

DRIFTING MAPS / 1

EDITED BY SERENA MARCENÒ AND GIULIA SAJEVA

MIGRATIONS: GOVERNANCE, POLICIES, AND RIGHTS

MIMESIS
INTERNATIONAL



MIMESIS
INTERNATIONAL

DRIFTING MAPS

n. 1

Series editor: Serena Marcenò (University of Palermo)

MIGRATIONS: GOVERNANCE, POLICIES, AND RIGHTS

Edited by
Serena Marcenò and Giulia Sajeve

MIMESIS
INTERNATIONAL

This publication is co-funded by the Erasmus+ Program of the European Commission.

European Commission Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency
Erasmus + Capacity Building in the Field of Higher Education
Migrants Project
Project No: 610242-EPP-1-2019-1-IT-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP

The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

© 2023 – MIMESIS INTERNATIONAL
www.mimesisinternational.com
e-mail: info@mimesisinternational.com

Isbn: 9788869774362
Book series: *Drifting Maps*, n. 1

© MIM Edizioni Srl
P.I. C.F. 02419370305

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Serena Marcenò, Giulia Sajeva

INTRODUCTION 7

Germana Vinciguerra

THE GOVERNMENTAL PRODUCTION OF TRANSIT MIGRATION STATES
IN AFRICA. SOME REFLECTIONS ON TUNISIA 25

Martina Costa

DECOLONISING THE SECURITIZED APPROACH TO MIGRATION:
CULTURAL DEWESTERNISATION AND POLITICAL RE-EMERGENCE 45

Marco Di Donato

ISLAM AND THE WEST: RELIVING AND REFRAMING THE CULTURAL,
RELIGIOUS, AND IDEOLOGICAL MIGRATION OF IDEAS 65

Martina Sardo

PROTECTING “ENVIRONMENTAL MIGRANTS” BETWEEN
INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC LAW.
TOWARDS A HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH? 85

Amal Hlioui

REPRESENTATIONS OF SUB-SAHARANS IN TUNISIAN MEDIA:
A DISCOURSE HISTORICAL APPROACH TO SILENCING AND OTHERING 111

Ida Saidani, Nieves Ortega-Pérez

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT DEBATE ON SOLIDARITY VIEWED
THROUGH THE LENS OF CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS (CDA) 135

SERENA MARCENÒ¹ AND GIULIA SAJEVA²
INTRODUCTION³

1. *The securitization of migrations*

The increase in migratory flows is a global phenomenon associated with regional instabilities and insecurities. This includes long-term push factors as well as other components related to globalization, such as the widening of the economic gap between the global South and North, political expectations associated with human rights and democracy practices, and shifting demographics, notably the declining population in the North and increasing population in the South. In addition, often-forgotten local push factors are extremely important and need to be assessed in order to understand the on-going migration process.

The Central Mediterranean route originating from African countries and arriving to Italy via Libya and Tunisia, has traditionally been one the main sea-routes towards Europe. The area from which migration flows originate through the Central Mediterranean route is characterized by many instability factors. The presence of armed conflicts, weak or failed states, difficult political transitions, terrorist groups, extreme human rights violations, poverty, and demographic pressure thus all play a role as push factors.

In many parts of the world, the closure of almost all legal

-
- 1 Full Professor of Political Philosophy, Dipartimento Culture e Società, Università degli Studi di Palermo. Email address: serena.marcenò@unipa.it
 - 2 Researcher in Political Philosophy, Dipartimento Culture e Società, Università degli Studi di Palermo. Email address: giulia.sajeva@unipa.it
 - 3 In this article the first part (*The securitization of migrations*) is to be attributed to Serena Marcenò, while the second part (*The volume*) is to be attributed to Giulia Sajeva.

entry channels continues to increase irregular migration, and the “collateral effect” has been the growth in smuggling and human trafficking. Moreover, these unsafe entry paths increasingly involve more vulnerable subjects, such as women and children. Despite the urgency of the problem, we are a long way from the development of a rational holistic approach to migration issues and meanwhile they are becoming a highly divisive and conflictual site of confrontation between countries, regional and national institutions, and governmental bodies.

It is very important to stress that although refugees and migrants are entitled to the same universal human rights and fundamental freedoms, different legal frameworks govern them. Refugees are entitled to the specific international protection defined by International Refugee Law, although they are increasingly being violated, while so-called economic migrants often remain excluded from international protection.

From this starting point, we can remark how migration policies are not only relevant *per se* but are also a proxy to reveal the strength of our democratic institutions. They tell us whether our democracies are functioning well or harboring harmful elements and showing authoritarian and anti-democratic pathologies. Academic institutions, schools, and civil society are the guardians of any democratic system, and it is therefore within our institutions that democracy is built, maintained and if necessary, capable of resisting against anti-democratic drifts. However, if it is in the name of protecting the vulnerable from violence and exploitation that democratic communities have built institutions for the care and protection of human beings, by adopting restrictive migration policies that resort to legal devices, which subsequently produce irregular migration, democratic countries do nothing but violate that very role.

This sort of juridical naturalization of the irregular subject exposes migrants to mechanisms of economic exploitation and socio-cultural exclusion. A process that is based on a low-cost wage inclusion of irregular migrants by means of their legal exclusion. The narrative that allows these strategies of differential inclusion to be activated, is that of a fictitious “emergency” that legitimizes the use of measures that normalize the exception. Instead of adjusting the level of protection to the extent of the risk,

the perception of risk is raised in order to be able to control it in “emergency” and “crisis” mode, legitimizing solutions that violate human rights, international law and the constitutional principles of our countries (Mazzone 2018).

Neoliberal governance enacts a systemic and violent form of social engineering that declassifies entire social groups as superfluous, wasted lives, seen as collateral damage in the construction of the neoliberal order. These are not only forms of direct violence, as genocidal actions, but also forms of indirect violence acting through the denial of protection and abandonment. Lives that enjoy no support, precarious lives that cannot satisfy neither the basic needs: housing, food, medical care, work, freedom of expression, forms of social recognition and the conditions for political agency. Lives devalued according to the dominant patterns of value and therefore not considered worthy of support and protection (Butler 2012).

In the classical paradigm, built on the security-development nexus – at least until the good governance framework in the 1990s – security devices were aimed at the protection of lives, through policies geared toward the reduction of undesirable effects emanating from the unequal distribution of wealth on a global scale. However, the dimension of securitization, which includes migrations, has broken down the security-development nexus via a conceptualization of risk that has transformed its functionality in terms of politics. Furthermore, this securitization builds on an epistemic twist in relations between knowledge, technologies, and practices that pave the way for post-interventionism at an international level (Duffield 2007; Sørensen, Söderbaum 2012).

Poor states and people are no longer “beneficiaries”, but rather “actors” managing their own risks, which they are exposed to, and have thus been repositioned on the articulation between global governmentality technologies and neoliberal forms of self-government. In this scenario, states and individuals are challenged as autonomous subjects, capable not only of calculating the risks associated with their own actions, but also of taking responsibility for these same risks within a system that is perpetually in crisis in terms of the environment, economy, domestic and international security (Marcenò 2017).

Today, migrations are assumed in a dimension that transcends the usual geopolitical dislocations and biopolitical dichotomies: developed, underdeveloped, developing, emerging and so on. All actors participating in migrations on a general scale such as states and institutions, and a particular scale, namely individuals and communities, must be able to act out their freedom of choice in the direction of taking responsibility in the governmentality of lives. It has to be understood and extended as a human condition resulting from the global dimension of risk, in which, on the heuristic side, knowledge is not able to guarantee rational behaviors, and thus exposes us to the ubiquitous threat of a series of uncontrollable and unknowable effects of technological and scientific developments including climate change, pandemic, environmental disasters, terrorist attacks, and migration flows.

In what seems to constitute a further stratification of the *sattelzeit* between disciplinary and control societies (Deleuze 1990), what changes is the principle of responsibility and accountability for action, which is rewritten as a rationale for the management of the living, imprinted with neoliberal governmentality. Where classical security technologies, based on foresight, functioned on the basis of a probabilistic device of risk management – thanks to which it was possible to calculate not only the probability of damage occurring, but also the estimation of its consequences and costs – the dimension of securitization has taken on risk in an emergency form, making it the cause, but at the same time also the effect, of a permanent state of alert.

The dimension of risk, whether objective or, as Beck (1986) says, discursively produced by cultural evaluation, is now located in an unprecedented relationship between ordinary and extraordinary government, between norm and exception. Without precedent not because it is new, but because it accelerates, emphasizes and intensifies the mobility of the threshold between norm and exception, relocating an increasing number of functions and practices of ordinary government into the sphere of emergency and, consequently, necessity.

As Laura Bazzicalupo points out: risk disengages itself from the exceptionality of the contingent event and takes on an ontological status, becoming the *modus adequate* to the reality of neoliberal

capitalism, which finds its accelerator in risk. Emergence and exception are thus the ontological and systemic condition of reality, an implicit effect of its organization. A risk produced by human action, which is at the same time its side effect, in which securitization becomes the general and permanent mode of exercising power (Bazzicalupo 2014).

This dislocation takes place, on the one hand, by entrusting the satisfaction of needs – traditionally guaranteed by welfare and social security systems – to individual self-reliance, and on the other, by managing the proliferation of risks and dangers on a global scale, through the multiplication of security systems based on the construction of transnational networks, in which state and non-state actors, international agencies and private security agencies act. The mechanisms just described, do not function according to the classical liberal pattern of inclusion-exclusion, but rather by activating processes of differentiated inclusion and assuming a reticular structure. Risk is assumed as the ordering principle of what ordered cannot be: that variable-geometry system that Deleuze described as the mode of operation and organization of *societies of control* (Deleuze 1990).

Today, the routes of conflict and social exclusion appear difficult to understand. Having scattered and re-displaced the classical dichotomies of geographic, class, race, and gender boundaries, in which the perverse effects of Western capitalism were located, globalization has generated forms of differential exclusion within the same political and geographic spaces. Social exclusion impacts the entire Planet, manifesting in variegated forms of vulnerability, poverty, exploitation, and violence, and fragmenting classical distinctions between the first, second, and third world. The subjects suffering the exclusionary effects of neoliberal economic and financial globalization are geographically and socially different: middle classes, migrants, women, young people, and the elderly. Likewise, conflicts are scattered across places of origin, genders, and generations.

The feature of these conflicts is that they manifest themselves in heterogeneous forms that, while showing certain homogeneity from the point of view of those who are excluded, nevertheless maintain their heterogeneity regarding the course to be followed

in order to reach a safe harbor. What solutions are we heading towards and with what knowledge? In the face of substantial and radical change in the classical logic of exclusion, and facing new forms of differential inclusion on a local and global scale, what tools do we have?

In the current geopolitical context, we have to ask ourselves: today, who has the right to claim rights? We could say that what determines our conditions with respect to rights and protection is the degree of vulnerability that individuals find themselves in and which make them more or less exposed to forms of violence, exploitation, slavery; all things that surely concern the majority of people on the move.

Poverty, the demographic increase in the global South, undocumented people produced by restrictive migration legislation in countries of transit and arrival, are all phenomena that increase people's vulnerability, lack of protection and the push of migration for people who do not enjoy a condition of protection deriving from their social condition.

As Sandro Mezzadra points out: if in the past, debates on globalization discussed a world in which, even if they hadn't disappeared, borders became less relevant in the definition of a global order, in the last twenty years we have seen the creation of new juridical assemblages for which the proliferation of borders and diversification of their functions are fundamental elements. The multiplication of work and ways in which labor is created as a commodity is the main consequence of this global change in the relationship between space, politics, and economics. Looking at the world across borders, and the hierarchies they produce, means addressing some of the fundamental issues for understanding the struggles of the workforce and their connections today. Exclusion, discrimination, poverty, and violence can no longer be resolved through the sphere of recognition of fundamental rights (Mezzadra 2014).

What has been transformed is the ontology of the subject: not the individual holder of rights but a human capital to be invested in the enterprise – security, economic, ecological and development – through a freedom understood as a choice between some market options. A form of subjectivation that makes it possible to place

what traditionally fell within the sphere of the recognition of rights and freedoms, within the sphere of a rewarding accessible through a spectrum of “conditionings”, financial or otherwise, which work thanks to management for results, monitoring, evaluation, and competition strategies.

Neoliberal governmentality combines new securitization strategies based on economic and emergency rationality to face risks, natural disasters, pandemics, economic-financial crises, and migratory flows, alongside the old security apparatus built on the model of closure and exclusion. The understanding and management of phenomena such as migratory flows as threats to our security and identity have eroded the sphere of rights and democratic legitimacy. Not because the list of rights has been reduced, indeed it has in fact lengthened, but because treating human beings as a threat allows them to be kept out of those who have the right to claim rights. It allows our post-democracies to guarantee an under-class of subjects to be exploited, whom we do not recognize as worthy of protection or mourning when we leave or send them to their deaths.

Those who are able – because they have the resources and capabilities to invest their human capital in a winning way – live or survive in the globalized world according to a process of commodification of lives that involves bodies, capabilities, and a specific ideology that functions on the basis of neoliberal rationality. This produces a process of hierarchization and differentiation of human life that no longer takes place according to a biological/racial selection criterion but instead, according to an economic/functional criterion in which the selection is not so much about individuals but rather, about behaviors (Mezzadra 2014). The winners are those who are able to maximize results, according to a logic that results in the differentiation between good lives, worthy of being lived, and bad lives, lives that are not considered fully as such and therefore not worthy of protection (Butler 2004).

The concepts of boundary and citizenship have become complicated by virtue of the multiplication, dissemination and differentiation of boundaries that produce differential forms of inclusion that function through the fragmentation into statuses and positions, with respect to citizenship, that no longer follow

traditional political spaces. Citizenship is a dynamic condition linked to social movements and the international division of the labor market, and, especially in the case of women, to how this is linked to care-work and so-called domestic labor. The transformation of boundaries is reflected in the international division of labor, marking the borders between exploitation, development, underdevelopment and poverty, to name a few.

The forms of exploitation and extraction of profit from labor invest the bios both from a cognitive point of view and thus the capabilities, skills, etc., as well as from a productive point perspective since new spheres of human existence are being capitalized. These include the affective sphere, the private sphere, but also parts of the physical body, as shown by studies on so-called global bio-labor concerning reproductive and regenerative medicine, which also operate in the global market – oocytes, uterus, placentae, cord blood, stem cells, embryos, etc. – and which makes bodies, and especially women's bodies, an object of surplus-value extraction (Cooper, Walby 2014; Cooper 2017).

Functioning on the basis of individual self-reliance in the processes of governing their own lives, producing a non-political space, neoliberal governmentality sets up zones of abandonment for lives differentiated according to varying levels of care, protection, and exposure to violence. Living inside or outside one of these zones is, therefore, no longer related to where we stand with respect to state borders or citizenship status. In this context, it is worth asking once again who is entitled to claim rights today? But this is not a question of legal entitlement because what determines our condition with respect to rights and the protection that should derive from them is the condition of vulnerability that makes us as individuals more or less exposed to violence, exploitation and new forms of slavery; all of which certainly affects most migrants.

2. The volume

The volume we introduce grew out of four years of work by a network of European and Tunisian Universities, NGOs and Associations participating in the MIGRANTS project, a Capacity

Building Program for higher education bodies funded by the European Commission in Key Action 2 of the Erasmus+ program.⁴

The Project was built on the conviction that the migration phenomenon must be tackled outside the logic of emergency and through improved cooperation on international migrations, which can be achieved by improving the governance of migrations in countries facing the phenomenon. Migrations produce a connection within and across geopolitical regions that link countries of origin, transit and destination, and addressing this reality requires an international effort to strengthen knowledge and understanding of such complexities. Such cooperation can facilitate improvements and sharing practices for policies that will reduce the risks arising from the production of irregular migration, both for people on the move and for those living in transit and destination countries, and avoid migratory flows being used to reinforce instabilities in the countries involved, making them more vulnerable socially and politically.

The MIGRANTS project aimed to strengthen Tunisia's position as a crucial geopolitical area in the context of current migrations. In the face of a migration management policy that the EU addresses through the outsourcing of controls, there are a lack of interventions based on the capacity-building strategy of partner countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region except through initiatives that have, so far, been limited to the military sector (e.g., Operation Sophia). The main objective of the MIGRANTS project was, therefore, an articulated capacity-building action in education in the field of migration studies, both for European and extra-European partners, that would strengthen local governance of migration flows through the training of highly qualified personnel capable of managing the migration phenomena affecting the Euro-Mediterranean region in a holistic

4 Within this project, another volume is about to be published: *Migrations: Socio-cultural context and Constitution*, edited by Valeria Cammarata, Federica Mazzara, Samira Mechri, and published by Mimesis International. The goal of this volume is to contribute to and expand the current debate on migrations by subverting the logic of representation and advancing a knowledge that goes beyond the mere management of a crisis.

and multidisciplinary way. The Project has worked to educate, study, research and work so that younger generations have the tools to develop a different and contrasting vision to the current securitization drift in the governance of migratory flows.

At an institutional level, the main goal of the Project has been to establish a new International Joint Master's Degree in Migration Studies between the three Tunisian partner universities: El Manar, La Manouba, and Tunis University, a new opportunity in the field of higher education since such a program neither exists in Tunisia nor the whole region currently.

Given its geo-political situation, Tunisia can play, in this specific context, an important role for itself and surrounding countries, including in this list, of course, the EU member states. As the Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (Marrakech, Morocco, 10 and 11 December 2018) states:

“Migration is a multidimensional reality that cannot be addressed by one government policy sector alone. [...] To develop and implement effective migration policies and practices, a whole-of-government approach is needed to ensure horizontal and vertical policy coherence across all sectors and levels of government”.

The MIGRANTS project promoted a broad multi-stakeholder partnership to address higher education curricula on migration in Tunisia in all its dimensions by including migrants, civil society, academia, the private sector, trade unions, national human rights institutions, the media and other relevant stakeholders in migration governance both in the Partner Country and in Europe. The capacity-building approach adopted by the Project was interpreted as a process of transformation from within for all the academic realities involved. With its systemic, holistic and multidisciplinary approach, MIGRANTS tried to respond to Tunisian priorities in the field of higher education by encouraging a trans-disciplinary approach to migration issues that took into account political, cultural and good governance aspects. The Project addressed Tunisian priorities in the social and behavior sciences and in arts and humanities as well by combining humanities with social and political science approaches to migration, including human rights

and law, economics and international development, sociology, demography and statistical analysis, anthropology, history, intercultural communication, cultural and media studies, as a foundation for a better understanding of the governance, policies and cultures of the migration phenomenon at the global level.

How successful have we been in producing elements of transformation, change and resistance against the authoritarian and security drift that animates migration policies in our countries is the question at the end of our Project. We worked to create the conditions for this to change, in the belief that democracy is a space that is always open to transformation, it is up to us to know where to direct our efforts.

The goal of this volume is precisely to show the limits and inadequacies of current interventions and identify inclusive strategies that respect human rights and international law to tackle the migration phenomenon as “a cooperative structure” that looks at the human movement in all its dimensions.

The essays collected here, whose authors are among the youngest researchers involved in the Project, propose new ideas, themes and approaches that speak to the varied fields of migration studies, ranging from socio-economic to political, legal, and philosophical approaches. Providing a multidisciplinary perspective can open up outlooks on migration phenomena outside the logic of emergency and improve cooperation on international migration.

The book proposes novel perspectives, insights and case studies on the perception, government, representation, and new realities of migrations. Readers will be guided through the discovery of the many challenges that migrations and migrants currently face, ranging through political theory reflections on the use of the term transit country and the need for the decolonization of the study and governance of migrations; media discourse analysis on the perception of migrants in Tunisia and of discourse analysis of the statements of EU politicians on migratory issues; reconstruction of the phenomenon of climate migrations and its legal framework; and the misleading reconstructions of Christianity and Islam as the root causes of the representation of otherness of Muslim migrants in Europe.

In Chapter 1 – *The Governmental production of Transit*

Migration States in Africa. Some reflections on Tunisia – Vinciguerra questions the very use of the label transit countries to indicate migration flows that – allegedly – temporarily halt in a country, most likely belonging to the so-called Global South, and then move on towards countries belonging to the so-called Global North. Within the interpretative framework according to which there is a good circulation and a bad circulation of people among countries, the use of the term transit countries helps produce and govern such bad circulation by perpetuating a state of crisis. By labelling certain people as *in transit*, hence not settled and still on the move, they are never treated as holders of the rights recognized to settled migrants and refugees.

On the other side, countries labelled as transit countries, present themselves and are presented from the outside as not in charge of dealing with the settlement, rights, and governance of migrants willing to live within their borders. As mostly, if not only, countries of the so-called Global South, transit countries are taken in consideration as places whose temporary flows are to be controlled, pushed back, and thus *dealt with*. Consequently, they are much more inclined to enter into agreements aimed at the externalization of the borders of the Global North rather than concentrating on taking care of people that, in fact, most often want to remain within their borders. Vinciguerra draws readers' attention to stereotyped media representations of African countries as ungovernable spaces from which masses of people escape via means deemed irregular, and how this picture completely overshadows the fact that most migrations occur along South-South routes. This representation further distorts the image of Northern African countries as solely countries of origin, or transit, and forgets the fact that they are instead, also, important destination countries. Through the application of a biopolitical framework of interpretation, and the in-depth analysis of Tunisia as an alleged transit country, Vinciguerra analyzes how the use of the expression transit countries not only wrongly labels certain states, but imposes on them a way of being, behaving and having to behave that fosters and promotes the idea of a crisis to be addressed with extreme securitization measures.

Costa dedicates Chapter 2 to *Decolonizing the Securitized*

Approach to Migration: Cultural Dewesternization and Political Re-emergence, with the aim of deconstructing the western-centered political and rhetorical approach to migration. Starting from the recognition of mobility as a human right enshrined in the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Costa witnesses the change in perception of human migrations. Even though mobility has always characterized human history, it is nowadays both perceived and regulated in ways that are only accessible to certain people, hence recalling the distinction between bad and good circulation. The increased securitization and externalization of borders, erection of camps, and construction of walls and fences all reflect the goal of containment through the construction of the myth that internal security is threatened by international mobility. By showing the processes of classification – along the lines of race, class and gender – and hierarchization of humans, mobility is governed by differentiating between those whose lives have a value and are worth of saving, and those whose existences are bare lives to be treated solely as problems to be solved. Costa advances the need for a decolonization of migration discourse, a process explained as necessary to reconstruct the value of all lives and re-establish the meaning of the universal human right to mobility. A need for a look from and to the South, able to deconstruct the Eurocentric concern of invasion, and to concentrate on the individualities and demands of the people on the move rather than on the misleading consequences that public authorities claim they provoke.

In Chapter 3 – *Islam and the West: Reliving and Reframing Cultural, Religious, and Ideological Migration of Ideas* – Di Donato embraces the discourse on religions and migrations in Europe. The author recognizes the existence of many and frequent misconceptions concerning the alleged separation between Christianity and Islam, and how such misconceptions fuel the representation of Muslim migrants in Europe as others. The author suggests that a better understanding of the history of the migration of ideas (and religions) between the *West* and the *Dar al-Islam* (Land of Islam) may help illustrate the hegemonic processes that have cyclically taken place and diminish the feeling of – in Di Donato’s words – “alienness” between Europe and *Dar al-Islam*.

Starting from the basic principles of faith (such as monotheism and direct revelation), Di Donato notes how Islam, Christianity, as well as Judaism share common ideological and historical roots that could permit them to understand one another. Such conclusions allow the author to deconstruct a common narrative, according to which the first contact between the two worlds is only happening now because of current migratory waves. The author suggests we reconstruct the meeting between the two religions as a possible site of mutual growth and understanding rather than a site of subjugation and annihilation of one over the other. Such an enterprise, the author suggests, currently clashes with the rise of extremist fundamentalist positions on both sides: the far-right wing and Salafi ideologies. However, hope remains for new generations to change perspectives.

In Chapter 4 – *Protecting “Environmental Migrants” Between International and Domestic Law. Towards A Human Rights-Based Approach?* – Sardo explores the ever-relevant field of environmental migrations, with the aim of better understanding the current legal framework that may be applied to foster the protection of people on the move due to environmental factors. The topic captures well the current state of the world in what is nowadays called the Anthropocene. Whether as a rhetorical concept or the reality of Earth’s geology, the new epoch is characterized by the unprecedented impact of human’s actions on the Planet and the fact that – as in the case of environmental migrants – said impact directly affects humans themselves. Rising sea levels, climate change, pollution, acidification of oceans, as well as many other environmental hazards we are currently witnessing, influence human mobility to the point of forcing individuals and communities to migrate to areas that are not undergoing processes of environmental degradation that threaten their right to life, dignity, shelter and much more.

After providing data on current and estimated environmentally induced migrations, Sardo’s Chapter offers a complete picture of the concept of environmental migrants, focusing on the distinction among terms such as climate migrants, environmental refugees, climate refugees, and forced environmental migrants. The presence of many different terms is due to the difficulties of determining the

most appropriate definition *vis à vis* how complex it is to isolate environmental reasons of migration from political, economic and social ones, differentiate between voluntary and forced movements, distinguish between temporary and non-temporary displacements, and evaluate slow environmental transformations as causes of displacements.

Given the current lack of legal instruments addressing environmental migrations, the Chapter evaluates different regulatory solutions proposed to create new binding and non-binding instruments, or adapt existing ones, to protect people forced to move on environmental grounds. It then analyzes the landmark ruling that the UN Human Rights Committee issued in the *Teitiota v. New Zealand* case. In said case, the Committee stated for the first time that, under certain conditions, the principle of *non-refoulement* could be applied *vis à vis* migrations due to environmental factors, hence opening the way for its future application to protect environmental migrants.

Hlioui's Chapter 5 – *Representations of Sub-Saharan in Tunisian Media: a Discourse Historical Approach to Silencing and Othering* – draws the reader's attention to the representation of migrants within host societies, focusing on the Tunisian media as a case study. In particular, Hlioui analyzes the representation of sub-Saharanans in Arabic-speaking Tunisian media, through the application of a Discourse-Historical Approach. The Chapter shows how words used by the media are not neutral and have consequences on how given groups are perceived and perceive themselves. Hlioui identifies a negative tone in almost half the pieces of the analyzed media corpus, the majority of which address sub-Saharanans as criminals. Their representations as terrorists and mercenaries, or as victims, together with the tendency of the media to talk *for* sub-Saharanans, rather than allowing them to speak for themselves, turn them into either non-agents, or deviant ones, in both cases doomed to remain others, so fostering their silencing, discrimination and expulsion from society.

In Chapter 6 – *The European Parliament Debate on Solidarity Viewed through the Lens of Critical Discourse Analysis* – Saidani and Ortega-Pérez engage in an in-depth investigation of the discourses of the members of the European Parliament during

debates on non-legislative Own-Initiative Reports concerning migration issues. Applying the methodology of Political Discourse Analysis, attention is given to how members of the Parliament invoked the term solidarity *vis à vis* two events that were labelled as crises, i.e., the 2011 Lampedusa refugee *crisis* and the 2015-2016 Syrian refugee *crisis*. Looking at their diverse political parties' affiliations, the authors note how the term solidarity is used with different meanings depending on the ideologies of each member. Through the identification of positive self-representation vs. negative other representation, the members of the Parliament use the reference to solidarity to justify approaches to the management of migrations that range from calling for the EU to take more responsibility, to suggesting an increased securitization and militarization of borders.

Bibliography

- Bazzicalupo L. 2014. *Produção de segurança e incerteza dos critérios*, in Avelino N., Vaccaro S. (eds.), *Governamentalidade e Segurança*, Intermeios, pp. 81-103.
- Beck U. 1986. *Risk Society*, Sage Publications.
- Butler J. 2004. *Precarious Life. The Powers of Mourning and Violence*, Verso.
- Butler J. 2012. *Can One Lead a Good Life in a Bad Life?*, in «Radical Philosophy», 176, 2012, pp. 9-18.
- Cooper M. 2017. *Family Values: Between Neoliberalism and the New Social Conservatism*, Zone Books.
- Cooper M., Walby C. 2014. *Clinical Labor. Tissue Donors and Research Subject in the Global Bioeconomy*, Duke University Press.
- Deleuze G. 1990. *Post-scriptum sur les sociétés de contrôle*, in «L'Autre Journal», 1, 1990.
- Duffield M. 2007. *Development, Security and Unending War. Governing the World People*, Polity Press.
- Marcenò S. 2017. *Critica alla cooperazione neoliberale. Resilienza e governance nelle politiche di cooperazione allo sviluppo*, Mimesis.

- Mazzone L. 2018. *Per un diritto internazionale alla fuga. Diritto d'asilo e dovere di ospitalità*, in «La società degli individui», 61 (XXI), 2018/1, pp. 31-46.
- Mezzadra S., Neilson B. 2013. *Border as a Method, or, the Multiplication of Labor*, Duke University Press.
- Sörensen J.S., Söderbaum F. (eds.) 2012. *The End of the Development-Security Nexus? The Rise of Global Disaster Management*, «Development Dialogue», 58, 2012, pp. 67-79.

GERMANA VINCIGUERRA¹

THE GOVERNMENTAL PRODUCTION OF TRANSIT MIGRATION STATES IN AFRICA Some Reflections on Tunisia

1. *Spaces of ungovernability*

1.1 *An introduction*

What is a transit country? Which criteria characterises it? Despite its apparently intuitive meaning, it will be observed that the concept is actually blurred. According to scholars who have critically analysed the term “transit country”, in fact, the sole value it has provided over the past three decades has been to question the early migration studies theories whereby flows were conceived in linear fashion i.e., from a country of departure A to a country of destination B, and characterized by a Eurocentric perspective in which migration was steadily directed from the “Global South” to the “Global North”. While acknowledging this contribution, however, I argue that stressing the uselessness and the harmlessness of the expression would, at best, be misleading.

As it will be noted indeed, far from being a new phenomenon, transit migration, and thus the identification of transit countries, functions as a governmental discursive and political practice through which unwanted migration is managed. Human mobility indeed is not a discouraged phenomenon *tout court*. Rather, the evolution of the Western securitarian paradigm within a neoliberal globalised economic (dis)order, allowed the distinction between a “good circulation”, made of skilled labour, tourism, finance and trade, from a “bad circulation”, associated with unskilled migrants,

1 Ph.D student in Migration Studies, Faculty of Political Science and Sociology, University of Granada, in cotutorship with the University of Palermo, Department of Political Science and International Relations. Email address: germana.vinciguerra@unipa.it

refugees, trafficking, shadow economies and international terrorism (Duffield 2007, 30). The main argument of this paper is precisely to show how transit states are produced and tactically used in order to govern the “bad circulation”. The philosophical-political reflection proposed here about the governmental production of transit states is currently under-theorized in scientific research but it is considered to offer interesting and necessary contributions in the critical analysis of the current border regime.

For those who are not familiar with Foucauldian analysis on biopolitics and the technologies of government, it is worth specifying that the government ought not be understood as an institution but rather “as an activity that consists in governing people’s conduct within the framework of, and using the instrument of, a state” (Foucault 2008, 319). Relying on Martina Tazzioli’s analysis on “how mobility is used as a disciplinary technique for managing migration and which hierarchies of lives are structured around it” (Tazzioli 2020, 106), I stress that the empirical analysis of transit countries as areas of suspension and immobility are misguided. As I will show, mobility – being kept on the move – is a governmental practice that finds in the targeting of transit states the ideal place of application. From this standpoint, transit migration serves to stress the uncertainty in migration patterns, associating this unpredictability with ungovernability. It is as if the principle of emphasising the movement itself, helps reinforce the *government of the crisis* and of the *crisis as a technology of government* (Tazzioli, Garelli 2016, 76). In other words, I argue that transit states are used to keep the crisis alive.

In essence then, by “governmental production of transit states”, I refer to that set of practices and apparatuses that determine ways of governing lives in motion. Accordingly, within the first part of this article I will primarily analyse how the supposed ungovernability of the African continent has led to a mushrooming of the so-called transit states. I will then propose a more extensive philosophical-political analysis of the role of transit states in the current border regime. The second part of this contribution, on the other hand, highlights some critical reflections on Tunisia’s role as a transit country. Given the novel approach, the proposed analysis does not pretend to be exhaustive but rather aims to stimulate

further research on the country in order to push for the Tunisian government to take measures to increase migrants' human rights protection. A crucial aspect that emerges from the philosophical-political analysis of transit countries such as Tunisia is that the governmental production of transit states triggers a field of tension and conflict wherein mobility is a practice of subjugation but also a form of resistance. Indeed, as Mezzadra and Neilson (2013, 252) pointed out, "constituted by power relations such as those that operate in processes of dispossession and exploitation, [the subject-migrant] is always constitutive or characterised by a moment of excess that can never be fully expropriated". From this point of view, the article will conclude by showing that the governmental production of Tunisia as a transit country has generated a space of struggle, which urges Tunisia's recognition as a destination country.

1.2 *Targeting transit states in Africa*

In recent years, irregular migration from Africa to Europe has become the object of an increasing – almost haunting, one might say – attention. Notwithstanding the fact that the majority of arrivals from the African continent to European countries take place through regular channels,² Western mainstream media reportages and public debates continue to refer to an invasion of "illegal" migrants "massively escaping" from wars, starvation, extreme poverty and environmental degradation, a narrative reinforcing the stereotypes of the "African misery" (De Haas 2008, 1305), hence enhancing the perception of the African continent as an ungovernable space.

Despite a general lack of data, it is now known that migration flows in Africa occur mainly along South-South routes (Adepoju 2008; Idemudia, Boehnke 2020; Devillard et al. 2015), and almost entirely within the continent³ (UN DESA 2020; African Union 2020). Despite the relevance of intra-African flows, the Eurocentric perspective characterising contemporary debates

2 See African Union 2019, 27.

3 According to the available data 82,4% of migrants choose to move to another African country, generally within the same sub-region.

on international migration keeps describing North-Africa⁴ as a backdoor where “millions of sub-Saharans are commonly believed to be waiting to cross to Europe” (De Haas 2008, 1305) or, as the International Organization for Migrations (IOM) affirmed, a “transit hub for migrants from sub-Saharan states” (WMR 2022, 73). Indeed, as Düvell highlighted, “transit migration is commonly linked with a supposed attraction of Western countries, implying that middle-income countries to the East and South of the EU cannot be destination but only transit countries” (Düvell 2014, 215). Coherently with this assumption, from the 1990s onward, the European Union (EU), started the experimentation of its securitisation policies in Africa. It is no coincidence, as I will discuss in the next section, that it is precisely in this period that the increasing use of the term “transit country” began to spread. Concerns about incoming flows to Europe from Africa were driven by the actual increase in migration from sub-Saharan to Northern Africa.⁵ As a consequence, countries such as Libya – a historical destination country in intra-Africa routes – Morocco, Algeria, Egypt and Tunisia have been strategically labelled as origin and “transit areas”.

However, several researches have now pointed to the growing role of North-African countries as a destination area for intra-African flows (Ali Bensaâd 2009; Said Saddiki 2021; Adepoju 2004; Bakewell et al. 2008). The 9/11 geopolitical upheavals marked a crucial turning point in the security-migration nexus producing a shift from a rhetoric that leveraged the fight against human trafficking, and thus the protection of human rights typical of the post-Cold War era, to a discursive practice that increasingly

4 North-Africa includes: Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya and Egypt; the Maghreb includes: Morocco, Western Sahara, Mauritania, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya.

5 According to Boubakri and Potot (2013), from a historical point of view, the reasons can be summarised in three main factors: (i) the inability of several African regions, including countries with stronger economies such as Cameroon and Ghana, to match demographic growth and market demand; (ii) the increase in ethnic conflicts and civil wars that erupted through many East, Central and West African countries after independence struggles; (iii) the progressive differentiation of economic development between Northern Africa and Sub-Saharan countries.

associated migrations with a potential infiltration channel for Islamist terrorists. Accordingly, during the early 2000s Middle East and North Africa (MENA) regions and sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) shot to the top of European political agendas on migration management. In general terms, Western securitisation policies on migration control in Africa respond to two main strategies: on the one hand, through a development-oriented approach based on identifying the roots of migration, they aim at promoting alternatives to migration. On the other hand, they point at restraining human mobility towards Europe through the externalisation of migration management which, as Cuttitta (2020, 26) pointed out, may be seen as a neo-colonial device of power through which “destination countries promote, support, delegate, impose, or directly carry out activities related to migration and border management outside their territories”.

The willingness to accept the implementation of Western rules and guidelines on migration control in Africa, however, should not be merely understood in terms of asymmetrical power relations between the North and the South.⁶ Rather, Western direct or indirect interventions are perceived by most African countries’ elites as a means to strengthen regime authority and domestic stability⁷ (Hahonou, Olsen 2020). Fears related to the management of the ungovernable trans-Saharan routes received a further impetus with the 2015 refugee crisis when the EU launched the Emergency Trust Fund for Stability and Addressing the Root Causes of Irregular Migration and Displaced Persons in Africa⁸ (EUTF), to-date the main financial instrument for the

6 See also Duffield 2007.

7 For example, the Forum Tunisien pour le Droits Économiques et Sociaux (FTDES 2020) stated that Tunisia’s participation in the global fight against Islamist extremism from early 2000s allowed then-President Ben Ali to increase control over the population, hence turning the securitarian paradigm into the justification for an increasingly repressive police state and greater control over the population (Meddeb 2012, 389). Identical developments have been documented in recent analysis also in sub-Saharan states such as Senegal, Ghana and Niger (Hahonou, Olsen 2020).

8 The EUTF for Africa was launched at the Summit in La Valletta as the main financial instrument to implement the Valletta Action Plan aimed at

EU's political engagement with African partners in the field of migration management. Interestingly, as several researches have highlighted, the geographical allocation of the EUTF projects is not based on traditional needs analysis but on the identification of areas of transit used by migrants to reach Europe (CONCORD 2018; Idemudia, Boehnke 2020).

In order to target transit states, three macro-areas of intervention have been identified: the Horn of Africa⁹ (HOA) is considered particularly relevant for the routes emanating from Eastern Africa. Migrants mainly leave from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, transiting in Khartoum (Sudan) in order to move further to the North, particularly to Libya and Egypt. Another option is to move from Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) to the Eritrean borders and from there towards Amara and Massara to reach Khartoum (Marchand et al. 2017). Such a situation brought the EU to define Sudan and Ethiopia as strategic partners for transit migration control.

Djibouti is also increasingly assuming a relevant role as a transit country within Eastern Africa flows, especially from Somalia and Ethiopia.¹⁰

The political, economic and social instability of Sahel and Lake Chad¹¹ area, further exacerbated by changes in the climate,

responding collectively to the migration challenges in a shared strategic framework. Adopted by leaders of the EU and African countries, the Valletta Action Plan set out five priority domains of cooperation: addressing the root causes of irregular migration and developing the benefits of migration; promoting legal migration and mobility; reinforcing protection and asylum policies; fighting against human trafficking and migrant smuggling; and strengthening cooperation to facilitate return and reintegration of irregular migrants. The EUTF for Africa was launched for the five-year terms 2015 to 2020 and 2020 to 2025.

- 9 In the Horn of Africa, the following countries are targeted: Djibouti, Ethiopia, Sudan, South Sudan, Eritrea, Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Somalia.
- 10 See Djibouti International Organization for Migration (iom.int) available at: <https://www.iom.int/countries/djibouti>
- 11 The Sahel and Lake Chad include: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Ivory Coast, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal.

pose several challenges to migration control. Lake Chad, situated between Chad, Cameroon, Niger and Nigeria, is an important livelihood source, supplying water to 30 million people. Its depletion is causing socio-political tensions and conflicts, thus making forced migration increasingly frequent and necessary. Within this area, Niger has acquired a pivotal role in the externalisation of the EU's borders. Migrants coming from Nigeria, Senegal, Gambia, and Mali have started to use the Nigerin city of Agadez as a hub for moving to Algeria and Libya (Hahonou, Olsen 2020; Frowd 2019). Together with Mauritania, Mali is targeted as a transit country. As already stated, the targeting of North Africa as a transit area, has expanded and intensified to the point that nowadays, as it can be seen by the entire EUTF sources allocation on "Improved migration management",¹² the sub-region has become a buffer zone to block irregular flows.

As it will be shown in the next pages, irregularity, and more precisely the process of irregularisation to which migrants are subjected to, is at the core of transit state construction and functioning as governmental practice. However, before analysing the governmental construction of transit countries, it is worth starting by questioning its meaning and usage.

1.3 *A biopolitical perspective on transit states*

Language is "fundamentally about ordering reality and creating categories that enable its perception" (Pecaud 2015, 78) and thus, can be understood as an operation of intelligibility. In political terms, attempts to define the transitory dimension of migration consist of proposing an interpretation of reality as unpredictable and turbulent with the purpose of subsequently transforming existing reality in this direction (Pecaud 2015, 78). However, all things are subject to interpretation; whichever interpretation prevails at a given time is a function of power and not of truth.

As I will state now, similarly to a buzzword of

12 https://trust-fund-for-africa.europa.eu/results/monitoring-and-evaluation_en

Development speak,¹³ whose migrations are a central pivot, the expression “transit country” is arguably not interesting for its meaning (or lack thereof), but rather for its performative use, i.e., its capacity to produce, through enunciation, normalising and hegemonic effects on migrants’ bodies and their spaces of liveability. Hence, not simply its political use but also its biopolitical dimension.

Despite its widespread use over the past thirty years, there is to-date no commonly accepted definition of a “transit country” (Düvell 2012) nor an official list of states targeted as such. Consequently, the use that is often made of it by various IOs, NGOs, political actors and even academia, is simplified and arbitrary. Whilst the expression “country of destination” is simpler and more intuitive, indicating the “place where a subject, or a group of subjects, intends to go regardless of their legal status” (IOM 2004), the expression “country of transit”, by contrast, seems to evade any unambiguous definition. One of the first definitions was proposed in 1993 by the United Nation Economic Commission¹⁴ (UNECE), which referred to transit migration as “migration in one country with the intention of seeking the possibility there to emigrate to another”. A few years later, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Assembly referred to transit migrants as “aliens who stay in the country for some period of time while seeking to migrate permanently to another country”. The urgency of addressing the threats posed by the role of transit countries in international migration, fuelled by the Council of Europe (CoE), the IOM, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), has also prompted academia to contribute to these efforts by framing transit migration as “a short-term temporary stay of a migrant on his/her way from a country of origin to a country of destination” (Ivakhniouk 2004, 20) or “the stage between emigration and settlement” (Papadopoulou 2005, 2).

As can be noticed, all these definitions are characterised by, and emphasise at the same time, a certain degree of vagueness both in respect to the time span within which it would still be possible

13 See Cornwall, Eade 2010.

14 See Pecaud 2015.

to refer to a transitional phase of the migration project, and in relation to the impossibility of identifying *ex ante* a person's, or a group of persons' intentions during their migration paths (Düvell 2012). The unpredictability of flows both in terms of time and space reinforce the interpretation of migratory phenomena as out of control. Such uncertainties however should not be intended as an intrinsic characteristic of migration: migrants may have a clear idea about their paths (Düvell 2014). Rather, the need to change migratory trajectories must be attributed precisely to the outcomes of the current border regime that hamper and continually alter migration flows, generating new "transit areas"¹⁵ thus increasing the duration of the migration projects (Düvell 2014) and their related risks (Ouhemmou 2021; Frowd 2019; CONCORD 2018).

Among these approximations, the Latin root of the word "transit", may offer a more comprehensive perspective. *Transitu* means the act or fact of passing or crossing something, hence it gives the idea of a passage (Bredeloup 2012). Contemporary border regimes, with the support of advanced technological systems aimed at sorting good and bad circulation, have in a sense altered the sense of fluidity of movement, transforming possible areas of passage into suspension zones. The operations of suspension, however, should not be interpreted as a material condition of migrants' bodies in space and time, but rather as a subjection process encompassing migrants as a whole, hence an existential condition.

From this perspective, echoing Agamben's work, Christina Oelgemöller (2011) suggests considering transit countries as "zones of indistinction" where migrants, who are assumed to be illegitimate migrants, are suspended from their juridical-political status. In other words, relying on a "legal production of illegality" (De Genova 2002) *in and through* transit states, migrants are turned into "bare lives" (Agamben 2005). It is the well-known Agamben's recourse to the concept of *homo sacer*, a figure from archaic roman

15 Analysing the perverse effects of border controls in the Maghreb, De Haas (2008) noted they have altered and diversified trans-Saharan migration routes and trans-Mediterranean crossing points, forcing migrants in Morocco to move southwards to the Western Sahara in order to get to the Canary Islands.

law who designates an individual who is deprived of its political dimension (*bios*) and is reduced to its natural existence (*zoé*). Finding themselves out of government jurisdiction, *homines sacri* are nothing more than “living deads”, bare lives (Lamke 2005).

Yet, in order to better understand the biopolitical dimension of transit states, I propose to analyse suspension practices in terms of the Butlerian concept of abandonment. Indeed, as abandonment, suspension works as an “active form of subtraction” (Tazzioli 2020, 60) that does not function in direct forms of death – *make die* – but in life, producing forms of dehumanisation and derealisation (Butler 2004) – *let die*. Such a reading allows a move beyond Agamben’s emphasis on the dispossession of rights and the sovereign exception. By this standpoint, rather than understanding transit states as dead(ly) ends (Oelgemöller 2011), like the application of the Agambenian reading would suggest, we have to conceptualise them as spaces of struggle and reappropriation wherein governmental practices of abandonment and suspension are challenged by forms of recognition that migrants put in place as forms of resistance.

The case of Tunisia that will be analysed in the following section is quite emblematic in this sense. Indeed, while it is true that Tunisia is a strategic analytical lens for “understanding the politics of mobility in the Mediterranean” (Tazzioli, Garelli 2016, 5), most of the current literature and data continue to emphasise “its different roles as a country of *origin* for migrants, as a country of *transit* for migrants and refugees coming from other countries and directed to Europe” (Tazzioli, Garelli 2016, 5). Yet, changing perspective, that is, shifting the focus along intra-African routes, Tunisia represents an important analytical lens for understanding the governance of mobility far beyond the Mediterranean, a research topic which remains fairly new within the literature. The Southern perspective proposed here is twofold: on a political level, as mentioned earlier, it allows a disengagement from paternalistic views wherein the Tunisian government is a pawn of the European technocracy. As I will show, not recognizing itself as a destination country, indeed, is not due to the inability or failure of the Tunisian government, rather it is a governmental practice of “not governing too much” (Tazzioli 2020) that relies on this withdrawal to get

rid of institutional responsibility towards migrants as subjects of rights. Additionally, as I have already partly anticipated, on a biopolitical level, a Southern perspective is particularly relevant for two main reasons. On the one hand, it contributes to showing the outcomes of contemporary border regimes in the countries in which these practices are implemented. Such a perspective, it is worth specifying, offers an unprecedented view of analysis as it breaks away from approaches that, although critical, continue to examine the outcomes of migration governance only in northbound flows. The focus on the Mediterranean routes is an example of this. Accordingly, I will not address the migration issues of Tunisia as a country of origin but rather the country's role within inter-African migration routes. On the other hand, a biopolitical analysis allows further considerations of the field of struggle that is at play within migration regimes, "between subjective desires and enacted practices of freedom and recognition on the one hand, and disciplinary mechanism on the other, which try to regain control over them" (Tazzioli 2020, 105).

2. *Spaces of Struggle*

2.1 *Tunisia as a transit country?*

Within the quantitative *vacuum* characterising intra-African migration research, Tunisia is not an exception. Despite an increase in quantitative research on migration in Tunisia over the past two years, data remains scarce. This gap, as well as making research on inter-African flows difficult, reinforces the rhetoric of Tunisia as an ungovernable space that consequently requires increasingly stringent emergency and security measures. Indeed, the emphasis placed on Tunisia as, primarily, a country of origin and transit by both the EU and the Tunisian government itself, relies precisely on non-recording practices, which while emphasising ungovernability, uses partial uncontrol in order to manage control.¹⁶ It is a governmental practice relying on

16 See Tazzioli 2020.

Zachary White's concept of "myopticon" that, unlike Foucauldian panopticon, "relies more on uncertainty than on accurately knowing or disciplining its subjects" (White 2011, 18). From this perspective thus, the transitory nature of the migratory flows that would affect Tunisia, succeed in keeping the crisis alive.

In order to critically analyse the construction of Tunisia as a transit country, it is worth looking briefly at the quantitative research carried out in the country so far. Although the "logic of the count", i.e., the statistical analysis of the transitory nature of flows in a country does not provide a useful empirical basis for analysing governmental practices along current border regimes, in this case it may be a useful counter-hegemonic tool to build on. The gradual increase of migrants from other African sub-regions in Tunisia dates back to the early 2000s and is linked to several different factors (Boubakri, Manzella 2005). Among these, the Libyan crisis played a key role. The entry of the sub-Saharan workforce to Libya was facilitated by Gheddafi's policies between the 1990s and 2000s in order to compensate for international isolation and the economic crisis caused by the embargo placed by the United Nations (Bakewell et al. 2007; Morone 2020). When the 2011 uprisings against Gheddafi's regime first escalated into a civil war and subsequently an international conflict for Libyan state and resources control, hundreds of thousands of sub-Saharan, as well as Tunisian, workers fled to Tunisia through the Southern Ras Jadir border-post which, by the end of 2011, had been crossed by one million individuals (Tazzioli, Garelli 2017). Over the following three years, Tunisia also coped with the arrival of Syrian refugees. As a consequence, between 2011 and 2015 the "ungovernability" of Tunisian space brought the EU to reinforce its border control measures.¹⁷

Notwithstanding these efforts, between 2004 and 2020 the number of sub-Saharans¹⁸ in Tunisia gradually increased from

17 See Akrimi 2020.

18 The majority of migrants are originally from Ivory Coast (35% of the total), followed by Guinea, Democratic Republic of Congo and Mali. A smaller percentage is from Sudan, Cameroon, Eritrea, Gabon, Somalia, Mali and Nigeria, Benin and Senegal.

3.017¹⁹ to 21.466 (Institut National de la Statistique Tunisien-INS 2021). Such a situation led the UNHCR (2019) to define the country as “primarily a transit country for most migrants, refugees and asylum seekers [...] intending to reach Europe”. However, other quantitative studies in the field showed that in most cases, migrants indicated Tunisia as the country of destination in their migration project.²⁰ By emphasising the data suggesting Tunisia’s growing role as a destination country, I am not denying that a proportion of sub-Saharan migrants in Tunisia are willing to leave.²¹ Rather, coherently with what I have observed so far, I am asserting that it is precisely the role of “transit state” attributed to Tunisia, by both the EU and the Tunisian government itself, that while increasing the deterioration of sub-Saharan migrants’ living conditions, also boosts the urge to leave, hence producing mobility. Indeed, as a “transit state”, Tunisia shirks its legal obligation to protect migrants’ rights and dignity, finding in that shirking the justification for what Martina Tazzioli (2020) defines as the “will not to govern”. One of the first forms of such a deliberate subtraction concerns the process of ir-regularisation set up by the Tunisian government. Despite several bilateral agreements on free visa access between Tunisia, and some sub-Saharan states allowing migrants to enter the country regularly, for the majority of them, it becomes almost impossible to extend their stay on a legal basis. According to the law no. 1968-0007, foreigners’ access to the labour market is heavily restricted on the basis of national preference. The inability to obtain an employment and therefore residency permit, produces a process of mass ir-regularisation which forces sub-Saharan

19 Tunisian population census 2004.

20 See Akrimi 2020; Mercy Corps 2018. Tunisia, country of emigration and return: migration dynamics since 2011; INS Report 2021.

21 The 2021 INS analysis shows that among migrants who declared their intention to leave the country, 39% affirmed willingness to return to their country of origin; only 1% wanted to reach another country (it should be stressed that this is not necessarily Europe).

migrants to work mainly in the informal sector where working conditions are highly racialised²² and degrading.²³

Paradoxically, Tunisia's "machine of ir-regularisation" also concerns those seeking refugee status.²⁴ The will not to govern, however, should not be interpreted as a lack of control. It is rather a biopolitical device of power producing exploitable and "governable mobile subjects from ungovernable flows" (Panagiotidis, Tsianos 2007, 82). While being exposed to several forms of violence, sub-Saharan migrants in Tunisia have transformed vulnerability in a deliberate and active form of political resistance through which to aspire to a permanent "good life" (Butler 2015), showing that transit migration and thus transit states, are "a strategic response to the constantly changing control regime and part of the complex interaction between migrants' autonomy and state sovereignty" (Düvell 2010, 422).

2.2 Tunisia as a battlefield

There is a thin line between the words *routes* and *roots* which is not merely phonetic. In referring to *routes* I do not mean the material dimension allowing migrants' bodies to cross territorial borders in transit countries through the disciplining tool of a mobile existence. Routes, rather, are a political practice of action that allow unrecognised and suspended individuals to "move" along and across non-spatial boundaries, that are within "the proliferation of hierarchies and internal boundaries within the space of a polity" (Mezzadra, Neilson 2013, 272). In this perspective,

22 In 2017, out of a total of 5470 work permits issued by the government, only 4% were directed to sub-Saharan nationalities compared to 40% of workers from Western European countries and 31% from other Arab countries (FTDES, 2020).

23 Almost all the male and female sub-Saharan workers surveyed by FTDES in 2020 believe they are exploited by their employer.

24 According to UNHCR (2020), more than half of the applications for international protection, both issued and registered in 2019, came from sub-Saharan migrants. However, despite having signed and ratified the 1951 Geneva Convention, the government has never passed a domestic law, thus Tunisia still lacks a functional asylum system. Shockingly, as a result, refugees in Tunisia are also undocumented migrants.

routes represent a field of tension and conflict within which mobility – being kept on the move – is a practice of subjugation but also a form of resistance. The mass protests that spread in 2018 in Tunis and Sfax following the killing of a young Ivorian migrant, Falikou Coulibaly, allow for further considerations of the struggle field which is at play in transiting migration regimes, “between subjective desires and enacted practices of freedom and recognition on the one hand, and disciplinary mechanism on the other, which try to regain control over them” (Tazzioli 2020, 105). In fact, the mobilisations were not limited to a request for greater security measures, whose urgency emerges from the frequent harassment of black people, but rather, for the first time in the country, the street has become part of a collective action aimed at advocating for the regularisation of sub-Saharan migrants in Tunisia. Hence a mobilisation not aimed at the demand to move to Europe but at the right to stay in Tunisia.

As Judith Butler suggests, looking at the migrant body in its public dimension, in its being both as a means and an end of politics, allows the return of a fundamental aspect to the centre of the governance of mobility: if it is true that the governmental production of transit states generates forms of abandonment and vulnerabilisation, migrants should be understood not only as acted bodies but also as agent ones (Butler 2015). In claiming the “right to appear” in Tunisian public space, sub-Saharan migrants do more than affirm their desire to remain in Tunisia. They posit a critique of the differential forms of power that govern their bodies by determining, through them, new forms of appearance and citizenship. Such a request must push a rethink of Tunisian migratory space as a destination area in order to improve migrants’ spaces of liveability and a greater protection of human rights.

Bibliography

- Adepoju A. 2008. *Migration in Sub-Saharan Africa*, Nordiska Afrikainstitutet.
- Achieng M., El Fadil A. 2020. *What is Wrong with the Narrative on African Migration?*, in Adepoju A. et al. (ed.), *African*

- Migration Report. Challenging the narrative*, International Organization for Migration publications.
- Agamben G. 2005. *State of Exception*, University of Chicago Press.
- Akrimi Y. 2020. *Between Securitization and Racialisation: the Sub-Saharan African Experience in Tunisia*, Forum Tunisien pour le Droits Économiques et Sociaux.
- Bakewell O., de Haas H. 2007. *African Migrations: continuities, discontinuities and recent transformations*, in Chabal P., Engel U., and De Haan L. (eds.), *African Alternatives*, Brill, pp. 95-118.
- Bensaâd A. 2009. *Le Maghreb à l'épreuve des migrations subsahariennes. Immigration sur émigration*, Karthala.
- Boubakri H., Manzella S. 2005. *La Tunisie entre Transnit et Immigration: Politiques migratoires et conditions d'accueil des migrants Africains à Tunis*, in «Autrepart-Revue de sciences sociales au Sud», 4(36), 2005, pp. 149-165.
- Boubakri H., Potot S. 2013. *Migrations et révolution en Tunisie*, in «Revue tunisienne des sciences (Rtss)», 2013, pp. 59-78.
- Bredeloup S. 2012. *Sahara Transit: Times, Space, People*, in «Population, Space and Place», 2012, pp. 457-467.
- Butler J. 2015. *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*, Harvard University Press.
- Cornwall A., Eade D. (eds.) 2010. *Deconstructing Development Discourse. Buzzwords and Fuzzwords*, Practical Action Publishing Ltd.
- Cuttitta P. 2020. *Non-Government Al/Civil Society Organisations and the European Union Externalisation of Migration Management in Tunisia and Egypt*, in «Population, Space and Place», 26(7), 2020.
- De Haas H. 2008. *The Myth of Invasion: the inconvenient realities of African migration to Europe*, in «Third World Quarterly», 29(7), 2008, pp. 1305-1322.
- Devillard A., Bacchi A., Noack M., 2015. *A Survey on Migration Policies in West Africa*, International Centre for Migration Policy Development, International Organization for Migration, Vienna, Dakar.

- Duffield M. 2007. *Development, Security and Unending War. Governing the World of Peoples*, Polity Press.
- Düvell F. 2010. *Transit Migration: A Blurred and Politicised Concept*, in «Population, Space and Place», 18, 2010, pp. 415-442.
- Düvell F. 2014. *Transit Migrations in the European Migration Spaces Politics, Determinants and Dynamics*, in Düvell F., Molodikova I., Collyer M. (eds.), *Transit migration in Europe*, Amsterdam University Press.
- Foucault M. 2008. *The Birth of Biopolitics. Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978-1979*, Palgrave Macmillan.
- Frowd P.M. 2019. *Producing the “transit” Migration State: international security intervention in Niger*, in «Third World Quarterly», 41(2), 2019, pp. 340-358.
- Hahonou E.K., Olsen G.R. 2020. *Niger-Europe’s Border Guard? Limits to the externalization of the European Union’s migration policy*, in «Journal of European Integration» 43(2), 2020, pp. 1-16.
- Idemudia E., Boehnke K. 2020. *Psychological Experience of African Migrants in Six European Countries. A Mixed Method Study*, Springer.
- IOM 2004. *Glossary on Migration*, 1st edition.
- IOM 2005. *World Migration Report. Costs and Benefits of Migration*, vol. 3, International Organisation for Migration.
- Ivakhniouk I. 2004. *Analysis of Economic, Social, Demographic and Political Basis of Transit Migration in Russia – Moscow Case*. Paper presented to regional Conference on *Migration in Transit Countries: Sharing responsibility for management and protection*, Istanbul, Council of Europe.
- Lamke T. 2005. “*A zone of Indistinction*” – *A Critique of Giorgio Agamben’s Concept of Biopolitics*, in «Outlines. Critical Social Studies», 7, 2005, pp. 3-13.
- Marchand K., Reinold J., Silva R.D. 2017. *Study on Migration Routes in the East and Horn of Africa*, Maastricht Graduate School of Governance.
- Mcauliffe M., Triandafyllidou A. (eds.) 2021. *World Migration Report 2022*, International Organisation for Migration.
- Meddeb H. 2012. *Courir ou mourir: Course à El Khobza et*

- domination au quotidien dans la Tunisie de Ben Ali*, Institut d'études politiques, Ph.D Thesis.
- Mercy Corps, REACH 2018. *Tunisia, Country of Emigration and Return: migration dynamics since 2011*, Mercy Corps & REACH.
- Mezzadra S., Neilson B. 2013. *Border as a Method, or, the Multiplication of Labor*, Duke University Press.
- Morone M. 2020. *Les migrations africaines dans la Libye post-2014: guerre, crise économique et politiques d'endiguement*, in «Migrations Société», 179(1), 2020.
- Moyo I., Laine J.P., Nshimbi C.C. (eds.) 2021. *Intra-African Migrations. Reimagining Borders and Migration Management*, Routledge.
- Oelgemöller C. 2011. *Transit and Suspension: Migration Management or the Metamorphosis of Asylum-Seekers into "Illegal" Immigrants*, in «Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies», 37(3), 2011, pp. 407-424.
- Ouhemmou M. 2021. *Migration, Governance and Geopolitical Conflicts in Africa: a comparative analysis of the Moroccan Algerian migration policies*, in Moyo I., Laine J.P., Nshimbi C.C. (eds.), *Intra-African Migrations. Reimagining Borders and Migration Management*, Routledge, pp. 159-179.
- Papadopoulou A. 2005. *Exploring the Asylum-Migration Nexus: A Case Study of Transit Migrants in Europe. Global Migration Perspectives No. 23*, Global Commission on International Migration.
- Pecaud A. 2015. *Depoliticising Migration. Global Governance and International Migration Narratives*, Palgrave Macmillan.
- Saddiki S. 2021. *The Maghreb and Intra-African Migration: one challenge and different strategies*, in Moyo I., Laine J.P., Nshimbi C.C. (eds.), *Intra-African Migrations. Reimagining Borders and Migration Management*, Routledge, pp. 126-140.
- Tazzioli M. 2020. *The Making of Migration*, Sage Publications Ltd.
- Tazzioli M., Garelli G. 2017. *Tunisia as a Revolutionized Space of Migration*, Palgrave Macmillan.
- UNDESA 2020. *International Migration 2020*, available:

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/news/international-migration-2020> (accessed 26/10/2022).

UNHCR 2020. *Italy- Sea arrivals Dashboard* (December 2020) available: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/84531> (accessed 3/11/2022).

UNHCR 2019. *Tunisia: Overview of Mixed Movement Profiling*, available: <https://data.unhcr.org> (accessed 7/10/2022).

Whyte Z. 2011. *Enter the Myopticon. Uncertain Surveillance in the Danish Asylum System*, in «Anthropology Today», 27, 2011, pp. 18-21.

MARTINA COSTA¹

DECOLONISING THE SECURITIZED
APPROACH TO MIGRATION
Cultural Dewesternisation and
Political Re-emergence

1. Governing migration in the coloniality of power: a security challenge

Migration has always been part of human history. Few states in the world would be what they are today without centuries of migratory movements. Over the centuries, however, the perception of human mobility, recognised in 1948 as a human right,² has progressively changed. Along with its increasing regulation – with the application of visa policies and of laws regulating the entry, the permanence or the transit in a country – human mobility has become a privilege of determined nations and certain categories of the population. Mobility has been increasingly restricted, that is it has been made (easily) accessible only to certain categories of people who meet specific criteria, such as a certain nationality and social status, and economic and professional stability. The colour of the passport and the weight of the wallet now play an important role in the human selection of those who can access regular and safe migration passages. As a consequence, those who do not satisfy particular requirements are automatically excluded from exercising this right and are relegated to irregular circuits.

As several scholars have pointed out, a process of securitisation has emerged and deepened over the last few decades (Duffield

1 Independent researcher, activist in defence of freedom of movement and socio-economic rights. Currently working as a Capacity-Building Officer for *Avocats Sans Frontières* in Tunisia in the field of migration. Email address: martina.costa1154@gmail.com

2 The Universal Declaration of Human Rights grants everyone the right to move freely within a state, to leave any land and to return to his or her own country (article 13).

2007). A paradigm that not only denies equal rights to all people but also aims at managing migration as a security threat. The governmentality³ of contemporary border regimes aims to control movement in order to reduce the arrival of migrants in their destination country. Faced with forced displacements, transit and destination states have reacted with an increasingly entrenched policy of strengthening external boundaries.

This understanding not only confers on mobility a problematic connotation for national security but also legitimises the use of coercive instruments for its management. The response to migration management implies a concentration of states' resources in the promotion of policies aimed exclusively at containing human mobility. As Martina Tazzioli notes, this includes the militarisation of checkpoints and the lockdown of national borders, negotiations with the main departure or transit countries in order to implement bilateral agreements for repatriations, pushbacks and deportations, erection of camps and reception infrastructures and of walls and fences and criminalisation processes (Tazzioli 2019). These governmental practices, all accompanied by the steady militarisation of surveillance and repression, are hence part of a security-based approach dominated by control and deterrence. As Sandro Mezzadra has argued, within migration management, in continuity to the flagrant violence produced by the border regime's exclusion, there are systemic forms of violence produced by inclusion: production of irregularities, exploitation, domination and exclusion (Mezzadra 2013). Through the resignification of different categories, this governmentality of human mobility has

3 According to Judith Butler "Governmentality is broadly understood as a mode of power concerned with the maintenance and control of bodies and persons, the production and regulation of persons and populations, and the circulation of goods insofar as they maintain and restrict the life of the population. Governmentality operates through policies and departments, through managerial and bureaucratic institutions, through the law, when the law is understood as 'a set of tactics', and through forms of state power, although not exclusively. [...] The tactics characteristic of governmentality operate diffusely, to dispose and order populations, and to produce and reproduce subjects, their practices and beliefs, in relation to specific policy aims." (Butler 2006, 52)

become the hegemonic system of management and control of mobility.⁴

1.1 *Space: a containment process*

Space, which is the set of human mobility, is one of the main categories in which the governmentality of human mobility applies concrete policies. The dominant perspective of migration manages the space of borders, which become devices of security and distance. At the international level, human mobility is often perceived as a threat to the internal security of the state precisely because of the resignification accorded to the role of borders and the ideology they have consequently embodied.

Starting from the 18th Century, with the emergence of the modern state, border control has become one of the main prerogatives to defend the national territory from external threats. Borders are intended to govern, regulate and select the passage of individuals and labour. They go from being physical or territorial lines to being ideological or mental dimensions (Cuttitta 2012). As Mezzadra and Neilson argue, the border regime functions not only as a filtering mechanism of people on the move, but also as a regime of hierarchisation of human dignity. Through “differential inclusion” (Mezzadra, Neilson 2013), migrants are strategically incorporated into some areas of society, primarily the labour market, while, at the same time, excluded from others, including from exercising fundamental rights.

Therefore, establishing tight borders not only responds to political and ideological needs, but becomes a symbol of “rationality”,⁵ which aims to protect internal security and to filter, classify and hierarchise people.

4 See Mezzadra, Neilson 2013; Tazzioli 2019.

5 Wendy Brown speaks of rationality in reference to neo-liberalism, defined as rationality because it involves the diffusion of market values to all social actions. In our case, the term “rationality” refers to a set of practices, not only political or economic, but also social, with a strong ideological value. In particular, it implies that the hardening of borders does not respond to a single geopolitical logic but is rooted in particular ideological beliefs and values. See Brown 2009.

As Duffield argues, in the process or strategy of securitisation, professional groups “describe an ever-widening range of social trends, conditions and practices through a lens of security” (Duffield 2007, 3). Hence through a process of securitisation, human mobility quickly becomes a threat to internal security. The concept of securitisation is used here to show how migration is gradually introduced for the threat it poses (Wæver 1993). This re-signification of a particular phenomenon, now presented in terms of a threat, justifies exceptional actions that can exceed the normal limits of political procedure (Butler, Buzan et al. 1998). Thus, by identifying a certain problem related to security, the state can claim a particular right to action. Politicians and policy makers can use the instrument of securitisation of a phenomenon to gain control over it and to legitimise certain abuses of power. Such a situation has increased the militarisation of borders as well as the number of walls and barriers erected along state boundaries (Mezzadra, Neilson 2014).

Ensuring security, by limiting the movement of “precarious lives”,⁶ becomes the pivot of the contemporary migration governance. The militarisation of borders is now justified in the form of border security and national stability.

The decolonial approach adopted here, also needs to rely on the category of distance that explains the use of space as a device to control and manage migration. The concept of distance can be employed to highlight the other effect of borders, which is not that of exclusion but rather of “differential inclusion” (Mezzadra, Neilson 2013). In this process, people on the move are thus accepted into the territory but are relegated to the peripheral space, which typically become lawless. Tuhiwai Smith argues that distance is used as a control device by the centres to differentiate themselves from those who are spatially distant (Smith 1999).⁷ In

6 According to Judith Butler’s definition, precarious lives are superfluous lives, which can be abandoned, not worthy of mourning, only partially living. See Butler 2006.

7 Tuhiwai Smith emphasized the concept of distance to analyse the treatment reserved for indigenous peoples: considering them as not fully human, “enabled distance to be maintained and justified various policies of either extermination or domestication. Some indigenous

this case, space is subdued and controlled by a well-defined centre that manages to separate itself from the subjects at the peripheries.

Immanuel Wallerstein's theory of the "world-system" is linked to the hegemonic management of migration and the space in which it develops. According to Wallerstein, the world-system is the domination of one space over another, that is states in the centres, or metropolises, over peripheral states (Wallerstein 2004). From this perspective, Santiago Castro-Gómez and Ramón Grosfoguel argued that the geographical division between centres and peripheries, formed during several centuries of European colonial expansion, was not transformed with the end of colonialism and the emergence of independent nation-states. Rather, we are witnessing a transition from modern colonialism to global "coloniality", a process that has transformed contemporary forms of domination, but not the structure of centre-periphery relations on a global scale. As a consequence, the periphery remains in a subordinate position (Castro-Gómez, Grosfoguel 2007, 11).

In order to understand such a dynamic, it should be specified that although closely related, the two concepts of "coloniality" and "colonialism", are different. The latter in fact refers strictly to a structure of domination and exploitation, where the control of political authority, the resources and the work of a given population is held by another authority. However, Aníbal Quijano suggests the notion of "coloniality" rather than colonialism in order to emphasise that colonial power relations are not only limited to the economic-political and legal-administrative dominance of the centres over the peripheries, but also include an epistemic dimension, which is a cultural one (Quijano 2000). From this perspective, coloniality reveals the durability of the dominant colonial forms that prevailed even after the end of colonial administrations (Grosfoguel 2008).

The fundamental importance granted to the concept of distance allows to analyse and question the existence of hotspots, refugee camps and settlements. These places, although within *states*

peoples ('not human'), were hunted and killed like vermin, others ('partially human'), were rounded up and put in reserves like creatures to be broken in, branded and put to work." (Smith 1999, 26).

of law borders but simultaneously distanced and differentiated from the centre, are dispensable from protections and guarantees. In this geographical manipulation of space, even fundamental human rights can be effectively suspended. They are spaces in which law can be derogated and exception normalised. “Distance again separated the individuals in power from the subjects they governed. [...] Distance is measurable” (Smith 1999, 55), and it is in the measure of that distance that the contradictions of border regimes and the continuous differentiation of the people who inhabit those spaces can be calculated.

This theory also illustrates the geographical polarisation of the migration debate, which is all oriented in one direction, namely towards the Global North. In past years, international attention to migratory movements and the impacts they generate have been focused on the Global North, and mainly centralised in Europe and the United States. There is a general tendency to focus on migration moving from the South to the North, prioritising the perspectives and priorities of different stakeholders associated with the Global North.⁸ Indeed, an increasing (and disproportionate) attention has been focused on migrant movements to the Global North, despite evidence indicating most people actually remain in the South. This has contributed to the narrative of *invasion* and *national threat*, which consequently justifies concrete repressive operations of containment and deterrence. In addition, this disproportionate emphasis on the migratory load on Northern countries reproduces a hegemonic narrative, which contributes to the construction of dehumanising dynamics.

1.2 *Classified and racialized: the bodies of human mobility*

The hegemonic management of space reproduces the division and fragmentation into borders that set the basis for the separation of the individuals that live in those spaces. In the governmentality

8 Global North and Global South are employed here to mean non-geographical categories that characterise regional spaces by their relative positioning in terms of global power distribution: the former being defined by its centrality and hegemony, and the latter by its peripheral and subordinate character.

of human mobility, people are often subjected to processes of classification and hierarchisation defined through different axes, such as gender, class and race. As proposed by Wallerstein (2004),¹ the world-system theory allows us to identify the human geography of spaces and therefore the subjects occupying the centres and peripheries.

Coloniality is based on the imposition of a racial and ethnic classification of the world's population that operates on every level of existence. At the core of Eurocentric coloniality/modernity is the understanding that the world's population is differentiated into inferior and superior, irrational and rational, primitive and civilised, traditional and modern (Castro-Gómez, Grosfoguel 2007).

Following Grosfoguel's analysis of Franz Fanon, the "zone of being" and the "zone of non-being" are the positions occupied by subjects in today's society: the first where people's rights are respected and violence is the exception, the latter where violence is the rule and subjects are dehumanised (Grosfoguel 2012). Those confined to the zone of non-being are characterised by the inactivity of their existence; therefore, they are perceived as colonised, invisible and unnecessary. Those who inhabit these areas and those who migrate from these spaces are depersonalised, deeply stereotyped and progressively marginalised. The zone of being and the zone of non-being reiterate practices of racism and discrimination through a mechanism that imposes a differentiation of subjects, in this case migrants, by their position in the ethnic and racial hierarchy.

Such processes, which allow these people to be conceived of as non-human, justify their discrimination, victimisation and the creation of a subgroup of the population that is considered a *problem to be solved*. In this framework, the traditional idea of migration as a threat and potential source of problems endures and consolidates.

Securitised migration shapes new subjectivities, "bare lives",² subordinate and criminalised subjects. In this sense,

1 See Wallerstein 2004.

2 According to Giorgio Agamben's definition, *bare lives* are not worth living; lives that have lost the status of a legal good, both for the bearer

dehumanisation is one of the most frequently used strategies to delegitimise the *other*, excluding them from the circle of those who are considered human, and justifying measures of extreme cruelty.

This governmentality operates through obstruction: not only does it hinder migrants in their mobility project, but it also suffocates and restricts their “livability” (Tazzioli 2019, 48).

Likewise, one of the most adopted strategies in current migration governance is what De Genova defines as the “legal production of migrants’ illegality” (De Genova 2002), which places migrants in a situation of extreme vulnerability, forcing them to live in an “eternal present”³ and in clashing spaces. Moreover, this production of irregularity leaves them in a condition of constant extortion – and thus potential exploitation and domination – as to the possibility of being detained and/or deported. Consequently, “Through logic of exclusion, practice of effacement and denominationalization” (Butler 2006, 38), states do not recognise migrants as people with needs and rights. People on the move from the Global South are treated as enemies, forced into irregularity and invisibility.

1.3 Narrative: a tool of power and domination

According to Alessandro Dal Lago, through implicit and explicit mechanisms of labelling and social exclusion, humanity is divided into “persons” and “non-persons” (Dal Lago 2008, 12). In fact, the institutionalised dehumanisation of migrants passes through a hegemonic narrative capable of shaping public opinion on migration.

Discourse, as defined by Michel Foucault, refers to a system that produces meaning and organises knowledge. Discourse is more than ways of thinking and producing meaning; it is the result

of the life and for the society, losing their human value. See Agamben 2011.

3 Anderson, Sharma and Wright ask, “when is the border?” to emphasise the temporal aspects of migration and how people on the move can be forced to live in an “eternal present”. See Anderson, Sharma, Wright 2009.

of power within a social order that legitimises knowledge and truth within the discursive order (Foucault 1969).

The violent discourse on migration, constructed by much of the recent political thought, is part of the colonial discourse, particularly for the subordinate role assumed by migrants in the host countries. Moreover, the stereotyped representation provided by the mass media tends to convey a message that suggests that all migrants have certain characteristics.

Consequently, discourse results in concrete practices of reflection and action through which migration is interpreted. The discourse on migration builds an interpretative framework that orients public perceptions about human mobility, provoking feelings of uncertainty and instability through the dissemination of negative stereotypes about migrants. Indeed, the exaltation of some aspects and the concealment of others contributes to the generation of a distorted perception of migration and a feeling of hostility. The labelling of the mass media reinforces the barriers, nourishing the social construction of the foreigner as an enemy of the society. As Mezzadra pointed out:

“[...] discourse and conversations [...] are increasingly shaped by an aggressive and often ferocious closure in front of the “other”, epitomized by the migrant (and increasingly by the refugee) – a closure that replicates in the spaces of everyday life the obsessive invocation of sovereign control over sealed borders by the government” (Mezzadra 2019, 6).

Similarly, as Arturo Escobar has shown, language “overdetermines” social reality as a whole. According to Escobar the nexus of power, knowledge, and domination define the discourse, with the consequence of mapping people into certain coordinates of control. The aim of such a practice is not simply to discipline individuals but to transform the conditions under which they live in a normalised social environment (Escobar 1995, 156). Hence, the hegemonic discourse on migration has crystallized in specific practices. The deployment of this discourse in a world-system in which the West has a certain dominance over the peripheries has profound political, economic, and cultural effects. Through images linked to emergencies, violence and

crime, feelings of insecurity and fear settle, xenophobic actions arise among citizens and fuel the demand for restrictive policies. Thus, as argued by Judith Butler:

“Dehumanization’s relation to discourse is complex. [...] A discourse on dehumanization produces treatment, including torture and murder, structured by the discourse. Here the dehumanization emerges at the limits of discursive life, limit established through prohibition and foreclosure. There is less a dehumanization discourse at work here than a refusal of discourse that produces dehumanization as a result” (Butler 2006, 36).

Hence, hegemonic discourse is such because it speaks of itself as well as speaking for others. Dehumanised lives are excluded from the possibility of expressing themselves and becoming the tellers of their own histories. The power of hegemonic narratives not only constructs physical places, it has the power to construct subjects, which are placed at the lowest level of the economic-political structure. As a result, individuals cease to be persons with their own human dignity and are reduced exclusively to bodies to be detained and confined.

1.4 Knowledge: a way to build the image of the world

The securitisation devices analysed so far – space, body and discourse – have thus created some categories to be protected and others not to be protected, legitimised via the hierarchies between Global North and Global South thought. Western scientific knowledge is fully involved in this process and is identified as the main tool for building the image of the world, combining modernity and rationality.

The principles of rationality, social supremacy and forms of racial exclusion have legitimised the hierarchies between Western and non-Western thought. According to Quijano and Dussel, Eurocentrism is a colonial attitude towards knowledge, which is simultaneously articulated with the process of centre-periphery relations and ethnic/racial hierarchies. The superiority assigned to European knowledge in many areas of life was an important aspect of the coloniality of power in the world-system. Subaltern

knowledge was excluded, omitted, silenced and ignored (Castro-Gómez, Grosfoguel 2007, 20).

According to the “coloniality of power”, as expressed by Anibal Quijano, the colonial forces did not merely conduct practices of conquest, subjugation and exploitation; they also intervened in practices of coloniality (Quijano 1992). The latter, more enduring and profound as a system of power, are based on justifying the role of the colonialists as rational organisers of the world and bearers of a higher order. The coloniality of power is precisely the process of exclusionary division carried out by the white subject-man in order to differentiate and impose himself on other subjects. Knowledge not only carries the colonial heritage of their paradigms but also contributes to the strengthening of the cultural, economic and political hegemony of the West. Everything aims at the systematic reproduction of a vision of the world from the hegemonic perspectives of the North (Castro-Gómez, Grosfoguel 2007, 79).

The cultural Europeanisation, carried out through systematic repression and social and cultural control, is another form of global colonial domination. Through the reproduction of images, symbols, meanings and the creation of perspectives and knowledge, cultural production has been monopolised by the dominators. The tools of repression have been used to make European culture a universal cultural model, in what Quijano calls “colonialidad cultural” (Quijano 1992, 13).

Eurocentrism, therefore, is not the cognitive and epistemological perspective of Europeans only, but of all those educated under its hegemony. It is the cognitive perspective produced over the long term by the whole of the Eurocentric world and it is perceived as natural, given, and not questionable. Western knowledge becomes the main tool for constructing the image of the world.

It is vital to consider how this hegemonic perspective impacts migration management. A migration regulated by interventions of securitisation, criminalisation, externalisation and deportations. The migration-security nexus is thus a Western construction that allows a securitised approach to human mobility to be established and perpetuated.

2. Reframing migration: mobility decolonial thinking

Given the above analysis, the questions at stake are: where to start in order to break the nexus of securitised migrations? Is it possible to theoretically analyse the phenomenon of migration from a decolonial perspective? What geographical, political and epistemological assumptions can feed the discussion?

In order to deconstruct the dominant discourse of the *immigration problem* and break the nexus of securitisation of migration, it is essential to change the perspective of observation and decolonise the Eurocentric and hegemonic conjectures that compose it. To shape a different approach to migration, the dominant modern/colonial and Euro-centred paradigm need to be decolonised. According to Walter D. Mignolo, decoloniality can work toward delinking from coloniality:

“The goal of decoloniality in my conception is delinking, delinking what for? To engage in epistemic reconstitution (Quijano), in re-existing (not only resisting, Adolfo Albán Achinte), engaging in forms of life that we like to preserve rather than be hostage of the modernity’s designs and desires, and of nationalists’ selection of the past of the nation; [...] and last but not least – and in a different sphere but similar political orientation of delinking – cultural dewesternization and political re-emergence” (Mignolo, Walsh 2018, 120).

In pursuit of this, it is essential to deconstruct the previously discussed categories whose manipulation has misrepresented their meaning and imposed a governmentality of containment and confinement. In neoliberal politics, in which migration management constitutes the ground application of mobility control, migration has become the object of policies of containment and repression through the proliferation of limit to mobility, the production of irregularities, exploitation and human racialisation.

In the deconstruction of this assumption, it seems important to refocus not only on the geographical spaces that frame migratory movements – and including the security devices that borders embody – but also on the movement itself, here understood not as displacement or a forced act, but rather as a conscious and aware

choice of people on the move, in their “right to escape” (Mezzadra 2006).⁴

2.1 *A look to the South*

In the context of global migration, or mobility from one continent to another, the hegemonic view of migration is used to focus on migratory flows moving from the South to the North.

This practice, which leads us to observe only the downward verticality of migratory movements, excludes from international debate and attention other movements going from Southern countries to other Southern countries. The Eurocentric view of migration is partial and misleading and amplifies the scale of a phenomenon.

This approach focused on the Global North also has concrete impacts. It directs attention and focuses responsibility (such as unemployment, crisis, crime) on migrants and not on the real causes. Furthermore, by painting an inaccurate picture of reality and amplifying the scale of the phenomenon, it justifies coercive instruments for the management of migration and contributes to a racist and xenophobic narrative and practices that often result in violent acts.

Finally, they orientate internal policies towards emergency responses rather than reception and regularisation policies, and build international relations, especially with countries of origin and transit, based on strengthening the border regime and reinforcing the security forces.

Since most of the *migration management* arguments have been Eurocentric and focused on the Global North, the importance and extent of South-South migration and displacement flows have

4 According to Mezzadra, when applied to migrants, the category of the “right to escape” plays two functions. On the one hand, it tends to emphasise the individuality, the irreducible singularity of the women and men who are the protagonists of migration. On the other hand, precisely this emphasis on the concrete singularity of migrants makes it possible to highlight their condition and experience at the intersection between a powerful subjective tension of freedom and the action of barriers and borders to which correspond specific techniques of power.

been underestimated (Chalcraft 2007, 27). It is actually the border countries with crisis states that manage the consequences they generate, often in charge of handling large-scale migration flows.

Dominant media and political narratives tend to focus on the relatively small number of migrant people attempting to reach the Global North and overlook the important role of South-South migration. Most migrants actually move inter-regionally and not to the Global North. South-South migration represents a significant factor in the socio-economic development of many developing countries. Migration within the South is an essential element of the historical processes of social, political and economic change. It shows an important process that profoundly affects the human development of millions of people.

In order to decolonise migrations, human mobility should be analysed at a wide range, focusing on South-South migrations that need to be unpacked and deconstructed. Dealing with migration from a decolonial framework means conceptualising it from a more southern perspective. It implies not only giving epistemological value to wide-ranging human mobility but also allowing breakages in the hegemonic narrative of migrations directed towards the North. This makes it possible to reorient public policies and reduce the Eurocentric narrative of *invasion*.

2.2 *Moving beyond containment*

Overcoming the colonial paradigm can occur by changing perspectives and moving away from the logic of containment and security as instruments of mobility management. This deconstruction takes place in the space and, as mentioned above, by looking at South-South migration, but also at the border. Borders, typically employed as the symbolic representation of exclusion, violence, marginality and domination, are precisely the space of the production of subjectivities that symbolic representations contest and challenge.

While, on a practical level, borders are used to contain, filter and hierarchise migrating people, in a more structural way they shape power relations and mark deep divisions and inequalities between people with different national statuses. In

doing so, borders represent the special asymmetry between “the universalism of rights”, which include the principles invoked to guide the treatment of citizens, and the “particularism of [national] belonging” (Mezzadra 2006, 79), used to exclude non-citizens from citizenship and access to rights. In this framework, state sovereignty is deeply involved in the “legal production of illegal and deportable subjects” and, consequently, in the construction of vulnerability through migration management and border control.

Hence, migration management does not assure, and indeed repress, “migrants’ subjectivities, engagements, and actions. They [migrants] are constructed as objects of control, rescue, and redemption rather than as full human beings” (Anderson et al. 2009, 8). In this sense, repositioning the processes of subjectivation inherent in mobility practices at the centre of the debate becomes crucial to challenge authority and the rigidity of boundaries. As Tazzioli points out, addressing migrants’ singularities implies examining not only how migrants are affected by political technologies aimed at exercising control over them, but also how they are affected and how they cope with this condition and react (Tazzioli 2019). In reactions, singularities emerge, and this is why, as Mezzadra states:

“[...] movements of migration become particularly important from this point of view precisely for the challenge they posit to borders, giving way to new geographies and spurring what Hall calls “the subaltern proliferation of difference” (Mezzadra 2020, 28).

Migration must be understood as a social movement in the full sense of the term, and not as a mere reaction to conditions of social or economic hardship. By subverting hegemonic power relations, the decolonial approach places migrants, and not the interests of the host society, at the centre of the analysis. The migrant person is thus not the object of a policy, but an active subject who claims, despite a potential state of deprivation, domination, exploitation and/or oppression, his or her freedom of movement. In this way, precisely those policies that aim to control mobility inevitably deal with a panoply of subjectivities, that force them to recalibrate their tools and technologies of confinement (Mezzadra 2011).

People on the move produce forms of counterhegemonic power through which borders are continually challenged. The demands and struggles of the people on the move, which besides freedom of movement concern exploitation, racial partitions, inequality and class division, contribute to undermining the containment imposed by the border regime.

2.3 *Reshaping narrative and knowledge*

The hegemonic view of migration is used to focus not only on migratory flows arriving in the North, but also on the risks that migration entails. An essential step remains overcoming Eurocentrism from a historical and an epistemological point of view. It is necessary to unmask the instrumentalisation of the discourse on the *immigration problem* from a decolonial perspective and to break with Occidentalism and its corresponding mythologies, that have been “efficient in silencing the “Other”” (Cervantes et al. 2002, 9).

Through the “grammar of decoloniality” (Mignolo 2007, 484), a de-linking process must be carried out. The grammar of decoloniality begins when languages and subjectivities, which have been denied the possibility of participating in the production, distribution and organisation of knowledge, retake a central role.

Since coloniality is today the most general tool of domination of the present world, what needs to be done in order to decolonise epistemology is to liberate the production of knowledge, reflexion and communication from the nexus of European rationality/modernity (Quijano 1992, 19). This is what makes Chakrabarty’s project of “provincializing Europe”, that is to explore how “European thought [...] may be renewed from and for the margins” (Chakrabarty 2000, 43), so necessary.

Thus, decolonial liberation implies *epistemic disobedience*. Epistemological decolonisation must provide space for a new intercultural communication, an exchange of experiences and meanings, as the basis for another rationality. Castro-Gómez and Grosfoguel state that a new resistance capable of re-signifying the hegemonic forms of knowledge is needed in order to facilitate a decentring and to create new places from which subordinates can

speak and be heard. They called *el giro decolonial* the opening and freedom of thought and other ways of life, the counter-response to the geopolitical hegemony of knowledge and being. Decolonial thinking is in planetary opposition to single thinking, it is a liberation struggle aimed at freeing the world from global coloniality. The present time claims a decolonial thought that offers other economic, political and social modalities (Castro-Gómez, Grosfoguel 2007, 29).

3. Conclusion: cultural dewesternisation and political re-emergence

Over the last century, the universally recognised human right of free movement within one's own country, of settlement and of emigration, has been increasingly restricted. Dominant media and political narratives have conferred human mobility with a problematic connotation of national security, and a new governmentality of contemporary migration has emerged and settled. The securitised approach to migration is aimed at the militarisation of borders, security policies, forced expulsions and the externalisation of border controls. It is also aimed at the legal production of irregularities that serve to control and impose dominance on people. This governmentality has transformed spaces and borders into battlefields and has subjected people to processes of classification and hierarchisation.

Further, Western knowledge has managed to focus all attention on the Global North, while overlooking the crucial role and the extent of South-South migration. In this framework, it seems that a decolonial approach can break the nexus of securitised migrations through the deconstruction of geographical, political and epistemological assumptions.

It is worth pointing out, however, that although part of the discussion on decolonisation is based on the absolute primacy of epistemology, advocated for example by Mignolo, I personally believe that this is one of the aspects involved in the analysis of power and not the only one. Indeed, it is important to refocus the analysis on the migratory movements in the Global South, which

are an essential element of the historical processes of social, political and economic change. It is also necessary to deconstruct the mobility itself, which should not necessarily be placed in a framework of displacement or forced act but as an aware choice of people on the move.

In this movement and in the spaces of transit and permanence, the subjectivities of migrant people must necessarily gain prominence and importance. While avoiding the rhetoric of migrants as militant and politicised actors, it is nevertheless quite clear that, even without an explicit *political will*, migrants' subjectivities arise as moments of emergency, resistance and struggle. This is due to the simple reason that they are bearers of differences and show undeniably systemic contradictions.

The border regime, which has demonstrated countless contradictions, is constantly challenged by common struggles that have combined freedom of movement with class, gender and race struggles. As Mezzadra stated "it is by focusing primarily on the materiality of those pains and practices, of those struggles and dreams that it becomes possible to grasp the potential forging of new formations of freedom and equality" (Mezzadra 2019, 8).

The struggle for the abolition of the border regime, an important and much broader claim than just freedom of movement, is already underway. In this struggle it is precisely the repressive systems of containment that are brought to collapse, as they are dysfunctional with respect to the goals they pose (limiting mobility) and productive of subjectivities that constantly destabilise their authority.

Bibliography

- Agamben G. 2011. *Homo sacer: Il potere sovrano e la nuda vida*, Einaudi.
- Anderson B., Sharma N., Wright C. 2009. *Why No Borders?*, in «Refuge», 26(5), 2009, pp. 5-18.
- Brown W. 2009. *Edgework: Critical Essays on Knowledge and Politics*, Princeton University Press.

- Butler J. 2006. *Precarious Life. The Powers of Mourning and Violence*, Verso.
- Buzan B., Wæver O., De Wilde J. 1998. *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Castro-Gómez S., Grosfoguel R. 2007. *El giro decolonial: Reflexiones para una diversidad epistémica más allá del capitalismo global*, Siglo del hombre editores.
- Cervantes-Rodríguez A.M., Grosfoguel R., Mielants E. 2002. *The Modern/Colonial/Capitalist World-System in the Twentieth Century: Global Processes, Antisystemic Movements, and the Geopolitics of Knowledge*, Greenwood Press.
- Chakrabarty D. 2000. *Provincializing Europe. Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, Princeton University Press.
- Chalcraft J. 2007. *Labour in the Levant*, in «New Left Review», 45, 2007, pp. 27-47.
- Cuttitta P. 2012. *Lo spettacolo del confine: Lampedusa tra produzione e messa in scena della frontiera*, Mimesis.
- Dal Lago A. 2008. *Non-persone. L'esclusione dei migranti in una società globale*, Feltrinelli Editore.
- De Genova N.P. 2002. *Migrant "Illegality" and Deportability in Everyday Life*, in «Annual review of anthropology», 31(1), 2002, pp. 419-447.
- Duffield M. 2007. *Development, Security and Unending War: Governing the World of Peoples*, Polity.
- Escobar A. 1995. *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World*, Princeton University Press.
- Foucault M. 1969. *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, Gallimard.
- Grosfoguel R. 2008. *Transmodernity, Border Thinking, and Global Coloniality*, Eurozine.
- Grosfoguel R. 2012. *El concepto de «racismo» en Michel Foucault y Frantz Fanon: ¿teorizar desde la zona del ser o desde la zona del no-ser?*, in «Tábula rasa», 16, 2012, pp. 79-102.
- Mezzadra S. 2006. *Diritto di fuga. Migrazioni, cittadinanza, globalizzazione*. Ombre corte.
- Mezzadra S. 2011. *Autonomia delle migrazioni: Lineamenti di un approccio teorico*, in «Outis. Rivista di filosofia (post)europaea», 1, 2011, pp. 27-49.
- Mezzadra S. 2019. *Sealing Borders? Rethinking Border Studies in*

- Hard Times*, in «Working Paper Series b/orders in motion», 3, 2019, pp. 1-11.
- Mezzadra S. 2020. *Challenging Borders. The Legacy of Postcolonial Critique in the Present Conjuncture*, in «Soft power: revista euro-americana de teoría e historia de la política», 7(2), 2020, pp. 21-44.
- Mezzadra S., Neilson B. 2013. *Border as Method, or; the Multiplication of Labor*, Duke University Press.
- Mignolo W.D. 2007. *Delinking: the rhetoric of modernity, the logic of coloniality and the grammar of de-coloniality*, in «Cultural studies», 21(2-3), 2007, pp. 449-514.
- Mignolo W.D., Walsh C.E. 2018. *On Decoloniality: Concepts, Analytics, Praxis*, Duke University Press.
- Quijano A. 1992. *Colonialidad y modernidad / racionalidad*, in «Perù Indígena», 13(29), 1992, pp. 11-20.
- Quijano A. 2000. *Coloniality of Power, Ethnocentrism and Latin America*, in «International Sociology», 15(2), 2000, pp. 215-232.
- Smith L.T. 1999. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, Zed Books.
- Tazzioli M. 2019. *The Making of Migration: The Biopolitics of Mobility at Europe's Borders*, SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Wallerstein I. 2004. *World-systems Analysis: An Introduction*, Duke University Press.
- Wæver O. 1993. *Securitization and Desecuritization*, Copenhagen: Centre for Peace and Conflict Research.

MARCO DI DONATO¹

ISLAM AND THE WEST

Reliving and Reframing the Cultural, Religious, and Ideological Migration of Ideas

1. *Introduction*

If, as recognized by Allievi (2009), religion and migration are two interrelated sides of a single coin, a deeper and better, as well as more accurate understating of Islam (including social, political, cultural, ideological factors) could highly influence how migration is perceived as well as managed. The perception of Islam as a “threat”, especially after 9/11, has contributed to a different, and increasingly hostile attitude. In Europe, the series of subsequent terroristic attacks, particularly those of 2015, 2016 and 2017 reinforced the Islamophobic narrative, thus leading towards a “securitarian” approach in terms of the management of the arrival of the “others” coming from *Dar al-Islam* (Land of Islam).²

Interestingly, according to Europol’s annual EU Terrorism Trend Reports covering the years 2011 to 2021, the so-called “Jihadist / religiously inspired” attacks are actually statistically lower than “Left-wing and anarchist” actions, as well as being numerically fewer than “Ethno-nationalist and separatist” occurrences.³ Furthermore, when examining the increasingly securitarian approach and hostile attitudes to Islam in Europe, it is also important to note that the religious claims of supposed Islamic-inspired groups (e.g. the so-called Islamic State) in their

1 Fixed-term Senior Researcher, Department of Cultures and Society, Università degli Studi di Palermo. Email address: marco.didonato@unipa.it

2 In consultation with the editors, the author has opted for simplified translations of Arabic names and terms.

3 For a detailed list, please consult <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/infographics/terrorism-eu-facts-figures/> (accessed June 2023).

calls for *jihad* or in their *khilafah* theoretical understanding, have been considered and measured as religiously untenable and invalid by several scholars as well as leading representatives of Islamic institutions. However, in spite all of this, a homogenized Muslim “other” has been created and branded as a perpetual enemy (Bakali, Hafez 2022).

As noted by Hourani (1994), the European fear of an “Islamic upsurge” obsessed the European mindset during its era of empire and has recently returned; continuing to influence general attitudes towards diversity in the Old Continent. In line with what was suggested by Hamid (2019), the main problem when analyzing the Islam-Migration nexus and the widespread anti-migration sentiment in Europe, is that “the immigrants in question are Muslim, not that they are immigrants” (Hamid 2019, 5)

Within this framework, this paper aims to upscale and disseminate Campanini’s proposal of Islam as a “religion of the West”, whilst suggesting how to reconsider the process of ideas of migration between East and West. It also proposes a reading of the shared history between the East and the West in Hanafian terms by using the theoretical framework proposed by the Egyptian philosopher regarding dominions cycles. The main objective is to propose theoretical suggestions (to be upscaled in future, more structured research) for recognizing structural differences and detecting the diverse and complex nature of dialoguers in the framework of hegemonic processes naturally inclined to annihilate, depersonalize and dissolve cultural identities.

2. *Islam as “Religion of the West”*

In Massimo Campanini’s recent book (2016), the author summarized that Islam, compared to the so-called “West”, is not as “alien” as has been described by a superficial mass media-approach and reinforced by widespread Islamophobic propaganda. In his historical and theoretical reconstruction, Campanini took as a starting point the following: Islam did not suddenly arise from the deserts of Arabia without historical or ideological connection with Christianity and Judaism.

Campanini opens his book underlining common themes between Islam and Christianity, pointing out that they can easily find a shared common perception of the basic principles of faith, namely that both religions:

- have monotheism as a common principle.⁴
- are transmitted through a direct revelation.
- are accompanied and sustained by a Text: a written form of the word of God.
- are directly connected to a specific prophet acting as a founder: Muhammad for Islam and Jesus for the Christianity.⁵ It is also necessary to note that both prophets are recognized as historical characters.
- are ascribed to the principle of Universalism.
- have Messages based on a previous Revelation and, in a certain sense, are upscaled and refined versions of the same, previous, Message.
- propose an eschatological common approach, even if with substantial differences in the concept of salvation and, I would say also, forgiveness.

According to Campanini's arguments, Christianity and Islam maintain the irreducibility of certain characteristics (e.g., the trinity) but cannot be considered as alien to one another, which is the crucial point. It is worth emphasizing that Islam *is not a new religion* claiming to be the refinement of the original monotheism. At the same time this affirmation must not be intended, in any way and in any case, as diminishing its originality and uniqueness. It is quite the opposite. As widely recognized by several studies, this is a very important feature that characterized the first part of Muhammad's activity in Mecca, trying to position himself in the chain of prophecy related to Adam. In the same way, after the *hijra* to Medina, Muhammad made several efforts to be recognized as a Prophet also by the local Jewish communities and, in several

4 In reality, monotheism is a common principle to Judaism as well.

5 This is a sensitive and debated point for Christianity, as also recognized by Campanini in his text.

ways, he presented “his” Message as completely in line with the previous one:

“Say [Muhammad], We [Muslims] believe in God and in what has been sent down to us and to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes. We believe in what has been given to Moses, Jesus, and the prophets from their Lord. We do not make a distinction between any of the [prophets]. It is to Him that we devote ourselves.” (Q. 3:84).⁶

Despite his efforts to this effect, the local Jewish communities of Medina never recognized him as a Prophet. An interesting writing by the polemist author al-Jahiz (d. 869) can help us understand the reasons behind this hostility and give us an additional testimony regarding the good relationship in place between Christians and Muslim during the 9th Century. In one of his polemist writings, the author asks himself why Muslims seem to be more favorably disposed towards Christians (in comparison with the Jews) despite the presence of the trinity concept, which is absolutely irreconcilable, in his view, with the Islamic monotheism. His answer to that is that Jews and Muslims in Medina were as close as only relatives can be, and that people tend to hate that which is most similar to them and what they know best (Goiten 1980). In this statement we can also find two additional elements that are useful for our discourse: the actual closeness between Christians and Muslim and the theological correspondence between the Jewish and the Muslim theological framework.

Here, it is vital to note that my argument does not intend, in any way, to set aside the well-established differences between Christianity and Islam. My contention is that it is necessary to observe and recognize the conjuncture points between Islam and Christianity in order to mitigate the above-mentioned sense of alienness.

Contemporary thinkers such as Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah (d. 2010) emphasized the need for a better knowledge based on “dialogue” (*hiwar*), underling the necessity to establish a “dialogue with Christianity by recognizing common roots and by respecting

6 All Qur’anic verses here are directly taken from the English version, by quoting verbatim the Muhammad Abdel Haleem translation.

mutual differences”.⁷ Fadlallah argued in favor of an absolute requirement for dialogue with other religious communities and expressed this point on many occasions and within *fatawa*, sermons, writings, and articles during the course of his life.

In *Hiwar fi-l Quran* a specific section is dedicated to the relationship with Christians. To describe common relationships, Fadlallah uses a very clear Arabic term, which is *ta'atif* (translatable from Arabic as “empathy”) and other terms that can be translated to “sympathy”, in the sense of closeness. In order to better describe this sense of both empathy and sympathy, he cites an event in the classic history of Islam: the so-called Little Hijra in 615 AD, when, following the growing tensions in Mecca due to the revolutionary message preached by the Prophet Muhammad, the latter was forced to send a small group from the community of believers to seek shelter at the court of the Negus of Abyssinia.

Fadlallah and his dialogue proposals allow us to quote here some reflections by Alessandro Bausani. In Bausani’s view, which I agree with, dialogue between Islam and Christianity should not start from the already recognized and extremely numerous points of contact but rather (after a standard recognition of commonalities), by debating the divergences. Additionally, dialogue must not be driven by a “too much rushed ecumenism that could create more confusion than clarity” (Bausani 1974). A real interreligious dialogue, noted Poggi (1974), must be capable of having a courageous approach reaching the extreme limits of both interlocutors, identifying commonalities but, on that basis, being capable of tracing back mutual pathways reaching and addressing convergences and differences.

Before Campanini, Bulliet (2004) formulated an unedited proposal of an Islamic-Christian civilization based on the prolonged weaving between brotherhood in European and Islamic societies. In his view, if we accept the idea of an Islamic-Christian civilization, it would then be possible to consider conflicts between Islam and Christianity no longer as external, but rather as “internal wars” between two sides of the same coin. In this view, Bulliet also

7 For the life and thought of Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah, refer to Di Donato 2019.

contends that the argument based on the limits and alleged Islamic defeats in understanding “Western standards of civilization”, will no longer be sustainable.

The consequences of Bulliet and Campanini’s proposals are enormous, but it is also probably necessary to properly re-read and additionally problematize some elements of the polemist debate between Islam and Christianity in order to debunk some commonplace misconceptions. As I have already argued elsewhere (Di Donato 2018),⁸ the reading of polemist writings such as Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328) could be correctly re-framed and, in some cases, reconsidered. It seems to me that also in some of his most hostile writings towards Christianity, Ibn Taymiyya is targeting not the whole Christian message and theological framework but mainly what he considers its “exaggeration” and, we could summarize, the problematic interpretation of the Text. As title of example, in line with the Qur’anic message, Ibn Taymiyya recognizes the virginity of Mary and the related miraculous birth of Jesus, without, however, characterizing Jesus as the son of God. In addition, his miracles are not denied. In Ibn Taymiyya’s view, the exaggerations intend to capture his attention in the same way as the Qur’an. Also, Campanini noted in different occasions that Qur’anic verses and related interpretations usually condemn unscriptural claims, sentiments, and cults of Christians with, for example, particular reference to Mariolatry.

Additionally, however, we should remember, in line with Hourani and several other scholars that the first centuries of debate of Christian polemic writings on Islam have been characterized by a substantial ignorance by European Christians regarding the Islamic theological architecture as well as its sources. While philosophical works were accepted and translated, the Islamic theology (in terms of Islamic law and spirituality) was almost neglected and disregarded. In Hourani’s view, only at the beginning of the modern era (between the 16th and 18th Centuries) was there a shift in this approach. We will focus on this in the next paragraph.

Widening our view to the more general contributions of the

8 For a more detailed discussion on this point, refer to Di Donato 2018, pp. 68-71.

broader Arabic (and then not only Islamic) culture to the European one, the dynamics of interaction do not seem to change.

“It has often been said that if it had not been for Arabs, Europeans would have had no Renaissance. It might be better said that the Abbasids, and especially al-Ma'mun – an unstinting patron greater than Maecenas or the Medici, and mid-way between them in time – were themselves princes of the Renaissance, of which the later European episode was a continuation, following a long hiatus” (Mackintosh-Smith 2019, 276).

According to Anawati (1994), the list of sciences that have been directly and positively affected by Arabic culture is extensive: astronomy, astrology, medicine, experimental sciences, mathematics, philosophy, poetry and several other sciences can be added. In the 13th century, European universities adopted the *Kitab al-Hawi*⁹ of al-Razi (d. 925)¹⁰ and the Ibn Sina (Avicenna) Canon of medicine considering both of them at the same level of Hippocrates and Galen (Geymonat 1970). In terms of mathematic research, the 13th century Europe was capable of performing incredible advancements only thanks to the Arabic sciences' contribution, as demonstrated by Fibonacci (d. 1242) who was originally educated in Arab arithmetic and was widely influenced by it in his activities (Geymonat 1970). Arabic sciences also influenced the field of optical studies thanks to the contribution of Ibn al-Haytham, better known in Europe as Alhazen (Geymonat 1970). As recognized by Geymonat, the same can be said for studies and research on magnetic fields or alchemy.

Regarding linguistics, influences have also been widespread:

“Looking beyond the dictionary to the atlas, Arabic is even further flung. It is not only confined to Spain and its many Arabic placenames like Guadalquivir (al-Wadi al-Kabir, the Big Valley). Via the Iberian Peninsula, Arabic makes it to London's Trafalgar Square (al-Taraf al-Agharr, the Gleaming Point), and to the New World and San Francisco Bay, where Alcatraz is the island of al-ghattas, the diving bird, the

9 *The comprehensive book on medicine*, commonly translated under the title *Continens Rasis*.

10 Persian physician and philosopher.

pelican (the word wandered even further and metamorphosed into ‘albatross’). On the Brazilian coast, Recife is the Arabic rasif, quay, while in the Amazon, one can encounter people of mixed Portuguese and native blood called, disparagingly, mamalucos (mamluks, slaves). Beyond the Andes and out to sea again, even Chile’s Robinson Crusoe Island has a local administrator called an alcalde (al-qadi, the judge) and a guesthouse called an aldea (al-day’ah, the country estate)” (Mackintosh-Smith 2019, 360).

Furthermore, Griffel (2011) convincingly argued that the philosophical connection between the Arab-Islamic world and European scholars lasted for several centuries, starting in the 12th and 13th Centuries and continuing up to the 16th, with the translations of articles and books from Arabic to Latin (whilst also underling a set of misunderstandings related to this).

“After all, most people in the West think of Islamic Civilization as a phenomenon of the past. Ernest Renan’s view that Islam is stuck on a lower developmental stage than Western societies in the eternal fight between rationalism and religion is still widespread in the West. Like Renan, many people are convinced that Islam needs to undergo either a period of Reformation or a period of Enlightenment.” (Griffel 2011, 61).

The above list of examples is incomplete, but at the same it is already impressive. Despite all this, Western Islamophobic propaganda continues to insist on highlighting differences and distances, perpetuating hostility between “Us” and “Them” by focusing on cultural and religious differences for increasing the sense of common and shared alienness.

The misuse and misrepresentation of the concept of *jihad* is probably the most widely known example in this “alienation process” and has probably represented the preferred narrative option in this for the Islamophobic propaganda. Academic studies (Afsaruddin 2022) have already clearly and repeatedly demonstrated that only defensive armed combat is allowed in the Qur’an (Q. 2:190), and it is worth noting that *harb* (the Arab word used to indicate war in general), is never used in the Qur’an along with the phrase “in the path of God” and is not even related to the very concept of *jihad* (Afsaruddin 2022).

In the same way, European historiography has overemphasized (in some cases intentionally) the impact of the Crusades and their importance in terms of religious struggle, while for Arab historiographers, the arrival of the Mongols and the subsequent devastation of Baghdad was more shocking than losing and reconquering Jerusalem.

“Their advent seemed apocalyptic. ‘The news of the Tatars,’ as Arabic writers called them (after a Turkic people they had subjugated and who then joined their campaigns), ‘is a tale to devour all tales, an account that rolls into oblivion all accounts, a history to make one forget all histories.’ So it seemed to Abd al-Latif, a physician of Baghdad. In contrast Ibn al-Athir, the great contemporary chronicler, saw the Mongols in the light of a dark future: ‘Probably not until the end of time will a catastrophe of such magnitude be seen again.’” (Mackintosh-Smith 2019, 365).

The fundamental point is why has the West forgotten or is hiding its Islamic and Arabic roots? Why not consider the value of this migration of ideas to mitigate the sense of alienness that is fueling European Islamophobia and driving the management of migratory flows, as well as the interaction with European Muslim communities? Why not acknowledge the value of Islam as part of a common, shared, cultural milieu?

3. *Reconsidering hegemonic processes in the migration of ideas*

Could the reconsideration of Islam as part of the Western cultural pathway, directly impact the migration phenomena in Europe? As recognized by Allievi (2009), migration phenomena are directly and historically connected with the perception of migrants as Muslim, especially for those coming from what is considered as *Dar al-Islam*, namely countries where most of the population is composed of Muslims. This reflection is not free from methodological problems, as indeed is recognized by Allievi, but my point here is different. In fact, the point that I would like to stress here is the one of alienness: the recent migration waves towards Europe are considered as the *first* contact between two

worlds that are, basically, evaluated as alien to one another. The presence of the perpetual enemy is perceived as a danger for the local “common sense” or in Hamid’s (2019) words the “shared consensus”:

“Anti-Muslim sentiment is driven by culturalist objections and arguments, particularly in countries like France, the Netherlands, and Sweden that have become more and more homogeneously secular in recent decades, and where Muslim immigrants and second-generation citizens express levels of religious observance that serve as a stark contrast with what was presumed to be a shared consensus” (Hamid 2019, 8).

While for some European societies, this could really be considered a truly first-time approach to Islamic culture, for academics, however, the magnitude of the interactions, challenges and clashes between the different Mediterranean shores is considered commonplace. Dozens of studies underline the extent to which historical experiences such as *al-Andalus* and *Siqilliya* have contributed to shaping European culture. The list of examples provided in the first paragraph should serve as a sufficient explanation.

Despite this, both in “Our” as well as in “Their” common sense, misunderstandings and misconceptions are abundant. Here it is important to underline that these misunderstandings and misconceptions are also inherent to the Islamic world related (in past years) to the recent explosion of Salafi-inspired movements and parties in Europe as well as in North Africa and the Middle East region.

The Salafi attitude could, in the long term, lead towards an increasing problematic relationship with the “others”. In the Salafi political and social-oriented propaganda, the main way to build the Muslim community future is to look at the past, to the “pure community” of the so-called golden age (the *Rashidun*) and exalt its example to retrieve guidelines for Muslim present and future. Additionally, Salafi propaganda ignores (or in any case underestimates or, even worse, selectively uses) the Islamic classical juridical and intellectual production by only relying on the “first community” example. Several studies (see, among the others,

Scott 2004 and Di Donato 2018) have already argued around the untenability of this utopic reconstruction of the past. Several other studies (see, among the others, Hassan 2010 and Afsaruddin 2021) have also convincingly reasoned about the misuse (in a different but at the same time incredibly similar way to the Western media) of Islamic categories (e.g., *khilafah* and *jihad*) in the propaganda of fundamentalist/radical violent movements, by exposing the roots of their pragmatism or, better said, opportunism.

In this process of common and shared misunderstandings, a greater role is played by a common, typical trait of fundamentalist attitudes; that of selectivity (Almond et al. 2003). Fundamentalists discourses appear to be selective in three ways:

- In selecting and reshaping peculiar aspects of the tradition, especially those that clearly distinguish themselves from the others.
- In selecting some aspects of modernity to affirm and embrace.
- In selecting certain consequences or processes of modernity and singling these out for special attention, usually in the form of focused opposition.

In all the above-mentioned typologies of selectivity, the precise content of what is selected may change over time. It is also important to note how these three modes of selectivity are strictly interrelated (Almond et al. 2003, 95) so as to match the significant issues, legitimize actions and sustain ideological positions. Directly associated with this, we can say the “results” of this selectivity approach is, first, inerrancy:

“The companion to selectivity is inerrancy. [...] Inerrancy promotes unambiguous behavioral rules, enabling a movement to draw clear boundaries between the saved and the sinful in behavior as well as in doctrine. Selectivity may have the strategic purpose of setting the movement dearly apart from its enemies.” (Almond et al. 2003, 102).

Thus, the creation of “boundaries” (internal and external), becomes the natural next step. Boundaries are created and maintained based on a set of distinctive behaviors, belief in one’s election and the Manichaeic division of the world into lightness

and darkness (Almond et al. 2003); the distinction between “Us” and “Them”.

This “fundamentalist selective” approach could be also framed and understood in the framework of hegemonic alternation between the East (Arabic-Islamic world) and West or in Hassan Hanafi’s (d. 2021) words, between the “I” and the “Other”, or, even better, between a “dominant subject” and a “dominated object” (Campanini 2016b).

By proposing a cyclical view of history, the Egyptian philosopher determined the alternance between East and West in periods of 700 years. By starting with the Christian revelation, when the West plays the role of the “dominant subject” and vice versa the East that of the “dominated object”, passing through what Hanafi calls the “dark age”, namely Middle Ages, up to the Renaissance (where roles are inverted) and then, to the third phase: the maximum maturity of the European powers from a cultural point of view determined by an absolute mastery at political, social and economic level guaranteed by colonialism (Campanini 2016b).

In Hanafi’s view, we are now witnessing the fourth sequence of these cyclical passages. As already emphasized by Campanini, this theory can be the object of criticism (and it has been, in reality), starting from the negative consideration of the Middle Ages that we know was a period deeply reconsidered for its contribution to the European Renaissance or considering the failure of the Islamic contemporary renaissance represented by the Salafi-jihadism proposals. However, in this article, Hanafi’s theory can be still considered valid because it can help us in detecting the roots of the misunderstanding, especially if we take into consideration the dynamic of hegemonic alternation and related dominions dynamics.

We can interpret this process of creating a hegemonic dominion as a progressive escalation, where the subjugated object evolves into a dominant subject, inverting the roles in what we could suggest appears to be a cyclical, mutual, metaphorical phagocytizing process of:

- 1) Recognizing and detecting;
- 2) Ingestion and assimilation;
- 3) Killing and degradation of the ingested.

Recognition is the initial phase, when the future dominant subject is in a position of analyzing from a status of inferiority, detecting and identifying elements of cultural strengths and weaknesses of the actual dominant subject, imagining measures and countermeasures and defining strategies. In the second step, the ingestion process initiated by crisis and confrontations, allows the phagocytosis process to progressively envelop cultural elements of the dominant subject *with its membrane*, up to and including it. As soon as this process of assimilation is internalized, the process of digestion and subsequently of degradation and digestion, destruction, of foreign molecules can start. The “killer” mechanisms responsible for the destruction of the “pathogen” involved are activated: the cultural characteristics of the ingested (former) dominant subject no longer exists and can be replaced by the new entity. The cycle is then complete: assimilate, digest, incorporate and finally annihilate the several identities of what has then become the subjugated object.

The last part of this process, what we have called the “killing mechanism”, echoing a sort of “cultural cannibalism”, is crucial for the definition of the new-born hegemonic process. To define its own constituency, the new hegemonic project will both selectively incorporate cultural elements from the old hegemonic dynamics as well as depersonalizing the concepts that are migrating towards it. In terms of selectivity, we can, for example, rely on Anawati’s reflections that while scientific and philosophical enrichment was welcomed by the European academia of the 12th Century, the same cannot be said regarding Islam as religion or the Islamic theological framework as the Islamic theology (e.g., Al-Ghazali), which was almost ignored (Anawati 1994). Not to mention knowledge of the Qur’an, which was extremely poor. Nevertheless, the migration of Greek ideas (Aristotle, Plato and Plotinus) through the Arab philosophers (Avicenna and Averroes) had a tremendous impact on the Christian theological architecture.

The above mentioned “killing mechanism” is something traceable not only during the 12th Century, namely at the beginning of the Hanafian European 700 years domination, but also during Arabization and Islamization processes that occurred during the territorial phase of Islamic expansion after the death of the Prophet

Muhammad. Both the identarian conceptualization of being Arab or Muslim were continuously evolving by incorporating assimilating and finally killing local cultures elements. Several examples can be noted in this sense, starting with what has been defined the sub-contractualization of the Ummayd Empire's expansion:

“[...] Arab warriors seemed to be on an unstoppable roll – except that, by now, they had both reached the end of the known world, and had gathered so many Berbers along the way that the force could hardly be called ‘Arab’ any more. And there was another problem: all the extra raiders had to be paid, or at least be given bed, board and booty (and bedfellows). [...] it was his [referred to the Yemeni commander Musa ibn Nusayr] Berber lieutenant and *mawla*, Tariq ibn Ziyad, whom he sent over the water in 711 to wrest the Iberian Peninsula from the Visigoths. (En route, Tariq gave his name to the shark-fish mountain in the sea, ‘Jabal Tariq’, garbled by Spanish tongues into ‘Gibraltar’.) The long and glorious history of Arab-Muslim al-Andalus thus began with a Berber ex-slave of the son of a Christian ex-slave. Rather as the Arab minorities of the present-day Gulf states leave the hands-on business of running their countries and expanding their economies to non-Arab masses, mostly from South Asia, Arabs of the Umayyad age were subcontracting the business of imperial expansion” (Mackintosh-Smith 2019, 254).

Indeed, it was exactly this evolution in the meaning of being “Arab” and/or being “Muslim” that determined the decline (obviously, along with several other dynamics) of the Umayyads and the rising of the Abbasid Empire. Abundant examples along the same lines can be recalled by studying artistic developments during this period, as recognized by Leaman when he stated that the “new political power in the early years of Islam went on to adopt many of the artistic ideas and aspirations of the civilizations it overwhelmed as its own” (Leaman 2021, 57).

In this view, the killing mechanism is also aimed at reducing complexities and thus creating a more manageable cultural identity to deal with and, mostly importantly, to export. The dynamic is paradoxical. The new dominant subject will reduce its internal complexity in order to manage it at an internal level, but it will recognize the complex and multifaced nature of its identity in the (external) relationship with the “other”. Once dominant, the new

subject in place will not recognize other cultural identities in their complexities in order to impose its dominion on it. As we will see, this dynamic has been very clearly applied by Western colonialism in Africa or in Asia.

Obviously, the killing/assimilation/digestion/incorporation process is neither immediate, instantaneous, or abrupt. This is the reason why, cultures and identities living on the edge or in the proximity of the passage from one Hanafian era to another seem to be the ones where it is still possible to recognize the complex elements of identities. At the opposite end of the spectrum, cultures and identities living at the apex of each of the 700 years cycle appear to be capable of reducing complexities and imposing one single common sense. Western colonialism is the perfect example in this sense.

More recently, at the top of European dominion, Western colonialism has drawn its success based on the Renaissance, which we have seen is directly interrelated with the Arabic cultural heritage. It is well recognized that the colonial project has been built on the basis of the cultural and scientific exploration of the previous centuries. In this sense, the 1798 Napoleonic mission (invasion) of Egypt is usually considered by historians as the turning point in the colonial history of North Africa and the Middle East. The Manichean division between “Us” and “Them”, in a rough division of the humanity in East and West, Christianity and Islam, developed and underdeveloped, has been used to both perpetrate and justify the Western dominion (Hourani 1994). This process has been very clear in the imposition of Britain’s dominion over Indian territories as well as during the Algerian culture exploitation and devastation by French colonialism.

Both Bianca Scarcia Amoretti’s works, (e.g., Scarcia Amoretti 2013) and Torri’s reflections on India (Torri 2005) provide abundant examples in these contexts. The British colonial state in India decided to create a non-homogenous society imagining the creation of several theoretically homogeneous groups that should have interacted among themselves. The setting up of these different blocks was based on religious or caste principles without considering that the identarian criterion related to religion, was originally very weak in the Indian society. The re-organization of Indian society was a top-down process, basically introducing

a set of “modern” elements that completely reshaped the reality in a way that was not only understandable but even propaedeutic for the British colonial scheme. The first step in this direction was one of simplification and categorization, disavowing the complex elements of the Indian social and political architecture. Almost naturally, these groups started competing for access to the economic and political opportunities provided by the new colonial state. This caused an internal strife between Hinduism and Islam that, before the colonial gamble, was basically absent in terms of religious or at least less relevant conflicts and persecutions.

In this colonial framework, Western modern civil society has also proposed itself as the exclusive result obtained in a strict and uniquely positive relationship with Christianity. This is a problematic reconstruction of its history as already noted many years ago by Bausani (1974). By quoting his reflections, we can most probably agree that rather than evolving in-line with Christian traditional conceptions, modern European societies evolved within a dynamic of opposition. As noted by Margalit and Buruma, the Weberian *Entzauberung der Welt* determined the disappearance of the religious fascination that obscured the principle of causation, which was at the basis of the Industrial Revolution.

If dress and hairstyles are superficial signs of change, breaking down the “monastery walls”, to use another of Weber’s metaphors, was regarded by many, including Karl Marx, as an essential ingredient of modernization” (Buruma, Margalit 2004, 113).

Thus, it is necessary to recognize that the number of stereotypes that are obstructing a deeper and more truthful understanding are multifaced and multileveled: between Islam and the West, within Islam, on a religious, but most importantly a political level, within the self-perception of Western history and culture and among the social strata of different countries.

4. *Conclusion*

Instead of promoting a cultural (not only religious at this point) dialogue having the main objective of recognizing the commonalities and convergences, it is necessary to open the debate to reach the point of recognizing structural differences, destructing vivisections and hegemonic dynamics that are “naturally” tending to phagocytize cultural identities. The scope should not be smoothing out these divergences but rather recognizing them in their profound meaning and accepting the diverse and complex nature of both dialoguers (admitting here that we have only two actors). This process should be mandatory for all parties involved, starting from the deconstruction of hegemonic absolutist characters by analyzing what we have suggested, as a tentative proposal, as the phagocytizing process steps. The scope should be to propose an understanding of the complexities through their recognition, without having the objective of annihilating and dissolving one identity into the other.

If we look back at history in Hanafian terms, I would say that the creation of a European Islam is only a matter of time. As recognized by Amer Sabaileh (2018), accepting Islam as a constitutive reality of the Western social structure requires great flexibility from all parties involved: Muslims living in Europe are called on to develop a way of thinking and acting in harmony with European values, while politicians defining the politics of European countries must guarantee all the religious rights and related freedoms.

All citizens have responsibilities to make a good effort to accommodate themselves to existing laws and social norms. But if Muslim citizens must do so, it also means that majorities have a responsibility to make their own accommodations, especially when it comes to the religious freedom and private religious practices of Muslim citizens; even if that private practice has public implications (Hamid 2019).

Most scholars in the field of the study of Islam and political and social factors are well aware that the next challenge is the West-East relationship that will be represented by the presence of a growing Islamic factor in Europe and outside what has been

classically considered as Dar al-Islam. This element cannot be detached from the migratory issue and will hugely affect it in terms of management and common (mis)understandings. The problem in our contemporary world is, as already underlined by Bulliet in 2004, that we are still missing, or failing to hear, the new voices that will provide answers and solutions for easing these tensions and thus opening a new phase in the Islamic history, most important in the relationship between Christianity and Islam. The parallel rise of Salafi in Europe coupled with the fundamentalist right-wing propaganda will probably widen the rift between the parties involved, giving new space for the fundamentalist discourse and continuing to negatively impact on the migrant's perceptions and on related political trends.

Bibliography

- Afsaruddin A. 2021. *Looking for the Caliphate in All the Wrong Places: ISIS and Its Reading of Scripture*, in Sonn T. (ed.), *Overcoming Orientalism: Essays in Honor of John L. Esposito*, Oxford University Press, pp. 121-148.
- Afsaruddin A. 2022. *Jihad. What Everyone Needs to Know*, Oxford University Press.
- Allievi S. 2009. *L'islam dei migranti e dei convertiti*, in Tottoli R. (ed.), *Islam*, Einaudi, pp. 607-641.
- Almond G.A. et al. 2003. *Strong Religion: The Rise of Fundamentalisms Around the World*, University of Chicago Press.
- Al-Sabaileh A. 2018. *Islam e terrorismo*, in Corrao F.M., Luciano V. (eds.), *L'Islam non è terrorismo*, Il Mulino, pp. 35-46.
- Bakali N., Hafez, F. 2022. *The Rise of Global Islamophobia in the War on Terror: Coloniality Race and Islam*, Manchester University Press.
- Bausani A. 1974. *Islam e Cristianesimo: divergenze e convergenze di fondo*, in *Tavola Rotonda sul Tema: Cristianesimo e Islamismo (Roma 17-18 Aprile 1972, Roma)*, Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, pp. 7-27

- Bulliet R. 2004. *The case for an Islamo-Christian civilization*, Columbia University Press.
- Buruma I., Avishai M. 2004. *Occidentalism: The West in the Eyes of Its Enemies*, Penguin Books.
- Campanini M. 2016a. *Islam religione d'occidente*, Mimesis.
- Campanini M. 2016b. *Il pensiero islamico contemporaneo*, Il Mulino.
- Di Donato M. 2018. *Salafiti e Salafismo*, Morcelliana/La Scuola.
- Di Donato M. 2019. *Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah. Percorsi di esegesi coranica*, Jaca Book.
- Geymonat L. 1970. *Storia del pensiero filosofico e scientifico. Volume Primo. L'antichità – Il medioevo*, Garzanti.
- Goiten S. 1980. *Ebrei e Arabi nella Storia*, Jouvence.
- Griffel F. 2011. *The Western Reception of al-Ghazali's Cosmology from the Middle Ages to the 21st Century*, *Dîvân Disiplinlerarası Çalışmalar Dergisi*, 30(1), 2011, pp. 33-62.
- Hamid S. 2019. *The role of Islam in European Populism: how refugee flows and fear of Muslims drive right-wing support*, Brookings Institution Report, February 2019. Available at: <https://www.brookings.edu/research/the-role-of-islam-in-european-populism-how-refugee-flows-and-fear-of-muslims-drive-right-wing-support/> (accessed 05/2023).
- Hassan M. 2010. *Modern Interpretations and Misinterpretations of a Medieval Scholar: Apprehending the Political Thought of Ibn Taymiyya*, in Rapoport Y., Shahab A. (eds.), *Ibn Taymiyya and His Times*, Oxford University Press, pp. 338-366.
- Hellyer H.A. 2009. *Muslims of Europe: The "Other" Europeans*, Edinburgh University Press.
- Hourani A. 1994. *L'Islam nel pensiero europeo*, Donzelli.
- Leaman O. 2021. *Art and Political Context in Islam: Some Methodological Issues*, in Campanini M., Di Donato M. (eds.), *Islamic Political Theology*, Lexington Books, pp. 51-66.
- Lucas S.C. 2004. *Constructive critics, Hadith Literature, and the Articulation of Sunni Islam: the legacy of the generation of Ibn Sa'd, Ibn Ma'in, and Ibn Hanbal*, Brill.
- Mackintosh T. 2019. *Arabs: A 3000-Year History of Peoples Tribes and Empires*, Yale University Press.
- Poggi Vincenzo S.J. 1974. *Lo studio del fenomeno religioso*

condizione di scambio reciproco fra cristianesimo e islamismo, in Tavola Rotonda sul Tema: Cristianesimo e Islamismo. (Roma 17-18 Aprile 1972, Roma), Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 1974, pp. 29-71; pp. 72-83.

Scarcia Amoretti B. 2013. *Il Mondo Musulmano: Quindici Secoli Di Storia*, Carocci.

Torri M. 2005. *L'evoluzione storica dell'Islam nel subcontinente indiano*, in Affatato P., Giordana E. (ed.), *A oriente del Profeta. L'islam in Asia oltre i confini del mondo arabo*, O Barra O Edizioni, pp. 13-36.

MARTINA SARDO¹

PROTECTING “ENVIRONMENTAL MIGRANTS” BETWEEN INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC LAW

Towards a Human Rights-Based Approach?

1. *Introduction*

Since the 1990s, concerns about the environmental crisis caused by human activity has begun to reach a global audience, raising a wide-ranging scientific, political, and legal debate. Scientists and scholars warned about the harmful impacts that environmental degradation and climate change could also have on human mobility (IPCC 1990). The increasing incidences of disasters, extreme weather phenomena, and slow-onset events could have devastating consequences for the lives, health, well-being, and security of populations, especially those in already vulnerable areas of the world, who might find themselves with no choice but to migrate.

That human mobility is one of the most striking effects of the ongoing environmental and climate crisis is now confirmed by an established stream of scientific literature (Fornalè 2019). Increasingly, more people are forced to move on environmental and climate grounds. In 2021 alone, there were 38 million new displacements, 23.7 million of which related to disasters due to both weather-related phenomena such as storms, floods, and droughts, and geophysical events like earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and landslides (IDMC 2022).²

-
- 1 Ph.D. candidate in Human Rights: Evolution, Protection and Limits, Department of Law, University of Palermo. Email address: martina.sardo@unipa.it
 - 2 Specifically, of the 23.7 million internally displaced persons related to disasters, 22.3 million were caused by weather-related phenomena, such as storms, floods, and droughts, and the remaining 1.4 million by geophysical phenomena, like earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and

Recent studies suggest that, unless action is taken, up to 216 million people could move internally within their countries by 2050 (IOM 2022, 7). However, reports by experts, humanitarian organisations, and specialised agencies have estimated that an increasing number of people will move across borders for reasons related to environmental degradation and climate change (Myers 2002). Numbers would range from 25 million to 1.5 billion “environmental migrants” by 2050, with between 200 and 250 million being the most likely prediction. Even the lowest hypothesis, however, would disrupt the current global order (Atapattu 2020, 87).

Thus, environmental migration is an urgent issue for the international Community of States, which, despite having recognised the uniqueness of the phenomenon,³ has not yet managed to provide shared solutions for the recognition and protection of so-called “environmental migrants”.

Currently, there is no legally shared definition of people fleeing due to environmental and climate reasons and, consequently, no specific legal framework at the international, regional or national level has been negotiated. However, in the last decade, some developments in soft law instruments and especially in jurisprudence have leveraged a Human Rights-Based approach to provide some sort of protection to environmental migrants.

This chapter will briefly address the main issues related to the migration-environment *nexus*, trying to highlight the difficulties in defining the category of “environmental migrant”. Then, it will analyse the main doctrinal proposals as well as the most significant non-binding instruments put forward to guarantee protection to individuals forced to move for reasons related to the environment, and in particular climate change. In the last section, this chapter will examine international, regional, and domestic case law to point out how, in the absence of a specific legal framework, human

landslides. According to the 2022 IDMC Report, of the 38 million new internally displaced persons in 2021, 14.4 million people were instead internally displaced due to conflict and violence (IDMC 2022).

3 At the UNFCCC Sixteenth Conference of Parties (COP16) in Cancún (2010), States referred for the first time to climate-induced displacement, migration, and planned relocation, calling for adaptation measures.

rights instruments could provide effective, even if “palliative”, protection to environmental migrants.

2. Addressing environmental migration. Between lack of definition and legal gaps

Human mobility related to natural disasters, environmental degradation, and climate change is an extremely complex issue (UNHCR 2020). Efforts to recognise and protect “environmental migrants” at the international level struggle against several difficulties on account of the characteristics of displacement.

First, it is complicated to isolate the environmental and climatic reasons for migration from political, economic, and social ones.⁴ Indeed, environmental migration takes place within a multi-causal framework characterised by a combination of elements of vulnerability (Del Guercio 2021, 521). In this sense, environmental and climatic phenomena exacerbate socioeconomic vulnerability, increasing the probability of the outbursts of conflicts related to resource scarcity, which then in-turn become an additional factor for migration (UNEP 2009).

In general, then, environmental displacement fuels the already increasing number of people that are expected to cross borders in the future (IOM 2020, 6, 253; McLeman 2016, 213) seeking protection in third countries. The UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, recently said that the world is preparing to witness “a mass exodus of entire populations on a biblical scale” due to environmental degradation and climate change, painting “an

4 Environmental causes of migration refer to natural but above all anthropogenic ones. They can be sudden-onset hazards, including floods and hurricanes, and slow-onset environmental events, including sea-level rise, and increasing temperatures, which may or may not be related to climate change. Climate change is one of the “symptoms” of the current environmental crisis, but not the only one. It may increase the frequency and severity of extreme weather and climate events or slow environmental degradation phenomena (UNHCR, *Key Concepts on Climate Change and Disaster Displacement*, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, available at <https://www.unhcr.org/media/36340>, accessed 04/06/2023).

alarming portrait of the emerging global security crisis” that they could portend (UN Security Council 2023).

Although there are as yet no firm numbers on cross-border migration (IOM 2020), some scholars have pointed out that while the solution in the short term is almost always internal movement, in the medium and long term, especially in non-developing countries, people also move across borders as a result of a combination of push factors, including environmental and climatic ones (McAdam 2011, 170; IOM 2010, 28). In other words, movements may happen “in both directions” (IOM 2010, 28).⁵

In addition, as much as disasters and environmental degradation can cause temporary displacement, more often, those affected do not have the possibility to return safely to their country of origin (IOM 2007, 3).

Finally, it is difficult to consider environmental movements in terms of forced or voluntary displacement. In this sense, human mobility related to environmental and climatic events further undermines the rigid distinction between “forced” and “voluntary” migration flows.⁶

Many scholars argue for the voluntary character of displacement, especially when associated with slow-onset transformations (Bates 2002, 468 f.). Other authors, instead, consider how the gradual deterioration of ecosystems, with phenomena such as drought or desertification, can foster water emergencies and food insecurity, generating, overall, severe conditions of vulnerability that force people to flee (Zetter 2014, 21). In this sense, in the case

5 In cases of internal migration, displaced persons remain under the responsibility of their State. Internally displaced persons are covered by the protection of their State and can enjoy the guarantees provided by other instruments, such as the UN Guiding Principles on Internally Displaced Persons (1998). People moving across borders are workers but often also irregular migrants who therefore seek protection in third countries (on this point, see among others McAdam 2011, 170; IOM 2010, 28). This contribution will focus mainly on cross-border migration, which is currently more problematic from a legal point of view.

6 The distinction between forced and voluntary movements is one of the cornerstones of migration theories. On this point, see Mezzadra 2015.

of displacement linked to environmental and climatic factors, a minimum form of compulsion would always be present (Zetter 2014, 22; Warner et al. 2014, 11).

Due to the drivers that characterise the displacement, it is complex to define the status of environmental migrants. Currently, there is no agreed definition by the international community for individuals compelled to move for environmental and climatic reasons, and, as a result, there is a lack of consensus on specific mechanisms, both internationally, and also regionally or nationally, that could circumscribe protection.

2.1 Attempts for shared definition

In recent years, various scholars and institutional bodies have tried to define people forced to move for environmental and climate reasons, also suggesting appropriate protection mechanisms. In 1985, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) researcher Essam El-Hinnawi first defined "environmental refugees" as:

"people who have been forced to leave their traditional habitat, temporarily or permanently, because of a marked environmental disruption (natural and/or triggered by people) that jeopardized their existence and/or seriously affected the quality of their life" (El-Hinnawi 1985).

While several scholars have preserved, over time, the definition provided by El-Hinnawi (O'Lear 1997), others have widely criticised it, pointing out that it neither adopts analytical criteria nor takes into account, for example, the differences between the various environmental factors (sudden or slow-onset) at the origin of displacement (Bates 2002, 466). Some scholars have instead supported the use of the term "climate refugee" (Bierman, Boas 2010; Behrman, Kent 2018), which does not include environmental factors of displacement that are not related to climate change.⁷

⁷ Climate displacement defines a singular type of environmental displacement, where the change in the environment is due to climate change. In this sense, climate migration is a subcategory of

However, the term “environmental refugee”, as well as that of “climate refugee”, are not approved by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which has instead addressed affected people as “Environmentally Displaced Person” (EDP). The International Organization of Migration (IOM) does not agree with the use of the term refugee either, opting instead to speak of “environmental migrants”, which they define as:

“persons or groups of persons, who, for compelling reasons of sudden or progressive changes in the environment that adversely affect their lives or living conditions, are obliged to leave their habitual homes, or chose to do so, either temporarily or permanently, and who move either within their country or abroad” (IOM 2007).⁸

IOM also referred to people moving due to environmental and climate reasons as “forced climate migrant”, in the knowledge that:

“it is not a universally accepted term but in the hope that it conveys a reasonably accurate impression of the increasing phenomenon of non-voluntary population displacement likely as the impacts of climate change grow and accumulate” (IOM 2008).

Expressions that are gaining favour with many authors, but also with institutions such as the European Commission (European Commission 2011) are “environmentally (or climate) induced migrants”. In general, definitions that emphasise the forced aspect of displacement occurring in response to environmental deterioration are increasingly used, but the terminology remains highly controversial.

Although there is still no internationally accepted legal definition, the expression “environmental migrant” seems to be the most appropriate to refer to people who move for environmental

environmental migration (Villani 2021, 4).

8 As the IOM has repeatedly specified, the definition of environmental migrant provided in its documents is not intended to create new legal categories, but is a “working definition aimed at describing all the various situations in which people move in the context of environmental factors” (IOM 2019).

reasons. The terms “climate refugee” or “environmental refugee” are most frequently used by media and activists to focus on the situation and needs of those uprooted by disasters, climate change and environmental degradation. However, this can be misleading at times since the definition of “refugee” provided by the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (hereinafter Geneva Convention) does not cover a number of aspects that characterise the movement of people in the context of environmental and climate degradation, such as the fact that it is mainly internal displacement and may not even be forced.

By contrast, the term “environmental migrants” is broader and more flexible, allowing for the complexity of movements of people due to environmental and climatic factors. Looking also at the definition provided by IOM in 2007, the expression “environmental migrants” seems to include all the different factors of environmental migration, (and not only climatic factors that are a sub-category of it), showing at the same time the different nature that environmental migration can take: “forced and voluntary, temporary and permanent, internal and international, individual and collective”.⁹

2.2 Looking for effective protection. Proposals from doctrine

Regardless of the chosen label and definition, since 1990, scholars, and international experts have provided different regulatory solutions aimed at protecting people forced to move on environmental and climate grounds. To fill the international legal gaps, scholars such as Norman Myers (Myers 2002) suggested extending the protection provided by the Geneva Convention,

9 IOM, *Environmental Migration* (Portal), International Organization for Migration, available at: environmentalmigration.iom.int (accessed 06/05/2023). For the purposes of this chapter, the expression “environmental migrant” will be used to encompass both environmental and climatic factors of displacement and to acknowledge the extent to which environmental migration can take. To emphasise that in movements due to environmental factors a form of compulsion could always be present, a terminology referring to the forced nature of displacement will also be favoured.

which contains the principal International Law on Refugees, to environmental or climate refugees. According to Article 1 of the Geneva Convention, the term refugee applies to those who:

“owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of *race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group* or *political opinion*, is *outside the country of his nationality* (emphasis added) and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country” [Geneva Convention, 1(A) (2)].

The proposal to extend the Geneva Convention to those who are forced to move for environmental and climatic reasons is gradually being shelved in the doctrine because the category of environmental migrants would not meet most of the requirements of Article 1 of the Geneva Convention (McAdam 2011). Firstly, the traditional definition of “refugee” requires the applicant to be outside the country of his or her nationality or habitual residence, protecting mainly those who have engaged in cross-border movement. Generally, however, most people who move due to environmental and climate degradation do not cross State borders and therefore would not fulfil this prerequisite.

Secondly, environmental migrants fail the “persecution test”, since environmental and climate reasons are not included among the five grounds on which persecution must be based according to the Geneva Convention. Moreover, it would be difficult to prove the risk of being persecuted because of environmental degradation alone.

Even if climate change impacts were to be considered grounds for persecution, the Geneva Convention would still require that persecution occurs for reasons strictly related to “personal” characteristics such as race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership of a social group, whereas climate change impacts are largely indiscriminate (Villani 2021, 5). The UNHCR ruled out the possibility of extending the Geneva Convention to environmental migrants, underlining the concern that opening re-negotiation in the current political climate could even dilute existing protections (Kuusipalo 2017, 630).

For all these reasons, other scholars suggested the adoption of a

new international instrument to address environmental migration (Docherty, Giannini 2009; Hodgkinson et al. 2010). The proposals provide different and very precise definitions to identify people to be protected but they have at least one recurring feature, namely that “protected persons would be guaranteed domestic legal status and the framework would be legally binding and enforceable on State parties” (Philip 2018, 651). Docherty and Giannini suggested the adoption of a new Convention that would guarantee human rights protection and humanitarian assistance to “climate change refugees”, based on a rethinking of the principle of *non-refoulement* as well as shared responsibilities among industrialised States regarding refugee admissions and related costs (Docherty, Giannini 2009, 378). The risk in adopting an *ad hoc* convention with a strict definition of an environmental migrant is that of rigidly circumscribing protection between “deserving” and “undeserving” persons, which might not reflect a common-sense assessment of the circumstances.

Moreover, a new international instrument may not be able to address the specific needs of different regions around the world. Environmental degradation has differing affects across land areas and peoples, thus remedies and adaptation strategies may vary (Scissa 2021a, 44). In this sense, local or regional responses would be better suited to the specific needs of affected people (McAdam 2011). The main problem, however, would be the lack of political will to negotiate and adopt an effective new instrument (Philip 2018, 652). Then, even in the (currently very unlikely) event that new binding instruments were to be signed, negotiations – in order to reach a consensus – usually end up agreeing on very bland and, therefore, ineffective “downward” definitions and actions.

A further proposal made by the doctrine, concerned the addition of a Protocol to an existing international instrument. In 2010, Frank Biermann and Ingrid Boas suggested adding a new Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) “on the Recognition, Protection and Resettlement of Climate Refugees”, based on some core principles including “planned relocation and resettlement; resettlement instead of temporary asylum; collective rights for local populations; international assistance for domestic measures; and international

burden sharing” (Biermann, Boas 2010; Philip 2018, 653). This approach was also supported by some non-governmental organisations, such as the Bangladeshi NGO network “Equity and Justice Working Group Bangladesh” (EquityBD), which proposed a Protocol to the UNFCCC to ensure social, cultural, and economic rehabilitation of the “climate refugee” (McAdam 2011, 23). The main critical issue with this proposal is once again related to the willingness of States to sign up for new responsibilities under International Law, while existing obligations already seem to struggle in addressing the plight of the millions of people forced to relocate due to the environmental crisis.

As a further possibility to fill the legal gap in the protection of environmental migrants, several researchers have suggested enhancing pathways under existing migration mechanisms (Philip 2018, 655). This solution is also supported by some affected States, including the government of Kiribati, which is trying to allow its inhabitants to “migrate with dignity” (Philip 2018, 655). The proposal is for States to issue temporary protection measures “combined with planned relocation and resettlement programmes to reduce the vulnerability of affected populations”, aimed at facilitating regional and national mobility (Scissa 2021a, 45). In the European Union, several Member States have already adopted various forms of temporary protection status in their domestic legislation on behalf of environmental migrants. In Italy, for example, the humanitarian protection permit has been granted by judges also for environmental reasons and a new permit on calamity was recently introduced, although the boundaries of application are not yet clear.¹⁰ The proposal to extend existing

10 Humanitarian protection, before Decree-Law No. 113 of 2018 (the so-called *Security Decree*), which abolished it, was a residual form of protection provided by Italian law for those who were not entitled to refugee status or subsidiary protection but could not be removed from the national territory due to “serious reasons” of a humanitarian nature, therefore objective and serious personal situations. For protection requests submitted before the entry into force of the Security Decree (2018), Italian judges recognised humanitarian protection due also to natural disasters and environmental reasons, including droughts and floods (see Tribunale dell’Aquila, Order of 18 February 2018; Italian Supreme Court of Cassation, judgments No. 4455/2018, 23 February

protection mechanisms would, however, leave a wide margin of discretion to national legislations and, possibly judges in assessing the relevance of environmental grounds.

3. Recognising environmental migrants through non-binding instruments

During the last thirty years, none of the proposals put forward in doctrine, nor those promoted by affected governments, have met with the consensus of the Community of States. The Paris Climate Agreement adopted at the 21st UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP21) in 2015 (hereinafter Paris Agreement) could have contained the first historic recognition of environmental migration within a binding instrument. The preparatory work introduced the issue of environmental migration into the body of the treaty. Unfortunately, in the final version of the Agreement, only a timid reference remained in the Preamble, according to which, States, in their efforts to combat climate change, must “respect, promote and consider their obligations on human rights”,¹¹ including those of migrants. Despite this, the Paris Agreement established a Task Force on Displacement, launched in 2017, with the mandate to “develop recommendations for integrated approaches to avert, minimise and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change”.¹²

In the last two decades, the most interesting developments for the protection of environmental migrants at the international level, have actually occurred within non-binding instruments

2018; No. 7832/2019, 15 April 2019; No. 2563/2020, 4 April 2020; No. 5022/2021, 24 February 2021 (see para. 4.1 in this contribution. On this point see also Brambilla 2017; Brambilla, Castiglione 2020). The same Decree-Law (No. 113 of 2018) that abolished humanitarian protection introduced a permit on calamity to offer protection to foreigners whose country of origin was in a situation of “contingent and exceptional calamity” that did not allow safe return (on the permit on calamity see Scissa 2021b).

11 Paris Agreement, Preamble.

12 COP21, Decision 2015 1/CP.21, sec. 49.

resulting from global initiatives, which recognised the issue of environmental migration and called for shared solutions between States, international organisations and other stakeholders to protect those forced to move due to environmental reasons.

These include the 2030 Agenda adopted by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 2015 (UNGA 2015), which, in its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), emphasised the close link between human well-being and the health of natural systems, pointing to the need to address common challenges, like migration, together. Goal 10, aimed at reducing inequalities, promotes, *inter alia*, the facilitation of “orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed policies” (UNGA 2015, 21).

In 2012, the governments of Norway and Switzerland established the Nansen Initiative, a State-led, bottom-up consultative process intended to build consensus on the development of a protection agenda addressing the needs of people displaced across international borders in the context of disasters and the effects of climate change. In 2016, 109 government delegates adopted the Agenda for the Protection of Cross-Border Displaced Persons in the Context of Disasters and Climate Change (The Nansen Initiative 2015), which “supports the integration of policies and practices by States and regional organisations into their own normative frameworks” (Philip 2018, 643) taking into account their specific challenges. The Nansen Initiative had its follow-up in the structured experience of the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD), launched in 2016, which works for the implementation of the Protection Agenda, aiming at improving the protection of people displaced across borders in the context of disasters and climate change.

3.1 *The Global Compact for Migration*

A key development for the recognition of environmental migration at the international level was the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (hereinafter GCM), which was adopted by the UNGA in December 2018 (UNGA

2018a). This was a result of the 2016 New York Declaration on Migrants and Refugees (hereinafter New York Declaration) (UNGA 2016) in which the UNGA called for the adoption of two global compacts, one for migration and another on refugees. The New York Declaration already included environmental factors among the drivers of migration¹³ and compelled States to combat environmental degradation and the adverse impact of climate change.¹⁴

The Global Compact for Migration is the first intergovernmental agreement to recognise natural disasters, the adverse effects of climate change, and environmental degradation as causes of forced migration, committing to invest in programmes that aim to eliminate “the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin including [...] climate change mitigation and adaptation”.¹⁵ The Compact is based on several interdependent guiding principles, including international cooperation, sustainable development and respect for human rights, in the knowledge that no State could tackle migration alone.

The Global Compact for Migration recognises that migrants and refugees are entitled to the same human rights but emphasises the conceptual differences between the two categories of subjects, stressing that they are “distinct groups governed by separate legal frameworks”.¹⁶ Only refugees are granted the specific international protection defined by International Refugee Law. In this sense, those who are forced to move for reasons related to environmental and climate degradation seem to fall squarely into the category of migrants.

Moreover, the Global Compact on Refugees (hereinafter GCR) (UNGA 2018b) – the second Compact adopted in 2018 in light of the New York Declaration – also clearly asserts that environmental threats cannot be seen as valid grounds for the application of the Refugee Convention, but rather as an exacerbating factor of forced migration.¹⁷

13 New York Declaration, sec. 7, ch. II, Annex II.

14 New York Declaration, sec. 43, ch. III.

15 GCM, sec. 18b.

16 GCM 2018, sec. 4.

17 GCR, Introduction, D8.

Like the 2030 Agenda and the Protection Agenda, the Global Compact is a *soft law*, non-binding instrument that reflects the general difficulty of States to engage with international legal instruments that could impose specific protection obligations in addressing environmental migration. Nevertheless, it introduces a holistic perspective on human mobility, based on cooperation and coordination between States, which takes into account the human rights of individuals, emphasising the close correlation between the latter and environmental/climate factors.

4. Environment, migration, and human rights: an intrinsic and inescapable link

The interconnection between environmental degradation, migration, and human rights has been progressively recognised by multiple international, regional, and national actors. The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights underlined that:

“the UN human rights treaty bodies all recognise the intrinsic link between the environment and the realisation of a range of human rights, such as the right to life, to health, food, to water and to housing” (UN Human Rights Council 2009).

The negative effects of environmental degradation and climate change, such as floods, droughts, and rising sea levels, are affecting agriculture, infrastructure, services, and thus the habitability of different areas of the world, threatening the human rights of individuals, including the right to life and the right to health. Over the last 30 years, international and regional judicial or quasijudicial bodies, such as the United Nations Human Rights Council,¹⁸ the European Committee of Social Rights¹⁹ but also the Court of Justice of the Economic Community of the West African

18 UN Human Rights Council, *Human Rights and Climate Change*, Resolution No. 10/4, 25 March 2009.

19 ECSR, *Marangopoulos Foundation for Human Rights (MFHR) v. Greece*, Complaint No. 30/2005, 6 December 2006.

States²⁰ considered the environment to be intrinsically related to the right to life, private and family life, and health (Scissa 2021a, 47).

More recently, a series of climate litigations, i.e. actions related, in general, to climate change issues, have been brought before national and supranational courts by individuals or NGOs complaining about States' failure to comply with their positive obligations to limit the effects of environmental degradation and climate change, as established by International Environmental Law. The cases have in common "the integration of the legal corpus on human rights within environmental-related arguments" (Villani 2021, 12). In the famous *Urgenda* case,²¹ the Dutch government was challenged for failing to take sufficient action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, thereby violating the right to life and to private and family life, as enshrined in Articles 2 and 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights (Villani 2021, 13). In the end, the Supreme Court of the Netherlands held that the Dutch government had binding legal obligations to prevent climate change damage under International Human Rights Law.²²

Since environmental degradation and climate change also cause displacement and migration, an increasing body of case law regarding environmental migration has been brought before both domestic and supranational judicial, and quasi judicial courts. Several people from States affected by climate change have applied for third-country protection in light of their human rights.

4.1 *The Teitiota Case. Towards Human Rights-Based protection?*

On 7 January 2020, the United Nations Human Rights Committee issued a landmark ruling on the *Teitiota* case,²³ which

20 ECOWAS Court of Justice, *SERAP v. Federal Republic of Nigeria*, No. ECW/CCJ/JUD/18/12, 14 December 2012.

21 District Court of The Hague, *Urgenda Foundation v. The State of the Netherlands*, case C/09/456689/ HAZA 13 □ 1396, 24 June 2015.

22 Supreme Court of the Netherlands, *Netherlands v. Urgenda*, Case No. 19/00135, 20 December 2019, para. 5.2.2.

23 UN Human Rights Committee, *Ioane Teitiota vs New Zealand*, UN Doc CCPR/C/127/D/2728/2016, 7 January 2020.

seems to have paved the way for granting environmental migrants “complementary” protection²⁴ based on human rights, and the principle of *non-refoulement* in particular. Mr. Teitiota, a citizen of the Republic of Kiribati, a Pacific archipelago suffering the effects of sea-level rise, had applied to the New Zealand authorities for refugee status. The latter rejected his application stating that the impacts of climate change did not qualify Mr. Teitiota as a refugee under the Geneva Convention, thus he and his family would have to be deported to their country of origin.

After exhausting all domestic remedies, Teitiota appealed to the Human Rights Committee alleging a violation of his right to life under Article 6 of the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The main issue concerned whether, at the moment of deportation, the applicant faced a real risk of irreparable harm to his right to life due to the effects of sea-level rise in Kiribati. The applicant also challenged the inadequacy of the measures taken by Kiribati to combat climate change.

Finding that there was no *real* and *imminent* risk of suffering *serious* and irreparable *personal* harm, the Committee rejected Mr. Teitiota’s claim. Nevertheless, it considered possible that, if not counteracted by the State of origin, the effects of climate change may result in the violation of the right to life enshrined in Article 6 of the Covenant, stating that the risk of suffering such effects in the country of origin could be grounds for inadmissibility under the principle of *non-refoulement*.

In particular, through an extensive interpretation of Article 6 of the Covenant – which, according to General Comment No. 36,²⁵ also includes the right of people to live with dignity – the Committee recognised that, in the absence of robust national

24 There is no definition for “complementary protection” in international instruments. The expression usually describes a situation “where a country grants an individual legal status because of broader international protection needs under national, regional or international law”, despite lacking the prerequisites for refugee status under the Geneva Convention (Philip 2018, 649). Regarding “complementary protection” see Mandal 2005; McAdam 2007.

25 UN Human Rights Committee, *General Comment No. 36, Article 6*, UN Doc CCPR/C/GC/36, 3 September 2019.

efforts, environmental degradation and climate change could expose individuals to the violation of their right to life and life with dignity, so that States should not expel them to their countries of origin. In this sense, the Committee provided a new interpretation of the relationship between the right to life and the principle of *non-refoulement* stemming from International Refugee Law, with regard to environmental degradation under the Covenant.

According to Art. 33 of the Geneva Convention, the principle of *non-refoulement* obliges States not to:

“expel or return (“refouler”) a refugee in any manner whatsoever to the frontiers of territories where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion” (Geneva Convention, Art. 33).

The principle of *non-refoulement* is now embedded in several international and regional human rights instruments and it is regarded as a principle of customary law.²⁶

According to the Committee *non-refoulement* may be “broader than the scope of the principle under International Law, since it may also require the protection of aliens not entitled to refugee status”.²⁷ In other words, when the impacts of environmental degradation and climate change cause serious and real damage to the right to life, and the State of origin cannot or will not apply positive measures to guarantee life against environmental threats, in light of the customary principle of *non-refoulement*, States should not expel affected persons, regardless of whether they are refugees or not.

26 UNGA, Convention Against Torture and Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, A/RES/ 39/46, 10 december 1984; European Court of Human Rights, *Soering v. The United Kingdom*, Application No. 14038/88, 7 July 1989. On the principle of *non-refoulement*, in general, see OHCHR 2018. On the principle of *non-refoulement* and environmental migration see Scissa 2022.

27 UN Human Rights Committee, *Ioane Teitiota vs New Zealand*, sec. 9.3.

4.2 *The Human Rights-Based approach in domestic case law*

Building on the Teitiota case, national courts have also increasingly recognised complementary protection for individuals forced to flee due to environmental and climatic reasons, in light of a broader interpretation of the right to life, the prohibition of inhuman and degrading treatments, and the principle of *non-refoulement* in particular. In 2020, the Italian Supreme Court of Cassation upheld an appeal concerning the rejection of a permit for a subsidiary or humanitarian protection submitted, under Italian Immigration Law, by a citizen from the Niger Delta.²⁸ Moving from the Committee's broader interpretation of the right to life, the judges recognised that the situation of environmental and social degradation and the exploitation of natural resources in the applicant's country of origin were likely to diminish the enjoyment of the right to life and the right to a dignified life, which justified the issuance of a humanitarian protection permit.

In December of the same year, in Germany, the Higher Administrative Court of Baden-Wuerttemberg decided on the prohibition of deportation of an Afghan national on the ground of German Immigration Law in combination with International Human Rights Law, in particular with reference to the prohibition of inhuman and degrading treatment as enshrined in Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights.²⁹ According to the court, the adverse environmental conditions, including climate and natural disasters, which had worsened due to the Covid-19 pandemic, significantly affected the applicant's life and health to such an extent that a condition of vulnerability was likely to justify the prohibition of deportation.³⁰

These cases are just two examples of how the protection of displaced persons in the context of natural disasters, environmental degradation and climate change might be possible outside the

28 Italian Supreme Court of Cassation, ordinance No. 5022/2021, 24 February 2021.

29 VGH Baden-Wuerttemberg, judgement No. A 11 S 2042/20, 17 December 2020, hereinafter VGH Baden-Wuerttemberg 2020.

30 VGH Baden-Wuerttemberg 2020, sec. 25.

scope of the Refugee Convention in the light of a Human Rights-Based complementary protection system.

5. Conclusion

Since the debate began to flourish in the 1990s, scholars and institutions have increasingly stressed the urgency of addressing the environmental migration phenomenon in a coordinated and well-planned manner. Nevertheless, so far the international community has not reached consensus on a shared definition nor has it developed a specific instrument that could guarantee a particular status of protection to those forced to move due to environmental and climatic issues. Several instruments, the result of UN negotiations or bottom-up State initiatives, now explicitly recognise environmental drivers of migration, but have no legally binding force. A common feature of soft law documents adopted by States and also found in the decisions of national and supranational judicial, and quasi judicial courts, is the tendency to focus on a Human Rights-Based approach rather than relying solely on the protection provided by International Refugee Law (Villani 2021, 25).

Indeed, Human Rights Law can be of crucial importance in addressing environmental migration if only because "it sets out minimum standards of treatment that States must afford to individuals within their territory or jurisdiction" and could provide "a legal basis on which protection may be sought (and granted) in another State" (McAdam 2012, 52 f.) also when the rights of individuals are threatened by environmental degradation and climate change. In this sense, even if they cannot be considered refugees, those who move for environmental reasons can invoke their human rights, and in particular the right to life and the right not to be subjected to inhuman and degrading treatment, to claim protection against third States which, in the light of a broad interpretation of the well-established principle of *non-refoulement*, are obliged not to expel them.

Thus, in the absence of an international consensus on the definition and specific protection framework, the application of a

Human Rights-Based approach, by extending and strengthening existing instruments, could in the meanwhile address the current legal gap and provide an effective way to ensure a form of protection for environmental migrants.

Protection based on human rights alone would be, however, a palliative and difficult to obtain protection in need of taking into account individual circumstances and of proving a very high threshold of risk of suffering violations of the right to life and inhuman and degrading treatment.

Indeed, in the Teitiota case, the UN Human Rights Committee required the existence of a real, personal and imminent risk of suffering serious and irreparable personal harm to the right to life. Thus, “seeking for external protection can be acceptable just in case of an irreparable and intolerable condition that deprives the individual of objective alternatives” (Villani 2021, 26).

In addition, the Human Rights Committee itself, also in the Teitiota case, made the application of the principle of *non-refoulement* conditional on the absence, in the affected State, of sufficient measures to reduce vulnerabilities and tackle climate change-related damage to protect the inhabitants’ right to life. In other words, the UN Committee considers the principle of *refoulement* almost as “*extrema ratio*” since the affected States should have the primary responsibility to protect people from environmental risks (Villani 2021, 26).

Hence, although domestic courts have adopted, in their pronouncements, a broader interpretation of the principle of *non-refoulement*, several stakeholders and institutions are continuing to call for the development of a shared definition as well as the adoption of specific protection instruments (Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe 2019), which includes all the features of environmental and climate displacement and the concrete efforts of States to reduce environmental risks.

Irrespective of the development, in the short or long-term, of a specific instrument to protect environmental migrants, in the wake of the developments that are progressively taking place in international *fora*, the international community should address the phenomenon of environmental displacement in an increasingly coordinated and holistic manner, striving to fulfil the international

obligations States have signed up to under Environmental Law, first and foremost within the Paris Agreement. In this sense, States should also cooperate effectively to make more efforts to reduce the environmental risks and impacts of their actions and, at the same time, ensure full respect for human rights (the right to life and the principle of *non-refoulement* in particular, as recently interpreted by UN bodies and judicial or quasi-judicial courts), providing protection for anyone who is forced or decides to migrate.

Bibliography

- Atapattu A. 2020. *Climate Change and Displacement: Protecting "Climate Refugees" within a Framework of Justice and Human Rights*, in «Journal of Human Rights and the Environment», 11(1), 2020, pp. 86-113.
- Bates D.C. 2002. *Environmental Refugees? Classifying Human Migrations Caused by Environmental Change*, in «Population and Environment», 23(5), 2002, pp. 465-477.
- Behrman S., Kent A. (eds.) 2018. *Climate Refugees: Beyond the Legal Impasse?*, Routledge.
- Biermann F., Boas I. 2010. *Preparing for a Warmer World: Towards a Global Governance System to Protect Climate Refugees*, in «Global Environmental Politics», 10(1), 2010, pp. 60-88.
- Brambilla A. 2017. *Migrazioni indotte da cause ambientali: quale tutela nell'ambito dell'ordinamento giuridico europeo e nazionale?*, in «Diritto, Immigrazione e Cittadinanza», 2, 2017, pp. 1-26.
- Brambilla A., Castiglione R. 2020. *Migranti ambientali e divieto di respingimento*, Associazione per gli Studi Giuridici sull'Immigrazione, available at asgi.it (accessed 31/05/2023).
- Del Guercio A. 2021. *Migrazioni connesse con disastri naturali, degrado ambientale e cambiamento climatico: sull'ordinanza n. 5022/2020 della Cassazione italiana*, in «Diritti Umani e Diritto Internazionale», 2, 2021, pp. 521-533.
- Docherty B., Giannini T. 2009. *Confronting a Rising Tide: A Proposal for a Convention on Climate Change Refugees*, in «Harvard Environmental Law Review», 33, 2009, pp. 349-403.

- El-Hinnawi E. 1985. *Environmental Refugees*, United Nations Environment Programme.
- European Commission 2011. *The Global Approach to Migration and Mobility*, [COM(2011) 743], 28 November 2011.
- Fornalè E. 2019. *Floating Rights in Time of Environmental Changes*, in Cataldi G., Corleto M., Pace M. (eds.), *Migrations and Fundamental Rights: the Way Forward*, pp. 183-200.
- Hodgkinson D. et al. 2010. *The Hour When the Ship Comes In!: A Convention for Persons Displaced by Climate Change*, in «Monash University Law Review», 36, 2010, pp. 69-120.
- IDMC 2022. *Global Report on Internal Displacement*, Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre.
- IOM 2007. *Discussion Note: Migration and the Environment: Ninety-fourth Session*, MC/INF/288, International Organization for Migration.
- IOM 2008. *World Migration Report*, International Organization for Migration.
- IOM 2010. *Assessing the Evidence: Environment, Climate Change and Migration in Bangladesh*, International Organization for Migration.
- IOM 2019. *Glossary on Migration* n. 34, International Organization for Migration.
- IOM 2020. *World Migration Report*, International Organization for Migration.
- IOM 2022. *People on the Move in a Changing Climate, Linking Policy, Evidence and Action*. Report, International Organization for Migration.
- IPCC 1990. *1st Assessment Report: Summary for policy makers*, International Panel on Climate Change.
- Kuusipalo R. 2017. *Exiled by Emissions. Climate Change Related Displacement and Migration in International Law: Gaps in Global Governance and the Role of the UN Climate Convention*, in «Vermont Journal of Environmental Law», 18, 2017, pp. 614-647.
- Mandal R. 2005. *Protection Mechanisms outside of the 1951 Convention*, Report PPLA/2005/02, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

- McAdam J. 2007. *Complementary Protection in International Refugee Law*, Oxford University Press.
- McAdam J. 2011. *Swimming Against the Tide: Why a Climate Change Displacement Treaty Is Not the Answer*, in «International Journal of Refugee Law», 23(2), 2011, pp. 1-27.
- McAdam J. 2012. *Climate Change, Forced Migration, and International Law*, Oxford University Press.
- McLeman R. 2016. *Migration as Adaptation: Conceptual Origins, Recent Developments, and Future Directions*, in Milan, A., Schraven B., Warner K., and Cascone N. (eds.), *Migration, Risk Management and Climate Change: Evidence and Policy Responses*, Springer, pp. 213-229.
- Mezzadra S. 2015. *Il lessico sulle migrazioni alla prova dei fatti e della soggettività*, in «Frontierenews», available at: frontierenews.it (accessed 14/03/2023).
- Myers N. 2002. *Environmental Refugees: A Growing Phenomenon of the 21st Century*, in «Philosophical Transactions: Biological Sciences», 1420, 2002, pp. 609-613.
- OHCHR 2018. *The Principle of Non-Refoulement under International Human Rights Law*, United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner.
- O'Leary S. 1997. *Migration and the Environment: A Review of Recent Literature*, in «Social Science Quarterly», 78, 1997, pp. 608-618.
- Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe 2019. *A Legal Status for "Climate Refugees"*, Resolution 2307(2019), 3 October 2019.
- Philip T. 2018, *Climate Change Displacement & Migration: An Analysis of the Current International Legal Regime's Deficiency, Proposed Solutions and a Way Forward for Australia*, in «Melbourne Journal of International Law», 19, 2018, pp. 639-664.
- Scissa C. 2021a. *Recognition and Protection of Environmental Migrants in International Law* in Diab J.L. (ed.) *Dignity in Movement: Borders, Bodies and Rights*, E-International Relations, pp. 41-53.
- Scissa C. 2021b. *La protezione per calamità: una breve*

- ricostruzione dal 1996 ad oggi*, in «Forum di Quaderni Costituzionali», 1, 2021.
- Scissa C. 2022. *The Principle of Non-Refoulement and Environmental Migration: A Legal Analysis of Regional Protection Instruments*, in «Diritto, Immigrazione e Cittadinanza», 3, 2022, pp. 2-36.
- The Nansen Initiative 2015. *Agenda for the Protection of Cross-Border Displaced Persons in the Context of Disasters and Climate*, Geneva, 12–13 October, The Nansen Initiative.
- UNGA 2015. *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, United Nations General Assembly, UN Doc A/RES/70/1 (21 October 2015).
- UNGA 2016. *New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants*, United Nations General Assembly, UN Doc A/RES/71/1, 19 September 2016.
- UNGA 2018a. *Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration*, UN Doc A/RES/73/195, United Nations General Assembly, 19 December 2018.
- UNGA 2018b. *Global Compact on Refugees*, United Nations General Assembly, UN Doc A/RES/73/151, 17 December 2018.
- UN Human Rights Council 2009. *Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the Relationship between Climate Change and Human Rights*, UN Doc A/HRC/10/61.
- UNEP 2009. *From Conflict to Peacebuilding. The Role of Natural Resources and the Environment*, United Nations Environment Programme.
- UNHCR 2020. *Legal Considerations regarding Claims for International Protection made in the Context of the Adverse Effects of Climate Change and Disasters*, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.
- UN Security Council 2023. *Climate Change-induced Sea-Level Rise Direct Threat to Millions around World*, Secretary-General Tells Security Council, UN Doc SC/15199, 14 February 2023.
- Villani S. 2021. *Reflections on Human Rights Law as Suitable Instrument of Complementary Protection applicable to Environmental Migration* in «Diritto Immigrazione e Cittadinanza», 3, 2021, pp. 2-27.

- Warner K. et al. 2014. *Integrating Human Mobility Issues within National Adaptation Plan*, in «UNU-EHS Publication Series», 9, June 2014, available at: <https://disasterdisplacement.org/portfolio-item/integrating-human-mobility-issues-2> (accessed 31/05/2023).
- Zetter R. 2014. *Protecting Forced Migrants. A State of the Art Report of Concepts, Challenges and Ways Forward*, Federal Commission on Migration, December 2014, available at https://www.ekm.admin.ch/content/dam/data/ekm/dokumentation/materialien/mat_schutz_e.pdf (accessed 31/05/2023).

AMAL HLIOUI¹

REPRESENTATIONS OF SUB-SAHARANS IN TUNISIAN MEDIA A Discourse Historical Approach to Silencing and Othering²

1. *Introduction*

In December 2016, when three Congolese students were assaulted with a blade in Tunis, official media overlooked the incident. Private media, which appeared less myopic towards marginal groups, allocated a “fait-divers” slot to the event, and represented it as an act of “violence” and “racism” against “Africans”.³ International media, namely France 24, qualified the event as “non-isolated” and “recurrent”, using words like “victims” and “sub-Saharan”.⁴ This event, and many others, are portrayed in myriad ways, thus contributing to the framing and re-framing of sub-Saharan existence in Tunisia.

This chapter hinges on two main gaps in the existing literature on sub-Saharan migration to Tunisia: (i) the lack of a systematic investigation into Tunisian media discourse on migration/immigrants, and (ii) the restrictive ethnographic and economic approaches to sub-Saharan migration in Tunisia.⁵ In the existing

1 Agrégée lecturer in ISSHT, University Tunis El Manar and Ph.D. researcher in System Dynamics, DEMS, Università degli Studi di Palermo (UNIPA) Email address: amal.hlioui@issht.utm.tn

2 This research was conducted thanks to an Erasmus+ mobility fellowship within the framework of the Erasmus+ Capacity Building Project MIGRANTS. More information on the project is available at: <https://migrantsproject.eu/> (accessed 02/02/23).

3 Shems Fm, news of 24/12/2016.

4 France 24, <https://observers.france24.com/fr/20161226-tunisie-agression-etudiants-congolais-africains-couteau-gorge-racisme-hopital> (accessed 25/02/2022).

5 For a thorough overview of such approaches, see El Ghali 2022, Cassarini 2020, and Nasraoui 2017.

literature, research tends to overlook a crucial aspect of migrants' reception within the host society, i.e., their representation. The interconnectedness between media and public opinion with regard to migrants was highlighted in numerous recent studies on European Union (EU) media and immigrants.⁶ Teun Van Dijk (1991) contends that the media do not simply mimic the political discourse but can also defy it. Indeed, "[t]hrough its specific discursive and cognitive strategies of selection, emphasis, focusing, exaggeration, relevance assignment, description, style, or rhetoric", media produce their own version of reality (42).

This chapter scrutinizes media representations of sub-Saharanans in Arabic-speaking Tunisian media outlets using the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA), coupled with resources from Symbolic Interactionism for an eclectic approach. Focusing on the notions of silencing and othering, the findings draw on how Tunisian media have an antagonizing discourse towards sub-Saharanans and representationally "silence" and "other" them. They are framed as an "absent presence" or "criminal/wretched others" within a rhetoric of "difference", which creates an amalgamation of assigned "otherness". Tunisian media seem hostile towards migrants as they symbolically annihilate them, then strip them of their agency, portraying them as a collective threat/danger to the social harmony of the country. Such representations further exacerbate the social distancing of sub-Saharanans from the public sphere and impedes their social integration. The analysis thereof can account for the recurrent racist flare-ups and campaigns against their accommodation and nationalization.

1.1. *Discourse and representation*

The DHA was resorted to in several studies scrutinizing discourse on migrants and "othering", such as Richardson and Colombo (2013), and Wodak and Boukala (2015). Wodak surmises that discourse shapes the identity of social groups. Like van Dijk (1991), she believes in the constitutive power of discourse

6 For a comprehensive idea on the studies carried out in this respect, see Eberl et al. 2018.

practices, which may (re)produce or even change the power relations between “social classes, women and men, and ethnic/cultural majorities and minorities through the ways in which they represent things and position people” (Fairclough, Wodak 1997, 258). Discourse – regarded as a social practice per se by Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) scholars – is ergo a discursive practice (Fairclough 1992, 71).

Attributing this socially consequential nature to discourse finds its echoes in social theory, notably Symbolic Interactionism (SI). In fact, social groups are evaluated and valued by their depiction in media discourse(s) as the audience absorbs their “symbolic status”. SI, developed by George H. Mead and his student Herbert Blumer, focuses on social actors and their capacity to fathom social interactions by interpreting the symbols used therein. The theory is unique as it shifted the focus of social studies from macroscale social dynamics to mundane social interactions and interpretations.

Symbolic interactionists maintain that social groups interact through discourse, i.e., language and symbols. Media theory is deeply rooted in this SI logic, and a great deal of the research on media discourse was informed by a SI perspective on the meaning and construction of social reality. This approach advances that individuals interact with media to generate meaning through symbols employed and interpreted in a specific context (Blumer 1969). Theoretically, SI abridges the communication process from message *formulation* by media actors to *interpretation/action* by target audiences. Media, whether positively or negatively, represents and underrepresents a given social group like migrants and the audience deciphers the symbols used. The missing link between SI and media representations might be the discursive strategies used to convey messages about the targeted social group.

When investigating the representations of migrants, the discursive strategies most relevant to media discourse are *nomination/predicational* strategies, which assign membership, either positive or negative and stereotypical attributes to the migrant group, as well as the *argumentation* strategies legitimizing those attributes (Wodak, Boukala 2015). Nomination is the “discursive construction of social actors” and thus, can be crucial in defining the social role attributed

to a given group like migrants (Reisigl, Wodak 2009, 95). The words chosen to name the migrant group have the power to change its position and future prospects. Each term elicits associations/social representations, and such a social representation/nomination determines a social group's membership to an ingroup or outgroup.

To these, I add *intensification* and *perspectivization* as these can inform us indirectly about the speaker's position vis-à-vis a represented group,⁷ and *legitimation*, namely mythopoesis, as it exposes how narratives around migrants strive to sanction their "non-legitimate" existence and actions. Wodak and Boukala (2015) deem it useful to analyze discourse(s) about "Us" and "Them", which summarize what "othering" is. Therefore, this study may contribute to the comprehension of the logic behind the Tunisian media's depiction of sub-Saharanans as an outgroup. The analysis of Symbolic *representation/annihilation*, coupled with discursive strategies entrenched in media discourse, is of great value in research about migration since it can inform us of a migrant group belonging to a socially *valued* group as opposed to a socially *voiceless* group. The little or under-representation, as opposed to over-representation, of a migrant group within the media of a host community guides the research towards latent political motives, reception paradigms and resulting social accommodation of this group.

1.2. *Methodological considerations*

The DHA poses a historical perspective of discourse and advocates historicity as well as a linguistics-orientated conception of social representations (see Wodak 2009, 20). Choosing the DHA to study the sub-Saharanans' media representations over eight years is legitimized by an intent to trace the diachronic evolution of media discourse on them. Furthermore, the systematic media monitoring of all the material published by Tunisian media outlets between 2012 and 2019,⁸ allows for more impartiality and objectivity. Finally, the

7 A comprehensive overview of discursive strategies is elaborated on by Reisigl and Wodak 2009, 104.

8 The chosen timeframe for media monitoring stops in 2019 as 2020 signals the outbreak of Covid-19.

choice of Arabic is justified by the fact that Arabic media is the most accessible to common Tunisian citizens, thus having the greatest impact on their understanding of migration.⁹

The year 2012 signals the beginning of a period of recognition of a new sub-Saharan migration phenomenon in Tunisian media. In the aftermath of the so-called “Jasmine Revolution”, media attention first drifted to the democratic transition. Then, when the political momentum faded, Tunisian media shifted focus to the old migration phenomenon, *harga*,¹⁰ and a new one: sub-Saharan immigration. The media monitoring was conducted by searching all possible Arabic keywords pertaining to sub-Saharan migration: muhajiru/muhajir, afariqa, janub assah’râ. The latter are the Arabic-to-English transliterations of the respective terms: migrants (in both inflections), Africans, and sub-Sahara.¹¹ The finished corpus consists of 154 media

9 Whereas French-speaking media is deemed elitist, Arabic press (print and online) is accessible to the bulk of Tunisians. Indeed, according to a Media Ownership Monitor, conducted on Tunisia in 2016, it was found that the majority of Tunisians (91%) listen to the radio in Arabic as opposed to only 10% in French. See <https://tunisia.mom-gmr.org/en/context/media-consumption/> (accessed 25/21/2023). Furthermore, according to Reporters Without Borders estimates, 76% of Tunisian newspaper consumers read Arabic publications. For more details, consult the report on: <https://fanack.com/tunisia/media-in-tunisia/> (accessed 25/01/2023).

10 Harga is the transliteration the Maghrebi Arabic term *ḥarrāga* finds its root in the verb “haraqā”, i.e., burn. Harga, in this sense, is the deliberate act of “burning” borders. As such, the term refers to “irregular” migration to the Northern Mediterranean shore.

11 It is noteworthy that the search was carried out using the umbrella keywords “sub-Saharan” and “African” because most media outlets use these two words to refer to what seems to be conceptualized as a homogenous “crowd”. To justify my choice, a counter-experience was carried out. Entering the keywords relating to sub-Saharan nationalities: Ivory Coast, Cameroun, Guinea, Senegal, Madagascar, Burundi, Chad, Mali, and Togo based on statistics published by Nasraoui 2017, the search yielded 31 pieces in total. Such a corpus cannot be adopted as it breaches the principle of representativity. Further scrutiny and matching showed that those same 31 results overlap with the systematic search done using the more general keywords and derivatives “sub-Saharan” and “Africans”.

pieces¹² including news, stories, articles, communiqués and briefings, etc., encompassing daily press (Al-Sabah, Al-Chourouk), regional and national radios (Radio Med, Mosaique, Shems, Sabra, etc.) as well as social media content (the Facebook pages of official institutions).

The DHA analysts suggest a multilevel pattern of analysis which ultimately enables the researcher to go beyond the analysis of linguistic phenomena to the socio-political context. This approach is contingent on addressing, at a basic or *entry level*, the key discourse topics and themes, such as *silence*, *othering*, *marginalization*, *victimization*, etc. and an *in-depth level* expanding on the relevant analytical tools or what Wodak calls “discursive strategies”. Coding, accordingly, adopted the DHA two-level methodology, as described by Krzyzanowski (2010). To this end, the corpus was coded based on the cross-referencing of (i) major representational categories: sub-Saharanans as “victims”, as “criminals” or both, (ii) voice allocation, and (iii) the relevant linguistic tools used for each representational category. Added to that, and following the DHA tradition, the analysis builds on the media discourse then connects it with other data, like the marking political and social events, to corroborate the quantitative and qualitative findings ensuing therefrom.

2. *Quantitative insights and interpretations*

The systematic quantitative investigation of the corpus reveals two major peaks in the diachronic evolution of the media coverage of sub-Saharan-related stories and news. The first marks the period of June and July 2015, and the second corresponds to December 2016. Regarding the second landmark, I noticed a reiterative reference to the incident of 24 December 2016, when three Congolese students were assaulted with a blade in the central area of Le Passage in the capital Tunis. The peak of the media

12 The initial corpus comprised 236 media pieces, then it was syndicated, sifted, and translated to English.

volume – almost 8 pieces a day – is explained by the media hype accompanying this “assault”¹³ and “racist deed”.¹⁴

As for the first peak, this is reflective of a peak in interception operations, which had become increasingly newsworthy after 2015. The media, via news briefings and communiqués *inter alia*, covered the authorities “successful interception” of 75 attempted irregular migration operations in 2015, and 113 in 2016, with a total of 1,103 Tunisians and foreigners involved in 2016. The significant rise in interception operations and their mediatization, is further corroborated by the Italian authorities’ arrestation of 541 individuals who had arrived “illegally” to the Northern Mediterranean shores.¹⁵ This media attention to interception operations and statistics of *harga* “foiling” is probably linked to external European pressure and externalization of borders. Indeed, March 2014 saw the signing of the EU-Tunisia Joint Declaration, whose declared aim is the “implementation of mobility cooperation” and real motive is curbing emigration operations from Tunisia.

This tendency to foreground security operations in the Tunisian media is endorsed by the significant recurrent reference to securitarian actors. A glance at the most mentioned and quoted organizations sends us to the realm of criminality. When scrutinizing the most mentioned organizations and agencies in the media corpus, the securitarian “trend” in media coverage of sub-Saharan existence in Tunisia is evident.

In fact, it comes as no surprise that the most mentioned national organizations are security bodies: the first being the body in charge of patrolling, protecting and securing the coasts, i.e., the National Guard. The second and fourth most mentioned organizations are the Ministries of Interior and Defense, whose different departments

13 Shems Fm, national news of 25/12/2016.

14 Kapitalis, *Racisme anti-noir: Une communication de crise plutôt efficace*, <http://kapitalis.com/tunisie/2016/12/28/racisme-anti-noir-une-communication-de-crise-plutot-efficace/> (accessed 20/12/2022)

15 For more information on statistics, please refer to the Maghrebi Migration Observatory monthly report on *harga* in Tunisia, January 2017 available on the FTDES website: <https://ftdes.net/rapports/fr.migration.janvier2017.pdf> (accessed 25/01/2023)

are involved in interception of *harga* and all crimes involving sub-Saharanans. The Ministry of Interior has a spokesperson who is very active and present, especially on the radio and national TV. The Ministry also has an official Facebook page, which publishes the fruit of their “securitarian” endeavors.

Apart from the media’s obsession with security stakeholders, what is also noticeable is the reference to ISIS¹⁶ and Al Qaeda¹⁷ in media pieces involving sub-Saharanans. It is explained by the assumption, on part of the media and subsequently the average Tunisian mind, that some sub-Saharanans in Libya, Algeria and Tunisia are “terrorists” and “mercenaries”. There were many reports issued by Algerian Intelligence warning about the sub-Saharanans of ISIS infiltrating the Tunisian soil. This came at a time when Tunisia was suffering from multiple terrorist operations in the Southern regions of Kasserine and even in the North of the country.¹⁸ Within this prevailing spirit of fear and danger, news like *Arrest of African Immigrants with Military Training and Links to terrorism Near the Tunisian Borders*¹⁹ further exacerbates the image of sub-Saharanans as “criminal others”.

Most Arabic-speaking media outlets target the ordinary Tunisian citizens; hence, they play on the “buzz” effect and attempt to serve them the news they are expecting. That can explain the tone repartition in the investigated media corpus. In fact, whereas 50.5% of the media materials have a neutral tone, negative media pieces account for 42.2% of the corpus.²⁰ Substantiating this predominantly negative tone repartition, the most mentioned negative words pertain to law, threat, and crime.

In the Tunisian media discourse, according to the quantitative findings, sub-Saharanans are mostly associated with negative words

16 ISIS is the third most mentioned organization in the targeted media corpus according to the quantitative results.

17 Al Qaeda is the ninth most mentioned organization.

18 The Chaambi operation of June 6, 2013; the Bardo terrorist attack of March 18, 2015; the Sousse attack on tourists of June 26, 2015, to name a few.

19 Akher Khabar Online, news of 23/12/2015.

20 The quantitative results show that only 7.3% of the media pieces have a positive tone.

pertaining to *crime*²¹ and *threat* such as “terrorist” and “violence”. However, strikingly and against expectations, the most used negative word in relation to sub-Saharanans’ media coverage is “loss”. In essence, this is due to all the news expanding on the death and “loss” of sub-Saharanans at sea during their *harga* journey. It seems that when dealing with sub-Saharanans, most media frame sub-Saharanans as “wretched others” on a perilous journey towards the unknown. This quantitative insight will be further confirmed by the content analysis of media pieces about sub-Saharanans’ immigration to Europe.

3. *Sub-Saharanans, the absent/invisible presence: voicing and silencing in Tunisian media*

From a DHA perspective, silence, neglect and myopia in media discourse have different interpretations. Wodak (2011) assumes that the silencing or concealment of the minorities’ questions are an outcome of a historical moment. Indeed, in post-1945 Austria, the Jewish issue was muffled because of the country’s “commitment to becoming a ‘Western’ democracy” (353). Accordingly, silence is the choice to forefront urgent political and social issues, to the detriment of minorities, especially at times of prominent political shifts. In 2011 Tunisia, the priority was “social peace” and democracy-building. Silence about migratory issues was met with heated debate about the political system. Indeed, the first debates about sub-Saharan arrivals could be traced back to 2012, a year after the “revolution”, because of the security urgency of the topic. The sub-Saharan groups’ entry to Shusha camp from Libya were described using words like “crowds”, “exodus”²² and “mass” to emphasize the danger and threat associated with their existence.

21 The most mentioned negative words related to crime are: gang, crime, scam and murder.

22 For instance, the *Le Temps* article of 08/09/2011, titled “The forgotten of the Choucha refugee camp: A Poignant story”, where Naceur Bouabid uses the rhetoric of exodus and mass entry: “Since the advent of the first waves of mass exodus sweeping across Tunisian territory, the Choucha refugee camp occupied the forefront and has become the

Within the SI model, “symbolic annihilation” was first coined by George Gerbner to designate non-representation or underrepresentation of social groups in the media due to their race, origin, gender, etc. In Gerbner and Gross (1976), representation is linked to “social existence” and its “absence means symbolic annihilation” (182). Later, Gaye Tuchman (2000) built on the concept of Symbolic Annihilation as an intentional erasure and adopted a broader definition encompassing even the “condemnation” and/or “trivialization” of a certain social group in the media, resulting in “social disempowerment” (17).

Via the symbolic “erasure” (SI) or symbolic “negative perspectivization” (DHA) of these groups as a means of perpetuating social inequalities by no or little representation of a minority group, the media systematically frame these groups as marginal or absent “others” with a symbolic “nil” societal status. Like Tuchman, Merskin defines Symbolic Annihilation as a “way cultural production and media representations ignore, exclude, marginalize, or trivialize a particular group” (Merskin 1998, 335).

The analysis of symbolic annihilation, coupled with discursive strategies in the media discourse on migration is crucial since it informs us of migrants belonging to either a socially valued or voiceless group. In DHA, perspectivization as a discursive strategy seeks to establish legitimacy as the speaker, voice owner. Thus, voice allocation is directly linked to action. In our media corpus, strikingly, only 10 pieces out of the total 154 allocated “voice” to sub-Saharanans. Most news and stories about sub-Saharanans²³ did not include any direct or indirect speech by sub-Saharanans, which reveals a minor possibility of action on their part.

From a syntactic stance, analyzing sub-Saharanans’ agentivity, i.e., whether their depiction is made in active or passive voice, is crucial to see if they are represented as agents, targets or victims. Indeed, marginalized groups are usually represented in a passive way. Yet, when these outgroups are involved in deviant acts, they are represented as agents, through active voice (Van Dijk 2010, 40).

object of exceptional concern”. (Translation author’s own, *Le temps* is a Tunisian daily newspaper in French).

23 With a ratio of 93.5%.

Tunisian media choose to adopt the perspective of the authorities rather than that of sub-Saharanans. Indeed, in all media, “newsworthy” pieces about the security forces’ successful interception operations, sub-Saharanans have no voice, neither active nor passive. They are also denied any agency; the agents being the “heroic” and “legitimate” state security apparatus. For instance, in Akher Khabar Online²⁴ it was reported that “eight Africans were arrested while trying [...] stealthily”.

The sub-Saharanans’ agency is nevertheless rendered when dealing with criminality. In fact, when reporting news about prostitution, drug-dealing, or fraud perpetrated by sub-Saharanans, the perspective of the media outlets suddenly inverts to turn sub-Saharanans into active doers and Tunisians into passive victims of the despicable deeds. “A boat was hijacked in Zarzis by Africans”, “an African defrauds a Tunisian businessman of about 260,000 dinars” are just some examples of headlines from 2012.

Out of the ten pieces – that is, 6.5% of the corpus – where sub-Saharanans *do* have a voice and *do* speak about themselves, only *one* adopts the perspective of sub-Saharanans in an active and positive way.²⁵ The article *An African cultural day in Sfax, in cooperation with the municipality and African students of different nationalities*, unsurprisingly, has a positive tone and uses a positive semantic field invoking solidarity rather than antagonism. Such a semantic choice involves words like “cooperation” and expressions such as “cultural exchange”, “participating African countries”, and “unique African cultural diversity”. It is also worth noting that in this same article, the nomination strategy shifts to individualized and positive nouns like “artists” and “students”. This piece testifies to a different treatment of sub-Saharanans who attend university i.e., learned and skilled “individuals”, in contrast to what is ostensibly perceived as a mob of undocumented, jobless and unskilled migrants. Silencing and omitting positive stories involving sub-Saharanans is itself part of the perspectivization of

24 Dated 29/08/15.

25 Journaliste Sfaxien Facebook page, 3/05/2013. The story is about The Association of African Students and Interns in Tunisia, organizing a cultural event at the Municipal Theater in Sfax. Such events happen periodically; however, the coverage in the media is rare.

media content which annihilates sub-Saharan migrants' voices and positions them as either receivers of correctional action or doers of "illegal" acts.

4. Sub-Saharans, the African "Otherness": Othering in Tunisian media discourse

If silencing and voice suppression stem from "symbolic annihilation", othering finds its roots in Gayatri Spivak's "subaltern" (1988). Both concepts have an "antagonistic" rationale, where a social "actor" is encountered with apathy and omission: Symbolic Annihilation, or can be dispatched to a different, inferior symbolic space: subaltern/otherness. The Indian scholar states that subaltern individuals are denied access to power by discarding them from any genuine and non-distorting representation or expression. The identity of the subaltern group resides in its difference. Thus, it is "non-representable".

"Othering", as a "situatedness" for minorities in media discourses tends to problematize and obscure the presence of these "others" by correlating outgroups to crime. Thus, othering is an outcome of discourses of racism, xenophobia; or even both in the case of sub-Saharans. Sune Qvotrup Jensen (2011, 65) argues that "symbolic degradation", instead of "symbolic annihilation", takes place when subordinate groups are relegated and repositioned as "others" in discourse, if they do not sip into a "spiral of silence".

This antagonistic rhetoric or "binarism" inherent in the processing of the Self/Others relationships operates through exclusionary dynamics. Thus, "othering" of the outgroup is a projection of features that are distinct from those of the ingroup. This echoes Fairclough's discussion of the discourses' "obfuscation of difference" where a "protagonist-antagonist relation appears to be set up between an unidentified protagonist against a protagonist" (Fairclough 2004, 28).

Investigating the representations of sub-Saharans through nomination and predication permits the study of their "discursive construction" and their "definition" as migrants (Reisigl, Wodak

2009, 95). The names chosen for migrants have the power to (re) negotiate their social status and future prospects. The nominal associations or “nomination” of migrants, and attributes ascribed to them or “predication”, determine their membership of the ingroup or outgroup.

The first striking feature of nomination in this context is the use of “Africans” to refer to sub-Saharan in 102 out of 154 media pieces, be them references to “refugees” or “migrants”. When scrutinizing the timeline for the use of the term “sub-Saharan” versus “African” to refer to people coming from sub-Saharan Africa, I discovered that the term “sub-Saharan” was, in fact, used almost 20 years ago as a conventional and customary term in famous newspapers like *le Quotidien* and *La Presse* as well as by the official news agency TAP. It was notably used when invoking the economic, political, climate and sports issues, and sometimes to talk about the international students in private Tunisian universities.

Then, when the Libyan crisis began, the usage shifted to “Africans”, and sub-Saharan Africans came to Tunisia as “refugees” in the Shousha camp, or as “irregular” migrants. Henceforth, sub-Saharan and non-sub-Saharan were amalgamated as the others; “the Africans”. Tunisian media, in referring to all sub-Saharan as “Africans”, further alienate them symbolically. They even seem to exert an epistemic fallacy by asserting that sub-Saharan are African as if Tunisians were *not*. This fallacy stems from racial and social discrimination, and voids sub-Saharan of distinctive human features, reducing them to “black others”. Severe “othering” in Tunisian media discourse towards sub-Saharan migrants manifests itself in the repetitive news about “Africans” being intercepted and arrested at borders. The media, by bludgeoning readers with news about sub-Saharan perpetrating crimes or being victims of death/loss at sea, is “othering” them in a multitude of ways.

Triandafyllidou and Wodak (2003) argue that identity formation is a double-fold process building on “sameness” and, on the other hand, “otherness”. Setting an antagonist-protagonist opposition, through the referential strategy, “Africans” excludes sub-Saharan from acquiring a Tunisian identity. Indeed, social groups seem to exclude “others”, “who/which do not seem to fit certain arbitrary criteria” and who do not fit the “same community” (Wodak, Boukala

2015, 89). In symbolic interactionism, symbols of difference, such as race, are perceived as threats to homogeneity, harmony, and security. Therefore, othering is a discursive strategy used to protect an ingroup and legitimate “correctional” and “securitarian” measures against an outgroup. “Othering” theory demonstrates that alienation has ramifications on the social attitudes and behaviors towards migrants (Wodak, Boukala 2015). It also influences migrants’ future plans and prospects as when confronted with such a marginalizing discourse, they tend to act in accordance with how they are expected to be: victims or criminals. If someone is constantly represented as a criminal by the media and society, they are likely to act like one or join a criminal group (Inankul 2016).

4.1 *Sub-Saharan: the Criminal Other*

The analysis reveals that the media expand on a wide range of criminal offenses. Yet, some crimes feature more frequently than others. Indeed, regarding the subject-matter of the news/stories, fraud and “illegal” sea-crossing are foregrounded. Organized crime is also present, through the recurrent use of “network” (16 times) and “gang” (32 times). The following table summarizes the repartition of mediatized crimes per type.

Table 1: Repartition of offenses per type and number of occurrences²⁶

Nature of offense	Total number of offense mentions
Fraudulent activity: fraud, money counterfeit, financial embezzlement	14
Robbery, burglary, theft	3
Sexual offenses: molestation, rape, and prostitution	2
Violent crimes: hijacking, kidnapping	4
Drugs: consumption and dealing	3

26 It is worth noting that some articles conflate and fuse different crimes, thus the higher number of mentions.

Illegal entry/illegal departure, smuggling, and trafficking	63
Terrorism	11
Petty crimes: felonies and misdemeanors like escaping from refugee centers	5

The quantitative insights show a fixation on sub-Saharanans' "criminality". To this end, the topos of threat/danger is used to further "other" sub-Saharanans and legitimate securitarian and correctional measures against them. In fact, the use of the topos of authority in most news pieces is telling of a choice to perspectivize the sub-Saharan "criminal other" in an antagonistic position, towards society and authorities. To Forchtner and Wodak (2018), the authority topos is "highly credible" as an argumentation device (139).

The use of elements of authority strengthens the speaker's positive ingroup representation by appealing to legitimate bodies or authorities like "National Guard Commander", "units of the National Guard", "Public Prosecution", "Border patrol of the National Guard", "Naval Guard units in the port of Al-Ktef" etc. The extensive and overlapping use of authorities in news pieces about crime involving sub-Saharanans contributes to legitimating the relevant decisions: deportation, detention, and prison. The media discourse accentuates this separation between citizens and those "others" who are either "clandestine" insiders or outsiders.

The representation of sub-Saharanans as a threat or danger, is carried out via the argumentation topoi of danger/threat and authority. By enumerating all the possible crimes and offenses involving sub-Saharanans and adding alarmist headlines, the correlation between sub-Saharanans and criminality is anchored as "common-sense". Headlines like "Urgent – a boat hijacked in Zarzis by Africans"²⁷ or "African gang in possession of 5 billion embezzled dollars overthrown",²⁸ enforce the antagonism between "us" as common, normal, safe, innocent Tunisians and "them" as conniving and criminal outsiders.

27 Al-Machhad, news of 18/03/2012.

28 Al-Sabah, news of 26/05/2012.

Hyperbole, one of the devices used for the intensification of sub-Saharan criminality, is deployed in expressions like “terrible murder”,²⁹ “looting and theft are frequent”,³⁰ “thousands of African students...Ebola virus has spread”,³¹ and the “‘bomb’ of African immigrants”.³² In all the pieces about sub-Saharan “criminality”, the “African others” are problematized as a threat to social peace – being represented as drug dealers, prostitutes, and embezzlers, or an absolute danger as terrorists, ISIS members, mercenaries – using intensification strategies, namely *hyperbole*.

This exaggeration is also discernible in the dramatization of “criminality” stories, i.e., mythopoesis, a “mythical mode of social action”.³³ Van Leeuwen introduced mythopoesis, which is a legitimation strategy deployed to build “narratives whose outcomes reward legitimate actions and punish non-legitimate actions” (Van Leeuwen 2008, 106). Some media stories about murder, embezzlement and kidnapping involving sub-Saharan suspects, although always presumed to be culprits, are mythopoesises. For instance, Attounissia’s article “In Tataouine: When will he know the truth about the kidnapping and killing of his son?”³⁴ has all the elements of dramatization like proper names, narration, description, the exact ransom, specific places, etc. The story of the ruthless “African” murderer and the distraught Tunisian victim

29 Al-Sabah, news of 17/03/2013.

30 Al-Jomhouria, news of April 2014.

31 The administrator of the Facebook page strives to link sub-Saharan students to Ebola and prostitution. The whole article (posted in 2015) advocates shunning these students from coming to Tunisia to avoid the spread of Ebola, an “African” virus. The page is Tunisian Central Intelligence Agency (Wikalet Al Estakhbarat El markazia Attounissia). The page, as hundreds of suspicious Facebook accounts, disappeared.

32 Akher Khabar, They were arrested near the Tunisian border, African immigrants with military training and links to terrorism, 23 December 2016.

33 To van Leeuwen, mythopoesis, as a legitimation discursive strategy has recourse to “stories [with] symbolic actions...that can nevertheless represent more than one domain of institutionalized social practice and so provide a ‘mythical mode of social action’ (119).

34 14/01/2013.

contributes to consolidating the myth of others sub-Saharan as “criminals”.

Framing sub-Saharan as “criminal others” is betrayed by the recourse to the topos of numbers. For instance, in its news reporting/stories about sub-Saharan as “criminals”, Al-Sabah, which is a historic and independent daily newspaper launched in 1951, employs specific numbers, for example the embezzlement “of 5 billion dollars” and “3 Africans arrested”.³⁵ The topos of numbers justifies a given stance and calls for a specific action to be performed. Ruth Wodak argues that such topoi as danger/threat, numbers and authority are used to “negotiate [...] specific agenda” or with a view to “trying to convince an audience of one’s interests, visions or positions” (Wodak 2009, 44). It seems that Tunisian media discourse chose to align against a prototype of a “criminal other”, who is invading and corrupting the society.

4.2 *Sub-Saharan: the Wretched Other, a dehumanizing discourse*

The sub-Saharan “other” in Tunisian media discourse is either a criminal or a victim. Yet, he/she is not a victim of the host country’s unfair policies or xenophobic society, but a victim of his/her own choice. This stance is reflected in the intensification of news and stories about sub-Saharan’s deaths at sea, as well as the extensive use of topoi of burdening, numbers, and urgency. In covering the death and loss of sub-Saharan in *harga* to Europe, “the deadliest destination”,³⁶ media discourse depicts an image of sub-Saharan as an uncontrollable disastrous happening. That explains the recurrent use of topos of danger like “disaster” or “marine catastrophe” or “marine disasters” or “tragic/tragedy”. This hyperbolic language, coupled with a rhetoric of danger, invokes the burdens of the state not only in preventing these catastrophic happenings, which are out of control, but also in managing the death tolls and human losses.

The topos of burden in relation to thwarting these *harga*

35 News published in February 2012 (the exact date could not be identified in the online archive).

36 Media-plus.tn, opinion article by Beshir Jouini in 2015.

operations is manifested through the rhetoric of disaster and legal/humanitarian discourse. The media coverage of such incidents usually includes reference to humanitarian operations deployed to search for the dead. Red Crescent efforts often include many days of patrols searching the shores and sea, and incessant efforts to bury the dead, which often turn to an impossible mission due to the “burden” of finding an appropriate cemetery for these “wretched”, “unidentifiable” almost non-human “others”, who do not belong to this land.

On July 4, 2019, a boat with almost 90 sub-Saharan migrants sank. Using mythopoesis, again, the *harga* fiasco was reported extensively to build a myth of a heroic state saving the wretched from their self-inflicted destiny. Media discourse on this incident framed “clandestine immigrants” as a burden to the central and regional governments. In the articles covering the incident, the topos of burden is employed through the reiterative, chronological and detailed account of such disaster from recovery, to transfer to hospital, autopsy, identification/failure of identification, repatriation or return to Zarzis, and burial. In many pieces, for instance the Babnet coverage, the use of time references³⁷ intensifies the image of this energy-consuming burden. The detailed description of the burial operations is another way to invoke the burdening effect of “the wretched” other. The article mentions many state agencies and stakeholders, like the national guard, Red Crescent, forensic medicine, municipality, governorate, etc., to depict the burden of “illegal” sub-Saharan migration. These “dead secret immigrants”, to quote the Head of the Municipal Council of Zarzis, constitute a “crisis”:

“[...] dealing with the crisis of the dead secret immigrants was *not an easy task ... accomplished at the expense of its daily work...*, incurred the *hardships* of this task years ago, which is *frustrating and psychologically challenging...* due to the horror of the scenes... However, we will *continue to deal* with the file of the dead immigrants, with our own resources, *tirelessly*”.³⁸

37 From 4 to 11 July.

38 Babnet, The mayor of Zarzis uncovers the clandestine *immigrants file and calls for not tampering with it*, July 2019.

(Translation and emphasis author's own)

The pseudo-humanitarian and dehumanizing discourse adopted by the Tunisian official further enhances the chasm between Us/Them, and “others” the sub-Saharanans. Mythopoesis is deployed to portray Tunisians as heroes who strive to bury these other “Africans” who are liable for their own death. Attributes such as “clandestine” and “illegal” divulge the media’s stance from these “others” as they are depicted as culprits and perpetrators of *harga* crimes, even if they are themselves victims of this inevitable migratory route.

The treatment of the “wretched other” as a burden, is added to a manifest use of numbers topos, thus reducing sub-Saharanans to numbers weighing on the state and society. Tunisian media bombard their readers with numbers, “61 bodies”, “86 migrants”, “45 bodies”, burying 74 corpses”,³⁹ “9 drowned Africans”, “86 corpses”, “74 of the bodies”,⁴⁰ etc. There is a quasi-systematic recourse to numbers in news about sub-Saharanans’ loss, deaths, or arrests. Even as victims, the “wretched others” are put to trial for being “clandestine” and attempting to “illegally” leave the *very* country which stigmatizes them. Tunisia, in this media rhetoric, is a trap where sub-Saharanans are double-jeopardized. These “Africans” are prosecuted, even figuratively, for irregular entry, but once they decide to leave and free themselves from this “irregularity”, they are prosecuted again, dead, or alive.

5. Conclusion

The present analysis of media representations of sub-Saharanans in Tunisia, from 2012 to 2019, through the lens of the DHA and SI attempted to explore the “how” of sub-Saharan representations in Tunisian media. However, the “why” begs the question of the motives for media actors’ *silencing* and *othering* discourse of sub-

39 Ibid.

40 National Radio, news of 19/07/2019.

Saharans, in the light of the political agenda and policy shifts in Tunisia. Moreover, the dynamics of representation in the Tunisian mediascape deserve further investigation in close connection with the fluctuating domestic socio-political and legal context and the technological affordances enabling the migrant groups to challenge the hegemonic media and their narratives. Indeed, further investigation into the sub-Saharanans' self-representations and the sociolegal ramifications of these clashing (self)representations can help researchers and policymakers acquire knowledge about the media/law system dynamics in Tunisia.

It is noteworthy that the findings of this study, which is centered on South-South migration dynamics, are consistent with the literature on media representations of immigrants and refugees in the Global North. Hence, migrant social reception in the Global South does not seem to diverge from that in the North where *antagonism*, *fear*, and *difference* predominantly govern the discourse on migrants. However, the terminological inaccuracies, the overlapping use of “illegal”, “irregular”, and “clandestine” is telling of an incongruous understanding of the sub-Saharan migratory phenomenon in South countries. Hence, future research should be carried out on the intertwined relations between the media discourse and political/legal dynamics in Tunisia, as a South destination country, to better understand this discrepancy.

Finally, the findings of the present study call for a reassessment of the media discourse with regard to sub-Saharanans, especially in the light of the new Organic Law No. 2018-50, dated October 23, 2018, eliminating all forms of racial discrimination. Indeed, Article 3 of the abovementioned law clearly mandates the state to establish policies and strategies to prevent racial discrimination and fight racist stereotypes, notably in education and media, inter alia. It also joins the civil society calls for a full-fledged migratory policy and protocols for a better integration of sub-Saharan migrants.

Bibliography

- Blumer H. 1969. *Fashion: From Class Differentiation to Collective Selection*, in «*Sociological Quarterly*», 10, 1969, pp. 275 ff.
- Cassarini C. 2020. *L'immigration subsaharienne en Tunisie: de la reconnaissance d'un fait social à la création d'un enjeu gestionnaire*, in «*Migrations Société*», 179(1), 2020, pp. 43 ff.
- Eberl J.M. et al. 2018. *The European media discourse on immigration and its effects: a literature review*, in «*Annals of the International Communication Association*», 42, 2018, pp. 207 ff.
- El Ghali A. 2022. *The protection of sub-Saharan migrants in Tunisia: community responses and institutional questioning*, in «*Journal of the British Academy*», 10(3), 2022, pp. 145 ff.
- Fairclough N. 2004. *Analyzing Discourse, Textual Analysis for Social Research*, Routledge.
- Fairclough N., Wodak R. 1997. *Critical Discourse Analysis*, in van Dijk T. (ed.), *Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Introduction*, 2, Sage, pp. 258 ff.
- Forchtner B., Wodak R. 2018. *Critical Discourse Studies: a critical approach to the study of language and communication*, in Wodak R., Forchtner B. (eds.) *Routledge Handbooks in Linguistics*, Routledge, pp. 135 ff.
- Gerbner G., Gross L. 1976. *Living with Television: The Violence Profile*, in «*Journal of Communication*», 26(2), 1976, pp. 172 ff.
- Inankul H. 2016. *An Analysis on the Impact of the Syrian Refugees on Turkey's Security with the Main Subjects of Migration and Criminal Acts*, in «*European Scientific Journal*», 12(5), 2016, pp. 297 ff.
- Jensen S.Q. 2011. *Othring, Identity Formation and Agency*, in «*Qualitative Studies*», 2(2), 2011, pp. 63 ff.
- Krzyzanowski M. 2010. *The Discursive Construction of European Identities: A Multilevel Approach to Discourse and Identity in the Transforming European Union*, Peter Lang.
- Lauvergnier C. 2016. *Trois jeunes Congolais agressés au couteau à Tunis: "Ce n'est pas un cas isolé"*, France 24. <https://observers.france24.com/fr/20161226-tunisie-agression->

- etudiants-congolais-africains-couteau-gorge-racisme-hopital (accessed 26/05/2023).
- Media consumption in Tunisia. 2016. *Global Media Registry*. <https://tunisia.mom-gmr.org/en/context/media-consumption> (accessed 26/05/2023).
- Media in Tunisia. 2021. *Fanack*, <https://fanack.com/tunisia/media-in-tunisia> (accessed 26/05/2023).
- Merskin D. 1998. *Sending up Signals: A Survey of Native American Media Use and Representation in the Mass Media*, in «Howard Journal of Communication», 9(4), 1998, pp. 333 ff.
- Meyer C. 2001. *A Case in Case Study Methodology*, in «Field Methods», 13, 2001, pp. 329 ff.
- Migration non réglementaire: Tunisie. 2017. FTDES, <https://ftdes.net/rapports/fr.migration.janvier2017.pdf/> (accessed 26/05/2023).
- Moscovici S. 1961. *La Psychanalyse, son image, son public. Étude sur la représentation sociale de la psychanalyse*, Presses Universitaires de France.
- Nasraoui M. 2017. *Les travailleurs migrants subsahariens en Tunisie face aux restrictions législatives sur l'emploi des étrangers*, in «Reconnu-e-s réfugié-e-s et après?», 33, 2017, pp. 159 ff.
- Reisigl M., Wodak R. 2009. *The discourse-historical approach (DHA)*, in Wodak R., Meyer M. (eds.), *Methods for Critical Discourse Analysis*, Sage (2nd revised edition), pp. 87 ff.
- Richardson J., Colombo M. 2013. *Continuity and change in anti-immigrant discourse in Italy*, in «Journal of Language and Politics», 12(2), 2013, pp. 180 ff.
- Spivak C.G. 1988. *Can the Subaltern Speak?*, in Nelson C., Grossberg L. (eds.), *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture London*, Macmillan, pp. 271 ff.
- Triandafyllidou A., Wodak R. 2003. *Conceptual and methodological questions in the study of collective identities*, in «Journal of Language and Politics», 2(2), 2003, pp. 205 ff.
- Tuchman G. 2000. *The Symbolic Annihilation of Women by the Mass Media*, in *Culture and Politics*, Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 150 ff.
- Van Dijk T.A. 1991. *Racism and the Press*, Routledge.
- Van Dijk T.A. 2010. *Discourse, Knowledge, Power and Politics:*

- Towards critical epistemic discourse analysis*, in Hard C.J. (ed.), *Critical discourse studies in context and cognition*, John Benjamins, pp. 27 ff.
- Van Leeuwen T. 2008. *Discourse and Practice: New Tools for Critical Discourse Analysis*, Oxford University Press.
- Wodak R. 2009. *Critical Discourse Analysis: history, agenda, theory, and methodology*, in Wodak R., Meyer M. (eds.), *Methods for Critical Discourse Analysis*, Sage (2edition), pp. 1 ff.
- Wodak R., Meyer M. 2009. *Critical Discourse Analysis: History, Agenda, Theory, and Methodology*, in Wodak R., Meyer M. (eds.), *Methods for Critical Discourse Analysis*, Sage, pp. 1 ff.
- Wodak R., Boukala S. 2015. *European Identities and the Revival of Nationalism in the European Union: A discourse historical approach*, in «Journal of Language and Politics», 14(1), 2015, pp. 87 ff.
- Wodak R. 2011. *Suppression of the Nazi Past, Coded Languages, and Discourses of Silence: Applying the Discourse-Historical Approach to Post-War Anti-Semitism in Austria*, in Steinmetz W. (ed.), *Political Languages in the Age of Extremes*, Oxford University Press, pp. 351 ff.
- Wodak R. 2015. *Critical Discourse Analysis, Discourse-historical Approach*, in Tracy K., Ilie C., Sandel T. (eds.), *The international encyclopedia of language and social interaction*, John Wiley & Sons, pp. 14 ff.

IDA SAIDANI¹, NIEVES ORTEGA-PÉREZ²

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT DEBATE ON SOLIDARITY VIEWED THROUGH THE LENS OF CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS (CDA)

1. Introduction

The European Parliament (EP) has been considered as “the good” at migration-related issues among the European Union’s triangle, together with the European Commission and the Council (Acosta 2009, 20). Drawing parallels between these three and the film *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly*, Diego Acosta states that “different evolving alliances between the actors and different events change the balance of power among the players” (20). As in the film, the EP is the site for bringing members (MEPs) who get involved in “a lot of political ‘horse trading’” (Versluis et al. 2011, 140). Henceforth, negotiations among MEPs make of the plenary “the most visible venue” (Greene, Cross 2017, 77) that unravels how they interact with each other, and how “the policy agenda of the EP evolves and responds to internal and external stimuli” (Greene, Cross 2017). It is important to mention that MEPs sit in political groups that reflect traditional European party ideologies. Studies on the political groups of the EP and their formation are prevalent, and they shed light on how the political parties operate.³

-
- 1 Ph.D. student in Migration Studies, Faculty of Political Science and Sociology, University of Granada (UGR). Email address: aidasaidani@correo.ugr.es Acknowledgement: This article is part of my PhD research in Migration Studies at the University of Granada (Spain) thanks to an Erasmus+ mobility scholarship within the framework of the Erasmus+ Capacity Building Project Migrants. Information available at: <https://migrantsproject.eu/> (accessed 06/01/2023).
 - 2 Ph.D. in Political Science and Administration and a Senior Lecturer of Sociology at the University of Granada. Email address: ortega@ugr.es
 - 3 See Bressanelli 2012; Gabel, Huber 2000; Hix et al. 2007; Hloušek, Kopeček 2010; Høyland et al. 2014; McElroy, Benoit 2012.

Against this background and reflecting upon two events labelled as “crises” in the European Union, i.e., the 2011 Lampedusa “refugee crisis” and the 2015-2016 Syrian “refugee crisis”, this paper seeks to examine how MEPs with diverse ideologies invoke the term solidarity in plenary debate on migration. More precisely, it focuses on the debate on non-legislative own-initiative reports (INIs). The latter are indirect parliamentary initiatives that aim at addressing a problematic issue. They are called “urgency resolutions” that bring a topic to light. They are the result of debate among the MEPs, first at committee level, and then during plenary. For political groups, own-initiative resolutions are:

“core instruments which allow them to present their original point of view on a given issue. Even if INI reports do not result in the adoption of new regulatory or redistributive legislation, they allow political groups to make prove of their collective – denationalised – interest and position in EU politics”.⁴

It is worth mentioning that own-initiative reports have not been addressed thoroughly thus far in the literature. The latter has mainly focused on the EP political groups and their formation, without specifically addressing these reports, which are considered as the “calling card for the European Parliament as a whole as well as for its political groups and members of the European Parliament” (Vögtle 2010, 2).

Accordingly, this paper contributes to the existing literature in three ways: first, it seeks to fill a gap by focusing on debates on own-initiative reports, which are, as mentioned above, under-researched. Second, it informs about how ideology permeates migration discourse through applying Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to the two selected debates. Last but not least, it contributes to discussion on the EU as a site of political and ideological struggle on migration-related issues, especially during plenary, an important yet under-investigated issue.

4 Maurer A., Wolf M., 2020. *The European Parliament's right of initiative*, P38, The European Parliament's right of initiative (europa.eu) (accessed 11/09/2021).

1.1 *Solidarity debate in the European Union*

As far as the EU's triangle is concerned, the EP was “the first [...] which fully and explicitly recognised the humanitarian features of the events on the EU borders, focusing the framing on the tragedy of refugees and the loss of human life in the Mediterranean” (Stępką 2022, 95).

Solidarity is enshrined in the EU law. In fact, Article 80 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) states that:

“The policies of the Union set out in this Chapter and their implementation shall be governed by the principle of solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility, including its financial implications, between the Member States. Whenever necessary, the Union acts adopted pursuant to this Chapter shall contain appropriate measures to give effect to this principle.” (C202/78).⁵

Additionally, the TFEU⁶ introduces a whole “Solidarity Clause”, and TFEU Article 222 requires that:

“Member States shall act jointly in a spirit of solidarity if a Member State is the object of a terrorist attack or the victim of a natural or man-made disaster. The Union shall mobilise all the instruments at its disposal, including the military resources made available by the Member States.”⁷

As stated above, solidarity is considered a guiding principle in the EU. Yet, it is seen as going through a “deep crisis” (Marin et al.

5 EU. Consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. Official Journal of the European Union, C326. 26 October 2012c. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:C:2016:202:FULL&from=EN> (accessed 15/09/2022).

6 The TFEU highlights the concept of solidarity in many Articles, apart from article 222 and 80 foregrounded in the text, namely article 2 stresses the fact that solidarity is a founding principle. Article 3 goes further to consolidate solidarity among member states Article 67 (ex article 61 TEC and ex Article 29).

7 Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union 2016 (C202/148).

2020, 2). The concept of solidarity is still contested in academia. It has been widely used in the literature around migration and refugees, especially in the past few years. Solidarity has been defined as “complex, multi-dimensional, and normative” (Bauder, Juffs 2020, 2). Building on Hobbes’ concept of negative freedom, Bauder and Juffs consider “self-centred” solidarity as “based on practical motivations and calculated interest in improving or preserving one’s own situation” (2020, 5). These scholars argue that there is a need for research on the political usage of these types of solidarity, including how decision-makers invoke this concept (Bauder, Juffs 2020, 16). The two selected debates are grounded in Bauder and Juffs’ typology of solidarity with the aim of identifying which type is more detectable.

Table 1: Typology of solidarity and related themes⁸

Solidarity as loyalty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - religion and family - networks of trust and reciprocity - community resource consolidation - religious solidarity as a means of integration
Indigenous solidarity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - internal provision of humanitarian aid to migrants - securitization has dramatic impacts on indigenous communities on both sides of the national border
Self-centred solidarity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - solidarity between European Union member states - burden-sharing - institutional inclusion in the welfare state
Emotional reflexive solidarity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the “humanitarian” version of solidarity - compassion with refugees and migrants - hospitality

8 Source: Reproduced by the authors from Bauder, Juffs (2019) typology of solidarity with permission.

Rational reflexive solidarity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- external humanitarian responsibility of European states and citizens towards refugees and global migrants- EU common humanity: hospitality
Recognitive solidarity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- support for migrants in Europe- activism, volunteering, and support for refugees- solidarity is framed in terms of reciprocity- labor organizing among migrants

2. *Methodological approach: Political Discourse Analysis (PDA)*

The present study seeks to examine how context-bound language constructs reality. According to Gunther Kress (1990)

“No linguistic form is itself neutral; rather, all linguistic forms always express a particular stance, modality, or inflection of the thing to be represented. In other words, the materiality of language itself has meaning, so that to use language is always, inevitably, to enter into particular positions”. (90)

Political Discourse Analysis (PDA) as a subfield of discourse analysis, aims to explore how certain language use is adopted to achieve specific political effects. Political Discourse Analysis draws heavily on all levels of linguistics including lexical, pragmatic, and discursive analysis. Put differently, when analysing a political written or spoken text, every single word matters. This is due to the fact that in the political context, language use is not innocent. Language is a tool by which political actors try either to exercise political power over their opponents or resist this power.⁹

The relevance of PDA to this research lies in the fact that parliamentary discourse, as a political discourse genre, is a rich communicative space wherein MEPs publicly expose their

9 This idea has been clearly addressed by many scholars who investigated Political Discourse Analysis, e.g., Chilton 2004; Fairclough, Fairclough 2012; Fairclough 1995.

ideologies and political programs employing many linguistic tools and discursive strategies. The latter are worthy of analysis considering the socio-cultural and political implications that these structures involve. To this end, this paper uses van Dijk's (1998) Ideological Square analytical framework, which is composed of two main discursive strategies: "positive self-presentation" and "negative other-presentation".¹⁰

The corpus includes 27 debates on own-initiative reports (INIs). Although not all reports are examined here, they are at the core of the debate. For the sake of this paper, we first started by searching the number of mentions in the 27 INIs for the recurrence of the term "solidarity". We identified two debates with the highest number of mentions. Then, we contextualized these debates to see the reasons why solidarity had been invoked. It is worth mentioning here that while the 2011 debate is available in English at the EU Legislative Observatory,¹¹ the 2015-2016 is not, therefore we proceeded with transcribing the English interpretation of the latter.

The first selected report¹² entitled "*Migration flows arising from instability: scope and role of the EU foreign policy*," and drafted by the Committee for Foreign Affairs, was tabled on the 4 April 2011. The second report¹³ titled "*the Situation in the Mediterranean and need for a holistic EU approach to migration*" was prepared by the committee for Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs

10 In his socio-cognitive approach to ideology, van Dijk proposes a paradigm that consists of four main moves: (1) Express/emphasize information that is positive about Us; (2) Express/emphasize information that is negative about Them; (3) Suppress/de-emphasize information that is positive about Them; (4) Suppress/de-emphasize information that is negative about Us. These four moves constitute what van Dijk named the "ideological square".

11 See, <https://oeil.secure.europarl.europa.eu/>.

12 EP. "EU response to the migration flows in North Africa and the Southern Mediterranean, in particular in Lampedusa - Migration flows arising from instability: scope and role of EU foreign policy (debate) [2010/2269(INI)]. 4 April 2011. Available at: <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/> (accessed 15/09/2021).

13 EP. *Situation in the Mediterranean and need for a holistic EU approach to migration* [2015/2095(INI)]. 12 April 2016. Available at: <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/> (accessed 15/09/2021).

(LIBE).¹⁴ The connecting thread between the two debates selected for analysis is that they invoke solidarity during times of so-called “migration crises”.

The debates are coded using Atlas-ti. In doing so, we used a purposive sampling “with the aim of increasing the depth (as opposed to breadth) of understanding” (Campbell et al. 2020, 2). Coding “may help to remove biases of the research, such as cherry-picking data. The consideration and selection of coding techniques also add to the systematic approach to taking research design choices” (Schebesta 2018, 20). Finally, in analysing the texts, we proceeded with italicizing the segments of speech that refer to van Dijk’s discursive strategies highlighted above. The examples are selected following van Dijk’s “ideological square”.

3. Critical Discourse Analysis of the Own-Initiative Reports on Lampedusa and the Syrian “refugee crisis”

3.1 Lampedusa: the harbinger of the “refugee crisis”

Celia Wikström (Swedish MEP ALDE)¹⁵ uses the discursive strategy of hyperbole to foreground that Lampedusa is under threat, because it is taking in more migrants and refugees than its size allows. The use of the adverb “worryingly” conveys a state of anxiety regarding the EU’s failure to meet its solidarity obligations. Moreover, in her speech, Wikström uses the denomination¹⁶ “people” when referring to migrants. She repetitively uses the modal verb “must...” to convey a sense of obligation on behalf of the EU. Moreover, she refers to the authority of “international commitments” to make the other MEPs adhere to her call for commitment. Emphasis is thus placed more on positive self-

14 It is worth mentioning that the two debates make part of a larger PhD research data on analysing own- initiative reports on migration from the seventh and eighth EU parliaments.

15 The Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe

16 According to van Dijk (2011), migrants are often described as different from Us (they are strangers, immigrants, Others, opponents, enemies, etc).

presentation, through showing commitment to the “common safety and stability” of the “Us”.¹⁷

“Thousands of people have also arrived on the small Italian island of Lampedusa when a Member State, for whatever reason, is extremely overburdened.

We have committed ourselves to implement this, and we must do so, and we must do it in a spirit of solidarity, with respect for international commitments for the common safety and stability of everyone” [Italics added].

The italicized parts of the speech below shows that Mara Bizzotto (Italian MEP, EFD)¹⁸ uses hyperbole to instil a feeling of threat in the audience. She also uses the metaphor of invasion and military jargon to convey a feeling of insecurity on the part of the in-group (Us).

Furthermore, she polarizes the listeners geographically into “Europeans” and “North Africans”. As far as solidarity among Member States is concerned, the MEP uses a rhetorical question to draw MEPs attention to the EU’s support for Italy. She accuses the Council of being guilty. As shown below the MEP employs the discursive strategy of denomination to “other” migrants and describe them as “law violators”. Furthermore, Bizzotto uses the strategy of evidentiality¹⁹ by mentioning that France is ridding itself of migrants. The MEP creates a dividing line between the positively presented “Us” (Italians) and the negatively presented “them” (French). This is another example of positive self-presentation and euphemism,²⁰ since Italy has acted better than France on the issue of “illegal” migration. The last sentence shows

17 “Us” versus “Them” dichotomy highlighted in van Dijk’s analytical framework mentioned above.

18 Europe of Freedom and Democracy.

19 This analytical category conveys the credibility, objectivity, and reliability of the speaker’s information. According to van Dijk (2004), evidentiality is a form of intertextuality.

20 This strategy aims at mitigating the negative acts of the ingroup, “whereas the negative characteristics of the outgroup will tend to be expressed in hyperboles, those of the ingroup will usually be expressed in euphemisms” (van Dijk, 2011).

the MEP's anti-immigration attitude as she proposes the return of migrants. Using the apparent sympathy strategy, Bizzotto calls on the member states to share the burden of the "Libyan refugees".

"Lampedusa has been invaded by tens of thousands of North Africans.

Italy has [...] been targeted by hundreds of boats of illegal immigrants. If we do not react together, if the EU does not react, the migratory wave of displaced people will continue.

immigrants who have arrived in recent months must be sent home...

The Italian Government has been left alone to handle this biblical exodus of such unforeseeable dimensions.

Where is Europe? Until now, Brussels has been guilty of hiding; my fellow citizens can no longer stand its shameful behaviour. Europe has left Italy alone to face the unprecedented emergency. Europe should instead assist Italy in the repatriation of illegal immigrants and must also support the efforts of the Italian Government to prevent thousands and thousands of people from continuing to leave, mainly from Tunisia.

The Libyan refugees are a different matter [...] The reception of those fleeing from the war cannot be the burden of Italy alone. It is time to stop talking.

The European Union needs to make its presence felt. We cannot accept the fact that Italy is filled with illegal immigrants, while France rejects them so shamefully. The illegal immigrants should be sent back home, while all Member States must now commit themselves to receiving the Libyan refugee" [Italics added].

In the extract below, Carlos Coelho (EPP)²¹ uses exaggeration and data fallacy. Once more, the use of this category implies that Lampedusa is under threat and that its demographic composition is changing. Yet, Coelho is not as explicit as his EFD²² colleague whose anti-immigration discourse is more obvious. Coelho mentions authority, by referring to his colleague Rui Tavares from the GUE/NGL²³ political group who champions the idea of relocation of migrants within the European Union. The EPP

21 The European People's Party.

22 Europe of Freedom and Democracy.

23 The European United Left/Nordic Green Left.

MEP proposes the adoption of a humanist approach to managing migration. Ultimately, as his colleague from the EFD group, Coelho blames the Council for failing to meet its obligations.

“The chaotic situation on the island of Lampedusa [...] with the number of refugees exceeding the number of residents.

The Member States that are particularly affected [...] *urgently* need to receive the necessary support [...] to respond to *the massive migratory flows*, and to be able to respond with humanity to the human pressure with which we are faced

I also agree with what *Mr. Tavares* has already said about the process for relocating refugees. It is important that *the Council, which is not present for this debate, stops hiding behind legal pretexts* and is able to bring this matter of refugee resettlement to a successful conclusion.

I believe that we need more solidarity between the Member States of the Union, improved coordination of efforts, and a sharing of responsibilities and burdens.” [Italics added].

As shown in the excerpt given below, Rosario Crocetta (S&D)²⁴ resorts to the discursive strategy of evidentiality by saying that he was eyewitness to the conditions of the migrants in Lampedusa. Additionally, he uses the rhetorical strategy of number game to foreground migrants’ miserable conditions. In the same vein, number game is used to tell the story about how children live on the island. He uses comparison to negatively represent the “Other”, in this case Tunisia, as a “poor” country that succeeds in showing solidarity, while “Us”, “Europeans,” fail to do so. Last but not least, the MEP presents evidence to prove that the EU should stand by the children who succeeded in changing the fate of Tunisia, and this implies that the EU should welcome them.

“[...] it is sad to note that sometimes, the West can find great solidarity when it comes to bombing, sending companies into third world countries and taking oil, but finds it more of a struggle to make solidarity and migration policies.

I went to Lampedusa on Monday and saw 4 000 - 5 000 people on the ground, huddling together to sleep under the sun and the rain,

24 The Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats.

doing their business where they ate and not being able to change the wet clothes.

Among these were 4 500 children, 12–13-year-old kids, living under the same conditions, conditions of discomfort shared also by the inhabitants of Lampedusa. Tunisia is now home to 150 000 migrants who come from Libya and shows its solidarity. It is a poor country showing solidarity, while wealthy Europe is unable to accommodate 5 000 migrants. Europe should instead show its solidarity to these wonderful kids who have sparked the Jasmine Revolution originating in Sidi Bouzid that is changing North Africa and the world” [Italics added].

In the extract below, Christine Vergiat (GUE/NGL) uses the face-keeping strategy of disclaimer “but” which serves as self-positive presentation. Vergiat refers to the concept of “fortress-Europe” and showcases the EU’s failure to learn from the success stories of the revolutions taking place in the Arab World. She employs the strategies of authority and number game to show how “Them”, i.e., Tunisians, succeeded in hosting “100000 Libyan refugees”, while “Us” (Europe/ans) fail in that, and this implies that Europe has not succeeded in taking the lead. On the contrary, it nurtures xenophobia. By referring to “certain Member States”, the French MEP implicitly refers to the measures taken by France and Italy to stop migration.

“[...] This report refuses to see that migration is primarily a *South-South issue* [...] True, *the European Union cannot accommodate all the destitute people in the world, but it is in no danger of having to do so*; the figures are there to prove it, regardless of the fuss some people are making [...]

This report remains in the tradition of *this inward looking fortress Europe*, in defiance of its own interests, particularly its demographic ones.

No, the European Union has not learnt from the revolutions taking place in the Arab states. *It is not showing solidarity. In the space of a few days, the Tunisians have accommodated more than 100 000 Libyan refugees in exemplary conditions. No, Commissioner, Europe’s talk is no match for the problems facing the world. It will only fuel the xenophobic policies of certain Member States, and I regret that”* [Italics added].

The extract below reveals, Greens/EFA²⁵ MEP Benarab-Attou uses the pronoun “we” and this is a an ingroup marker. Furthermore, she uses the fallacy of mentioning authority, when she referred Berlusconi and Guéant, in order to support her argument. She further states that Italy and France are undermining European Union values when dealing with migration and securitizing their borders. She, like Carlos Coelho, calls for the adoption of a humanist approach in managing migration. Benarab-Attou uses polarization and categorization, and in this case the use of the binary division “North/South”, positively in an attempt to highlight the idea of fostering cooperation.

“[...] The use of the words ‘migration flows’ gives the impression that migrants are commodities or invaders. These are historic times for the peoples of the Southern Mediterranean and us, but the fear of mass immigration is preventing the EU and the Member States from creating a new dynamic. The recent democratic movements in the South have helped make us aware of our contradictions. They have demonstrated once again the inconsistency and lack of vision of our obsolete and out-of-touch cooperation policies [...] our humanist values [...] We must meet the expectations of the peoples of the South. The fear of immigration must no longer guide our policies. Strengthening border controls must no longer be our main motivation in implementing cooperation agreements, as it was in the case of Libya. We must review the conditions necessary for any signing of agreements on the movement of persons involving readmission agreements, so that we respect human rights. Our actions are still characterised by a security-driven approach to mobility, which goes against our values and the requirement we have to protect populations. The scandalous position adopted by Mr. Berlusconi and Mr. Guéant must be vigorously denounced” [Italics added].

3.2 Tackling the Syrian refugee crisis: is there any holistic approach to immigration?

In the text below, Roberta Metsola (EPP) highlights the idea of “shared values”, which is another form of positive self-presentation. On one hand, she agrees with opening safe access

25 The Greens/European Free Alliance (Greens/EFA).

routes for migrants; on the other hand, she admits that security of Europe/ans should be provided at “the external borders.” She argues that there are fears that need to be lifted and this could only be done through securitizing borders. The very mention of the term “security” refers to migration as a threat, which implicitly attributes negative traits to the “Other”.

“We draw differences between those who are in need of protection and those who come to Europe for work [...] If we are a Union of shared values, we must now truly become a Union of shared responsibility [...] On security, we cannot bury our heads in the sand. Security fears do exist among our citizens, and states must fulfil their obligations at the external borders if these fears are to be in any way allayed” [Italics added].

In the following text, Kashetu Kyenge (S&D) emphasizes the need for cooperation with “third countries” in combatting “trafficking and smuggling”. He uses the denomination “economic migrants” to differentiate between those who have legitimacy to access Europe, and those who first need to meet certain criteria. He uses the idiomatic expression “put the final nail in the coffin” to imply that migration is a matter of life and death, and if not handled properly, it will cause the collapse of the European Project.

“[...] We call for greater cooperation with third countries, the relaunch of certain processes, including Rabat and Khartoum, and above all we call for strong measures to combat human trafficking and smuggling [...] We call on Member States to implement tangible measures to provide housing, access to education, and to intensify intercultural dialogue [...] It is now up to the Member States to decide whether to follow our lead or put the final nail in the coffin of the European integration. The future of Europe also depends on how much we are capable of sharing our European dream and values.” [Italics added].

In the example below, ECR²⁶ member Eleni Theocharous uses the denomination “European Refugees” and “refugees arriving in Europe” to say that priority should be given to the former

26 European Conservatives and Reformists.

category. Positive self-presentation is apparent here by showing that “Europeans” are themselves “refugees” in their countries and they need support. Yet, they welcome those arriving in Europe. She uses hyperbole “tsunami” for the sake of projecting her fear into the other MEPs. Her use of the word “target” emphasizes a sense of attack from Turkey on the EU. Eventually, the MEP uses apparent sympathy by using the expression “poor refugees” to show how Turkey is using refugees to threaten the EU.

“I would like to remind you that *European citizens are refugees too, have been living for years in the European Union in miserable conditions, without any support, and yet they warmly embrace the refugees arriving in Europe today.* Migration is becoming a *tsunami* ready to *overwhelm Europe* [...] We need solidarity between Member States, a proper asylum system, a proper immigration policy, a fair burden-sharing. *Today, Greece is facing the biggest problem, but the Republic of Cyprus is also becoming the new target of Turkey, which has begun to send the poor refugees in order to blackmail the European Union, and the EU opens funds for Turkey*” [Italics added].

The example stated below shows that the British MEP, Janice Atkinson (ENF)²⁷ is using the strategy of authority by mentioning British writer and TV producer Trevor Phillips’ study on “*What do British Muslims really think?*”. This was a question asked in a Channel 4 survey. The use of the metaphorical idiom, “elephant in the room,” says that Islam is a threat, however many seem to ignore its presence. Thus, she refers to some of the study’s findings to support her claim. By mentioning members who oppose her views on migration, this MEP creates a categorical division of people in ingroup “us” and outgroup “them”. She also uses positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation (English Law versus Sharia Law). Additionally, her use of the denomination “so-called refugees” implies that many of them are “fake”. As for Muslims, they are being “othered”, since “*their values*” are irreconcilable with “*our liberal western democracies*”. Ultimately, this extract is an example of positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation, especially when she implies that Muslim men are rapists, sexual assaulters, and paedophiles.

27 Europe of Nations and Freedom.

“The rapporteurs [...] have not confronted the elephant in the room: Islam. The most comprehensive study of British Muslims – and I would say Muslims in Europe, actually – ever conducted, by Trevor Phillips, the former chairman of the Commission for Racial Equality, draws some very disturbing conclusions, particularly for the Socialists in this House and the members of the Committee on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality. [...] More than 100 000 British Muslims said that they had sympathy for people who take part in suicide bombings [...] Unfortunately, these are widespread views among the Muslim communities in the UK. I think the so-called refugees on our borders need to be repatriated to Muslim countries, as their values are clearly incompatible with our liberal western democracies. This will avoid the current clash of cultures that denigrates the achievements of Western civilisation and flouts the protection of women, the gay community and vulnerable children, who are being attacked by Muslim gangs and migrants who deplore our way of life” [Italics added].

Regarding Atkinson’s speech, GUE/NGL MEP Sofia Sakorafa uses evidentiality to refer to Chilcot Report and Tony Blair’s public declaration of using “fake data in order to attack Iraq”. The Greek MEP accuses Britain of causing suffering to the Iraqi people, but the ENF member does not seem to recognize the use of fake data, she instead uses Trevor’s report, which is contested.

“[...] Your Prime Minister has publicly stated that he used fake data in order to attack Iraq, to tear an entire country apart? Have you ever thought as people about this, have you ever thought about the responsibilities you have vis-à-vis all these people who have been forced to take to the streets, who have no homes, whose children are starving, who at this moment are forced to be refugees all over Europe and begging to live like human beings? Have you ever reflected on this?” [Italics added].

In the example that follows, Gerard Batten (EFDD)²⁸ refers to the “EU Referendum” to convince the British who are still hesitant to vote to leave the EU, because “solidarity in the area of migration” represents a threat to the British if they decide to remain part of the

28 Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy was a continuation for the Eighth European Parliament of the EFD group that has been stated above.

EU. The use of the discursive strategy of the number game, migration is represented as a threat to security. Using the strategy of authority, by referring to Angela Merkel, the MEP accuses her of being accomplice since she takes in more migrants, which is an implication that British security is not guaranteed, and therefore, she uses anti-immigration discourse to urge the British to vote leave the EU.

“Anyone in Britain who is still unsure on how to vote in the EU referendum should think about what is to come if they vote to remain in the EU. The report states that the EU Treaty gives a legal basis to implement the principle of solidarity in the area of migration. This is part of a common immigration and asylum policy which Britain cannot avoid if it stays in the European Union. It calls for a binding mechanism on all Member States for the distribution of asylum seekers. It says that asylum seekers should be viewed as seeking asylum in the Union as a whole and not in individual Member States. Mrs Merkel opened the floodgates by inviting anybody to come who wanted to. They took her at her word. More than a million have come and many millions more will try to follow. This was not done by accident. The EU has a commitment to endless, mass, uncontrolled migration, both within its borders and from without. David Cameron did not even try to gain concessions on immigration in his so—called renegotiation with the European Union. There is nothing in his famous reforms that takes back any control whatsoever over migration. If the British people want their government to have any control on migration whatsoever, then they must vote to leave the European Union on 23 June” [Italics added].

Cypriot MEP Sylikiotis (GUE/NGL) uses the metaphor “fortress Europe” and the strategy of evidentiality by referring to the EU-Turkey agreement that aims at putting a halt on migration to Europe via Turkey. Sylikiotis uses the water metaphor to argue that countries receiving more refugees should be offered support. The MEP also uses the discursive strategy of comparison to imply that the EU is treating the refugees as enemies who should be confined. In this example, we find that Sylikiotis is portraying the “Us” as perpetrators, against “Them”, whose rights have been violated.

“[...] we need solidarity in practise. We have to equally recognize the failures of the Dublin Regulation and the call for the creation of legal and safe routes, and all Member States should face their

responsibility and protect the rights of refugees. Unfortunately, however, the report also supports *the inhumane military operations, NATO's involvement in the Aegean and the strengthening of border controls,* which make Europe a fortress and sustain crime against refugees. Equally unacceptable, in our view, is the call for the implementation of the European Union-Turkey action plan, which aims to rid the Union of refugees [...] *We demand that the crime be stopped and that the Member States receiving the largest waves of refugees be supported immediately. The European Union has ended up maintaining hotspots as concentration camps and the EU is violating the human rights of refugees*" [Italics added].

The last example by Petras Auštrevičius (ALDE) highlights the need to meet the challenges of globalization. According to him, external borders need to be strengthened and "Schengen rules must be obeyed". He adds that solidarity among Member States can be ensured by revising Dublin III regulation that determines which European Member State is responsible for asylum applications. Ultimately, the MEP emphasizes the need for cooperation with "third countries" in the field of migration.

"As the stronghold of democracy and liberal values, the EU should care about those lives lost at the sea. In the name of the security and prosperity of our peoples the EU should develop a well-functioning, strong mechanism to be able to adequately respond to this challenge of our highly globalised and interdependent world. We have to apply a holistic approach, which means involvement of all the stakeholders and setting the rules of play. The common external border of the EU should be strengthened and managed effectively and inside the EU the Schengen rules must be obeyed. Now we clearly see all disadvantages and gaps of the Dublin III Regulation and call for changes needed to ensure fairness, solidarity and shared responsibility between the EU Member States" [Italics added].

4. Conclusion: the positive self-presentation as hinge discourse on solidarity

Using the discursive strategies of what van Dijk called the "Ideological Square" (van Dijk 1997; van Dijk 2001; van Dijk 2005), we selected one speech per political group from two plenary

sessions at two different times. Our analysis suggests that views on solidarity by MEPs who belong to the same political group converge. Furthermore, we noticed that right-wing to far-right political groups, namely the EFD, EFDD (that replaced EFD in the 8th Parliament and ENF) use blatant anti-immigration discourse. They often use strategies that highlight positive self-presentation, while centre-right groups, namely the EPP and ECR are not too harsh in their speeches, although they do agree with some of the ideas of the right-wing to far-right political groups mentioned above (for instance on issues related to the securitization and militarization of borders). The Social Democrats and Liberal Centrists agree to a certain degree with the moderate right, i.e., they approve of externalizing and securitizing borders, but they frame such proposals within a human rights discourse. Last but not least, they do not negatively label migrants and refugees.

Interestingly, and building on Bauder and Juffs typology of solidarity, as highlighted above, we find strong association between the self-centred solidarity category and speeches by MEPs from the ALDE, EFD, EPP and ECR groups. As explained, MEPs from these groups champion solidarity with Member States for the interest of Europe/ans. They often take recourse to strategies of positive self-presentation when they bring to the fore the values of responsibility and burden-sharing. Yet, and considering the above-mentioned typology provided by Bauder and Juffs, we notice that there is no reference to the institutional inclusion of migrants in the welfare state.

Moreover, only two speeches (one by an ALDE MEP and the other one by an EPP MEP) have a strong association with “rational reflexive solidarity” as explained by Bauder and Juffs. This category of solidarity aims at aiding migrants.

Furthermore, speeches by EPP, Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL members are associated with the category of “emotional reflexive solidarity”, in which “humanitarianism featured strongly [...] as it does in the Emotional Reflective Solidarity category” (Bauder, Juffs 2020, 11).

Lastly, no single speech is associated with the categories of “solidarity as loyalty”, “indigenous solidarity” and “recognitive solidarity”, which means that there is no reference to ethnic and

religious ties or activism and volunteerism in engaging with migrants.

To conclude, CDA, and more particularly van Dijk's Ideological square, has enabled us to conclude that MEPs with different ideologies are associated with different types of solidarity. Members of the political groups who share similar political ideologies associate themselves with the same typology of solidarity as defined by Bauder and Juffs. The conservative and liberal groups tend to focus their discourses on self-centred and rational reflective solidarity; meanwhile, the left-wing groups adopt "emotional reflexive solidarity" discourse.

Bibliography

- Acosta D. 2009. *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly in EU Migration Law: Is the European Parliament Becoming Bad and Ugly? (The Adoption of Directive 2008/15: The Returns Directive)*, in «European Journal of Migration and Law», 11(1), 2009, pp. 19–39 (accessed 10/12/2022).
- Bauder H., Juffs L. 2019. "Solidarity" in the migration and refugee literature: analysis of a concept, in «Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies», 46(1), 2020, pp. 46–65 (accessed 10/12/2022).
- Bressanelli E. 2012. *National Parties and Group membership in the European Parliament: ideology or pragmatism?* in «Journal of European Public Policy», 19(5), 2012, pp. 737–754, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2011.646790> (accessed 20/03/2021)
- Campbell S., Greenwood M., Prior S., Shearer T., Walkem K., Young S., Bywaters D., Walker K. 2020. *Purposive Sampling: complex or simple? Research case examples*, in «Journal of Research in Nursing», 25(8), 2020, pp. 652–661 (accessed 20/03/2021).
- Chilton P. 2004. *Analysing Political Discourse: Theory and Practice*, Routledge.
- Fairclough I., Fairclough N. 2012. *Political Discourse Analysis. A Method for Advanced Students*, Routledge.
- Fairclough N. 1995. *Critical Discourse Analysis*, Longman.

- Gabel M.J., Huber J.D. 2000. *Putting Parties in Their Place: Inferring Party Left-Right Ideological Positions from Party Manifestos Data*, in «American Journal of Political Science», 44(1), 2020, pp. 94-103 (accessed 20/03/2021).
- Greene D., Cross J.P. 2017. *Exploring the Political Agenda of the European Parliament Using a Dynamic Topic Modelling Approach*, in «Political Analysis», 25(1), 2017, pp. 77–94 (accessed 20/03/2021).
- Hix S., Noury A.G., Roland G. 2007. *Democratic Politics in the European Parliament*, Cambridge University Press.
- Hloušek V., Kopeček L. 2010. *Origin, Ideology and Transformation of Political Parties: East-Central and Western Europe Compared*, Ashgate.
- Høyland B., Godbout J.-F., Lapponi E., Velldal E. 2014. *Predicting Party Affiliations from European Parliament Debates*, Proceedings of the ACL 2014 Workshop on Language Technologies and Computational Social Science, 2014, pp. 56–60 (accessed 27/05/2021).
- Kress G. 1990. *Critical Discourse Analysis*, in «Annual Review of Applied Linguistics», 11, 1990, pp. 84–99, (accessed 15/03/2021)
- Marin L., Penasa S., Romeo G. 2020. *Migration Crises and the Principle of Solidarity in Times of Sovereignism: Challenges for EU Law and Polity*, in «European Journal of Migration and Law», 22(1), 2020, pp. 1–10 (accessed 20/12/2022).
- McElroy G., Benoit K. 2012. *Policy Positioning in the European Parliament*, in «European Union Politics», 13(1), 2012, pp. 150–167 (accessed 20/03/2021).
- Schebesta H. 2018. *Content Analysis Software in Legal Research: A Proof of Concept Using ATLAS.ti*, in «Tilburg Law Review», 23(0), 2018, p. 23 (accessed 20/03/2021).
- Stepka M. 2022. *Identifying Security Logics in the EU Policy Discourse*, Springer International Publishing (accessed 25/12/2022).
- Versluis E., van Keulen M., Stephenson P. 2011. *Analyzing the European Union Policy Process*, Palgrave Macmillan.
- Vögtle E.M. 2010. *A Good Bluff is Half the Battle: the Role of*

Non-legislative Reports for the European Parliament, VDM Verlag Dr. Müller.

Van Dijk T.A. (ed.), 1997. *Discourse as Social Interaction: Discourse studies. A multidisciplinary introduction*, vol. 2, Sage Publications, Inc.

Van Dijk T.A. 1998. *Ideology: A Multidisciplinary Approach*, Sage Publications.

Van Dijk T.A. 2001. *Critical Discourse Analysis*, in Tannen D., Schiffrin D., Hamilton H. (eds.), *Handbook of Discourse Analysis*, Oxford Blackwell, pp. 352-371.

Van Dijk T.A. 2005. *Politics, Ideology and Discourse*, in Wodak R. (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics*, Volume on Politics and Language, Elsevier, pp. 728-740.

MIMESIS GROUP
www.mimesis-group.com

MIMESIS INTERNATIONAL
www.mimesisinternational.com
info@mimesisinternational.com

MIMESIS EDIZIONI
www.mimesisedizioni.it
mimesis@mimesisedizioni.it

ÉDITIONS MIMÉSIS
www.editionsmimesis.fr
info@editionsmimesis.fr

MIMESIS COMMUNICATION
www.mim-c.net

MIMESIS EU
www.mim-eu.com

Printed by
Puntoweb s.r.l. – Ariccia (RM)
September 2023

The increase in migratory flows is a global phenomenon associated with regional instabilities and insecurities, including long-term push factor and other factors related to globalization processes in the economic (the gap between the global South and the global North), political (expectations associated with human rights and democracy practices), demographic (declining population in the North, increasing population in the South) and technological sectors (transport and communication innovations). However, local push factors are extremely important and need to be assessed in order to understand the on-going migration process and its variations. The essays propose new ideas, themes and approaches that speak to the varied field of migration studies, starting from the approach of socio-economics, and moving to politics, legal, and philosophical studies, which can open up visibilities to migration phenomena outside the logic of emergency and improve cooperation on international migration.

Serena Marcenò is full professor in Political Philosophy at the University of Palermo. She has extensive experience in governmentality studies, post colonial and gender studies. She is scientific responsible and coordinator of MIGRANTS an Erasmus + Capacity Building for Higher Educations Project with a network of Tunisian and European Universities and NGOs. She published many books, among which, with *Mimesis: Critica della Cooperazione neoliberale, Biopolitica e sovranità e Le tecnologie Politiche dell'acqua*.

Giulia Sajeva is researcher in Political Philosophy at the University of Palermo. She is currently working on the project *Food Sovereignty and Sustainable Development in Sicily. Small-scale and artisanal fisheries and the rights of local communities*, was previously a Marie Curie fellow at the Strathclyde Centre for Environmental Law and Governance (University of Strathclyde, UK) and holds a PhD in human rights: evolution, protection and limits. She published many articles and the book *When Rights Embrace Responsibilities. Biocultural Rights and the Conservation of the Environment*.

