Abstract

Airport security represents a crucial part of civil aviation worldwide. Due to its substantial impact upon millions of passengers daily, it is bound to provoke questions about proportionality and sufficiency. Drawing on the insights from Actor-network Theory (ANT) and a medium-term field research at Václav Havel Airport Prague, which entailed a mix of qualitative-oriented research methods from participant observation to interviews, this thesis examines the nature and production of airport security as a network of chains of translation. These chains turn or translate according to their own logics of veridiction of all incoming actants, both human and non-human, from an insecure status to a secure one. In their translation, they are guided by three respective logics of division, movement and visibility, which have already been identified in previous studies of airport security. Going beyond the existing state of the art, this thesis specifically inquires into the components of chains of translation, particularly the airport security technologies and their interactions with humans, and focuses on instances where either of these logics or the veridiction logics, intersect, thus disclosing their own nature and presence. Furthermore, this thesis identifies spatiality and identity as two complementary actant logics. Their special relationship in the security field is further examined, regarding their complementarity, exclusiveness and merges. Finally, the result of the whole network of translatory chains – the end product of airport security emerges.