made it harder to make direct observations and made it necessary to take detours.
II) Access, barriers, and detours

Büscher and Urry advocate studying mobilities at nodes, because they argue that at nodes people are temporarily immobilized and are therefore researchable. In practice, this is not always the case, particularly not at an airport. At the departures area, people may be in a hurry to catch a plane, and at the arrivals hall they may be tired and eager to go home. Moreover, many places at airports are not accessible to researchers, and airport authorities may not be keen on having researchers around. While I was able to literally follow arriving migrant workers in the special migrant terminal in Jakarta, the authorities at Schiphol Airport did not allow me to observe anti-drug-smuggling checks or interview staff about them, because they considered the checks ‘politically sensitive’. At Soekarno-Hatta Airport, on the other hand, I was allowed access to the restricted part of the arrivals terminal several times to observe arriving migrant workers, and I spent one week in the migrant terminal, interviewing migrant workers and staff. As a result, the chapters that discuss my findings in Indonesia are ethnographically richer than the chapters on my findings in the Netherlands.

I also spent time in other parts of the two airports. At both airports, this included joining work shifts of airport personnel of the operational departments. I saw the management of mobilities from the control room as well as on the ground. At Schiphol Airport, I sat next to employees in the control room who manage passenger flows ‘from above’, but I also joined employees of floor management who work ‘on the ground’ to facilitate passenger flows in the terminals. At Soekarno-Hatta Airport, I joined employees who plan operations, and employees in the control room who manage operations in real time. I also examined and joined the registered traveller programs at both airports. At Schiphol, I became a member of the Privium program and interviewed stakeholders, while at Soekarno-Hatta I joined the company that managed the program for one week of participant observation. Although in the course of my fieldwork I decided to focus on the protection of migrant workers and on the curtailing of drug smuggling, these other experiences at the airport were valuable. Even during my fieldwork at the operational departments, I encountered practices regulating the movement of labour migrants and of travellers on risk flights. For example, for risk flights at Schiphol Airport, part of the baggage claim hall needs to be fenced off, and for arriving flights with many migrant workers on board, the employees in Soekarno-Hatta’s operation control room extend the time the baggage belts are open, because migrant workers are known to bring a lot of baggage and to be ‘less knowledgeable’ travellers. Although my work on registered traveller programs does not feature in this thesis, it served as a valuable
comparative case for sharpening the analysis of my findings on drug smuggling and labour migration.

Tracing mobilities regimes also took me to places outside the airport. In addition to doing short interviews with travellers at both airports, I visited 33 people at their homes, where it was easier to interview them more extensively about their recent journey. At the check-in desks at Schiphol during the Christmas holidays, I contacted people who were waiting in line to check in for a flight to Suriname and asked them whether I could interview them at home later, after they had returned to the Netherlands\textsuperscript{23}. In Indonesia, I visited two rural regions in Java with high numbers of migrant workers and interviewed people who had recently returned.

Apart from the homes of travellers, I also went to places at and outside the airport to interview other actors. In total I did 22 interviews with stakeholders, such as NGOs and activists, Surinamese organizations in the Netherlands, lawyers, local and national government agencies, labour recruitment companies in Jakarta, transport companies, airline companies, Customs, and the special Schiphol Court for drug smugglers. In addition, I examined policy documents, laws, regulations, files of court cases, and reports by advisory bodies and NGOs. These documents provided important information on how the mobilities regimes were imagined, planned, implemented, discussed, and challenged.

Hence, access, barriers, and detours affected my tracing of mobilities regimes, and as a consequence, the ways I was able to describe and analyse certain aspects of mobilities regimes. In the analysis of anti-drug-smuggling checks in particular, the perspectives of travellers and stakeholders outside the airport feature more prominently than the perspective of staff at the airport. Nevertheless, what I first saw as detours later proved to be productive alternative routes, such as the interviews with different stakeholders, and the analysis of documents. When I started my fieldwork, I focused on the airport as the research site, but I soon found out I also needed to go to places outside the airport.

When I started my research, I thought I was studying airports, but it turned out I was tracing mobilities regimes and the airport was my method\textsuperscript{24}. The airport is a method because \textit{via} the airport, I trace mobilities regimes. The four characteristics of the airport that I describe in this chapter enabled me to trace mobilities regimes in a particular way. First, airports are a node and a border, and as such are an important site of manifestations of practices regulating international mobilities. The airport as node and border allows me to

\textsuperscript{23} Many Surinamese Dutch people have family members in Suriname. The period around the Christmas holidays sees an increase in passengers to Suriname caused by people visiting their relatives.

\textsuperscript{24} I thank Anna Tsing for suggesting this particular phrasing.
trace mobilities regimes because it is a site where mobilities and borders can be accessed and where regulatory practices take place on an everyday basis. Second, airports are a constellation of different public and private actors. Tracing a mobilities regime in this sense means examining state and non-state actors that are engaged in regulating mobilities and what their stakes are. Third, airports are linked and grounded. Tracing mobilities regimes thus means being sensitive to (transnational) connections, but also to the local context in which a mobilities regime is situated. Fourth, what the airport is depends on the kind of traveller one is. This can be read as an invitation to track trajectories that are less well-known: to follow mobile subjects other than white academics, and to study less well-known mobilities regimes. Hence, I trace mobilities regimes through the airport in two ways: first, the airport represents a research site for studying the regulation of mobility, and second, the airport provides a lens to look at the regulation of mobility in a particular way.

With these four points of departure in mind, we can now move to the arrivals halls of Schiphol and Soekarno-Hatta Airports. The next four chapters follow passengers on ‘risk flights’ and migrant workers as they arrive at the airport (Chapters 3 and 5), and analyse what actors are involved in regulating their mobility as well as the spatial and temporal aspects of regulation (Chapters 4 and 6).