Summary PART II

In this Part, I have suggested that cases require various *(dis)associations* to become resolvable (see Latour 1984). I distinguished five key processual events in which cases become assembled on their trajectory through the *dispositif* – openings, encounters, assignments, authentications, and closures. In the first processual event, openings, cases become established as material case files and applicants become bodily associated to them via fingerprinting. Such previous bodily inscriptions may already foreclose potential further chains of assembling and resolution. Or they may lead to the non-opening of cases. In the second processual event – encounters – the caseworkers meet applicants in different types of hearings. In these hearings, applicants' backgrounds and stories of persecution become "entextualised" (Jacquemet 2009) as they are assembled in protocols. Such encounters establish various associations that enable protocols as records of case files to 'speak' on behalf of applicants in the further course of case-making. Yet, what enters these records (and how) is crucially mediated by the pragmatic affordances of these encounters. The third processual event is about case files' assignments to different sites, sections, senior officials, secretaries and caseworkers along their trajectory. It breaks with the narrative of assembling a single case to introduce the pragmatic considerations of their distribution and allocation. It points to the fleeting ownership that caseworkers assembling cases have of case files and their partial assembling. And it hints at a crucial facet of the pragmatics of case-making: that every single case awaiting partial assembling is part of a stack of cases on each caseworkers' desk. In the fourth processual event, authentications, associations established in encounters regarding identity and potential persecution come to matter. They are compared and weighed against authoritative knowledge (partly) assembled in records in case files again. The authenticity of origin and accounts may be

tested in encounters, traced in protocols or material records submitted by the applicant, examined with external reports or internal consultations, or directly 'found' in "reality signs" in the account. Importantly, such authentication work is not necessary to the same extent for all cases. Once associations of records are ready to speak for a decision*, cases move on to the fifth and last processual event of case-making: their closure in legal decisions*. Assembling decisions* varies considerably between positive and negative ones: while the former are "split records" that only internally reveal the considerations*, the latter have to perform these to the outside. The former usually consist of relatively simple forms to fill and a barely adapted standard letter to send out to applicants, the latter require the diligent crafting of text. However, writing negative decisions* also relies on various preassembled "modes of argumentation" and "tried and tested justifications". Written decisions* are sent out as administrative orders that re-cord applicants to a particular reading of their lives – and may become sticky records that capture them in undesirable spatial relations. Yet, closures in asylum decisions* often prove only provisional, as cases may resurface for various reasons and haunt not only applicants but also the office.

Tracing how such (dis)associations are produced across a range of processual events of case-making Scheffer (2007a) has offered a reading of how asylum is governed in mundane, pragmatic terms. I have argued that in these processual events, the *dispositif* becomes enacted: its governmental arrangements, agentic formations, and cases meet up in situated events of case-making and their trajectories of becoming becomes transformed in them (see also Chapter 2). What my account of governing asylum has only touched on so far is the reflective facets or "meta-pragmatics" (Boltanski 2010) crucially entangled in the *dispositif's* continuous (de)stabilisation. I consider these in Part III: on the one hand, the "states of conviction" involved in enacting the *dispositif*: epistemological footings of case-making and its occasional overflows (Chapter 7); on the other hand, the rationalities that sustain enactments of the *dispositif* and highlight the fragmentations, contradictions, and the "ontological politics" (Mol 1999) of governing asylum (Chapter 8).