The EU's Problem with Migration

A critical policy analysis and mobility justice

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Abstract

Access to mobility and migration have become highly charged topics. Since the so-called refugee crisis in 2015 the EU has developed a holistic approach to control migration. The 2015 European Agenda on Migration is a policy which has significantly shaped mobility governance since being implemented. However, this response has been heavily criticised.

The aim of this thesis is to understand how the EU contributes to uneven mobility access and reveal the ways in which knowledges and subjects are both relied on and produced through policies. The research takes a normative position to challenge the harmful effects of migration policy and to identify possible alternative solutions which provide more social and spatial justice. The empirical contribution is a qualitative analysis of EU migration policies using the post-structuralist method named '*What's the problem represented to be?*' (WPR). The analysis takes a multidisciplinary approach but draws mostly from critical geography and the mobilities paradigm. The broad concept of *mobility justice* is used to interpret the findings and offer alternative policy solutions. The concept seeks to develop more just relationships to mobility in the context of global mobility regimes, climate change, and colonial legacies.

The analysis showed that EU policy remained silence regarding climate refugees and asylum procedures for climate induced displacement. It sensationalised the mass migration threat and relinquished responsibility from any relational role in the production of migration. A good/bad migrant binary is produced, this hierarchy is formed in relation to a paradigm of suspicion. Lastly, legality is framed by the migrant's relationship to the economy.

Key words: mobility justice, migration, WPR, policy analysis, EU, relational space

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Cover image: *Fallen* by Tintin Wulia (2018)

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1. Introduction

Through the wide-open windows on the second-floor dining hall of the self-governed 'refugee hotel', soft but excited chanting breezed in. After a few seconds the chant became recognisable, a group of high-pitched kids turned the corner and begun walking down the street towards the front entrance: *'City... Plaza... City... Plaza... City... Plaza...'*. The vowels were drawn out as if they were cheering for their favourite football club. They bundled into the reception area below still booming the name of the hotel. They had just finished a short day at a summer school in the central Athens neighbourhood. The kids and their families were mostly from the Middle East and were temporarily staying at the hotel while they navigated the EU asylum system.

Several days later as I walked into the same dining area on the second floor a young Syrian man was being propped up with his back against someone's legs. There was a crowd around him, and an Italian man was explaining how he had been shot and that shrapnel in his brain was causing convulsions. The Italian man had buddied up with the Syrian man to help him during his many daily seizures. As he was explaining this to the concerned group the Syrian man slumped over, biting his tongue. The Italian man shouted that he was having another seizure and tried to prise his mouth open so that he could breathe, and so his tongue would not get wounded. I helplessly fanned his head with my cap.

The previously abandoned hotel was a squat set up by Greek activists and people on the move in Athens with the purpose of housing and supporting those in need as they entered the European Union. I was visiting for several weeks in the summer of 2016 to support their activities. This experience, as well as other solidarity work involving asylum claimants and those effected by EU migration and border controls, led me to develop an interest in how people have such drastically different experiences when travelling. The Syrian man, like thousands of others, waited in Athens. He was not eligible for healthcare in Greece and so could not get treated for his brain injury. These absurdities were regular amongst the stories of people on the move and brought into stark contrast the inequalities resulting from controls over movement. After living in the hotel, I took a flight to Sweden, then to London.

This thesis, then, examines the impact of uneven access to mobility. I do this by conducting a qualitative analysis of EU migration policy. I situate the research in the so-called mobilities paradigm that has developed across the social sciences in the last two decades (Cresswell, 2006, 2010; Sheller & Urry, 2006). I agree with the claim made by mobilities researchers that many social issues revolve around the issue of mobility and immobility (Hannam et al., 2006; Sheller, 2018). The analysis is multidisciplinary but I make good use of the conceptual umbrella of critical geography as well as the overarching concept of *mobility Justice* (Sheller, 2018), which I use to critique EU policy, i.e., I examine what it proposes to do about migration. I take a critical approach to the study of migration with the understanding that policy develops in relation to uneven power relations that 'benefit the members of some groups at the expense of others' (Bacchi, 2009, p. 44), policy is not neutral. Thus, I am concerned with how governing mobility takes place, how access to mobility is presented in a way that allows inequality to flourish, as well as how it shapes our understanding of each other and the various subjects that are constructed through such processes. How is it possible, for instance, for certain groups to become dehumanised and denied healthcare in a space heralded for its human rights and progressive values?

The possibility of being able to step foot inside the EU, in a place like Athens, is a long and dangerous, often deadly process for many groups around the world who are 'blacklisted' from taking official routes to the EU (van Houtum, 2010). Indeed, the modest number of safe, 'legal' resettlement opportunities for those seeking refuge will be addressed below. The possibility of gaining access to the human rights and associated privileges of the EU's core values therefore creates a need for unofficial routes. This is due to the closing and militarisation of external EU borders and the lack of safe passage (MSF, 2016). The use of alternative routes ('irregular migration') are the topic of intense debate and the focal point of many political movements in Europe. This is evident in news media coverage (Berry et al., 2016) and the rise of anti-immigration sentiments, which seeks to exclude the perceived outsider, regardless of legal status (Polovina, 2022). Current research even suggests that EU relocation schemes should factor in the likelihood of local far-right reaction to immigration in order to stem populist movements and sustain a liberal EU (Deole & Davis, 2017).

The EU's reaction to movement across its external borders has been widely criticised. The EU's border regime is said to be underpinned by a racial violence inherent in liberal governance,

whereby direct physical violence exists alongside the indirect violence of inaction (Isakjee et al., 2020). The maritime borders of Europe have been labelled a 'deathscape' due to the amount who have died while crossing the Mediterranean (Genova, 2017, p. 2). Land crossing too are marked by huge loss of live (Genova, 2017, p. 4). Nature itself is said to be mobilised for the purposes of border control. Migrants face spatialised slow-violence through the political production of the exposure to the elements (Schindel, 2022), meaning states can indirectly enact violence onto migrants by blurring accountability and giving agency to 'nature'. The temporal aspect is interesting as it highlights the drawn-out slow violence of 'irregular' routes which many are forced to take. They are routes which highly contrast with the comfort, velocity, and safety of the mobility afforded to privileged populations.

This thesis highlights how the categorisation of mobility affects all groups across European space. Whether that is the production of fear amongst EU citizens (Van Houtum & Pijpers, 2007) or the dehumanising of those categorised as outsiders (Amnesty International, 2021; Statewatch, 2021; Vaughan-Williams, 2015). However, these categorisations are not clear cut. As I show when defining 'the migrant' below, migration policy, and debates, are situated in stratified societies where racialisation plays a key role in social hierarchies. Racialisation is the process of categorisation, of defining an Other based usually on bodily characteristics. It is dialectical; 'ascribing a real or alleged biological characteristic with meaning to define the Other necessarily entails defining Self by the same criterion' (Miles, 1989, p. 75). This dichotomy between white and black, European and African, in periods of colonialism, for instance, has been ascribed with meanings of superiority and inferiority, shaping contemporary understandings of difference and mobility. For example, French legislation which focuses on governing women who dress in Islamic clothing is primarily about controlling certain women's mobility in public space. The experience of walking on the beach, as a practice of mobility, differs depending on representations. For some it represents leisure, while for others it constitutes a crime in need of armed police (see Figure 1). Mobility is political and not just about the physical movement across space, but includes different representations and practices (Cresswell, 2010).

Figure 1 (The Guardian, 2016)

1.1 Aims

The aim of this thesis is to position the analysis of EU migration policy in a normative approach which seeks to avoid the above mentioned suffering of certain mobile subjects. I use a critical policy analysis approach to highlight how policy proposals are based on taken-for-granted assumptions which impact on how we understand the world and each other, while remaining silence on alternative possibilities. The aim is to make visible the politics of mobility governance (Bacchi, 2012b). That is, the experience and meaning of certain mobilities is made by EU proposals in its policies. EU policy on migration is therefore key in understanding the harmful effects produced by it.

From this post-structuralist perspective, entities such as the EU, nation-states, and economic systems are seen as emergent, they are made and are not fixed or unchanging. Thus, they can be unmade and changed in various ways. This is also true for subjects. If people are shaped by their interaction with discourses, then identifying how discourses are used in policy can help to reveal more just ways of organising mobility. My aim is to reveal the ways in which knowledges and subjects are formed through policy proposals, in order to challenge the 'deleterious effects, and to suggest that [mobility] could be thought about in ways that might avoid at least

some of these effects' (Bacchi, 2009, p. 44). Alongside the post-structuralist method I take a more normative stance by arguing that the broad concept of *mobility justice* can support efforts to tackle mobility injustice. Therefore, I suggest ways to reform current mobility regimes in the EU so as to avoid harmful effects while also being aware of the possibility to radically alter our understanding and organising of relations across multiple scales, from the making of subjects to global mobilities, and how they are mutually constitutive.

1.2 Research questions

To guide the above aims I ask the following questions:

- Does EU migration policy contribute to uneven mobility regimes?

- Does EU migration policy contribute to the formulation of subject hierarchies?

- Have Europe's colonial legacies impacted on migration policy?

The following chapters cover the relevant existing literature, my theoretical framework, and my methodology. The chapter named *Problem Representations* lays out the findings from the policy analysis in relation to the theoretical framework and previous literature. Followed by a brief examination of a key theme and the theoretical contribution of this thesis. Finally, I offer a conclusion.

2. Background Literature

Juxtaposed with the smiling kids I witnessed at the hotel are the tragic cases of child suicide attempts in Greek 'refugee camps' (MSF, 2018) and the global epidemic of PTSD associated with mobility governance (Al Jazeera, 2020). There is a clear issue regarding human and non-human mobility across the globe which at various points becomes considerably more dangerous for certain groups. That is, there is a politics to the embodied differences which effect the motivation, speed, efficiency, rhythm, experience, and route of mobility (Cresswell, 2010). Across the border lands of central and north America, the shores of Australia, the Strait of Gibraltar and the Mediterranean, mobility is highly political; representations and experiences are diverse and are dependent on various factors. The suffering, violence, and death which occurs in relation to EU mobility governance is an issue which requires continued research.

The contrast between various mobilities has become starkly apparent since the beginning of the so-called migrant or refugee crises in 2015. Importantly, the question of 'whose crisis?' asked by Bhambra (2017) reveals that, regarding refugees, Lebanon, whose population is made up of 20% refugees, is possibly more fittingly described as in crisis. While on the other hand the EU had an average of 0.25% asylum claims proportional to local population figures (Bhambra, 2017, p. 397), highlighting the power of the recent discursive storm which has shaped European politics and attitudes towards asylum and migration (for a media analysis on this topic see Berry et al., 2016). The relative lack of crisis therefore opens up a discussion regarding what the problem is. Some state it is instead a racial crisis (De Genova, 2018), whereby the mobility of the non-European is tied to a multitude of socio-political 'emergencies'. Or, a European crisis of humanism, where neglect and a lack of responsibility for deaths at the border has led the EU to dehumanise people on the move which is contrary to their founding value of human dignity (Squire, 2020).

An introspective approach challenges the notion of Europe as fixed, with an innate character. In *The European Question*, De Genova (2016) identifies the relationality of European space and suggests it must be understood as an abstraction which is produced and sustained purely through socio-political relations (2016, p. 77). Questioning, *what is Europe, who is European?*,

allows research to break away from the naturalised assumptions that there are clear boundaries which distinguish an inside from an outside, belonging and intruder, or a centre and periphery. As Balibar (2009) notes, Europe could actually be thought of as being made up of overlapping folds, with no centre, only a series of open crossover peripheries; each region in Europe remains 'heterogeneous and differs from itself as much as it differs from others' (2009, p. 200). Beginning with this understanding of Europe can help avoid the pitfalls of methodological nationalism, which assumes nation-states to be containers of homogenous social and historical processes (Wimmer & Glick Schiller, 2002). Below I review some of the more significant contributions to the literature relating to my aims for this thesis.

2.1 The migrant

The Directorate-General of Migration and Home Affairs for the European Commission adopts a UN recommendation for defining a migrant:

> 'In the *global context*, a person who is outside the territory of the State of which they are nationals or citizens and who has resided in a foreign country for more than one year irrespective of the causes, voluntary or involuntary, and the means, regular or irregular, used to migrate' (European Commission, n.d.-b)

Although, they identify that there is no common international definition. Indeed, migrant can be defined differently when used in different contexts. Such as foreign born, foreign national, or with regard to the length of stay. The definition has consequences, who counts as a migrant affects research, reporting, public debate, and policy (Anderson & Blinder, 2019).

Additionally, scholars of migration have reported how there is a distinction between data, law, and public debate. Those people who are foreign-born and non-citizens may not be thought of as migrants in public debate but categorised as 'expats' or something else which avoids the political baggage of migrant (Anderson, 2019). This baggage is hugely racialised; in fact, 'hostility to migration in many states today cannot be understood independently of the migrant as a racialised category' (Anderson, 2019, p. 8). Silverstein (2005) explores this by tracing a racial genealogy of the immigrant and how different mobilities have been differently categorised in Europe and in European studies of migration. For instance, white skinned Jews and Irish immigrants in America have previously been racialised as subordinate to other white groups. Following this, immigration is shown to have been categorised in a 'savage slot' which

is positioned in a binary of us/them or European/exotic other. This relates to how migration studies and state policy represent some migrants as an 'abject people' unresponsive to integration. Middle Eastern mobility is framed as suspect due to 'global Islam' being perceived as misdirecting loyalties away from the nation-state. Much like 'Jews and Gypsies/Roma' people in past racialised mobility categories were deemed suspect races due to their supposed cosmopolitan rootlessness (Silverstein, 2005, pp. 366, 376). Therefore, migrants are often represented differently to how they are defined elsewhere. There is a taken for granted assumption that the mobility of certain racialised groups is suspicious.

However, the theorising around why people migrate is contested (D. S. Massey et al., 1993). The push-pull model (Lee, 1966) is contrasted with theories on the importance of understanding immobility, stasis, and retaining factors, as well as aspirations and capabilities (Arango, 2000; de Haas, 2021; Myers, 2000; Schewel, 2020). Overall, though, generalising theories of migration cannot account for the complexities of migration observed through empirical research.

The question of *how* migration has come to be thought about is important. It is true that 'migration control has only quite recently become a prominent function of political borders' (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013, p. 3). Many scholars trace the introduction of mobility laws and the disciplining of mobility in relation to both race, class, and territory, which can be generally positioned within constellations of mobility (Anderson, 2013; Bhambra, 2017; Cresswell, 2010, 2013b). This highlights how migration and the migrant are constructed through specific power relations. Arguments regarding colonial regimes of mobility in the creation of different mobile subjects (Sheller, 2018, p. 41) and the coloniality of asylum and subject production (Picozza, 2021) also situate the present in relation to colonialism.

For this thesis I define migration and the migrant in a broad way. Similar to Mezzadra and Neilson (2013, p. 142, emphasis in original), who:

> '[C]onsistently use the term *migrant* to describe subjects who cross or negotiate the world's borderscapes, avoiding where possible the recourse to categories such as refugee, asylum seeker, or ''illegal'' migrant invented by state bureaucracies or their international counterparts.'

I am sensitive to the definition of who counts as a migrant and the effect this has. For instance, the EU policy that I analyse uses migration somewhat ambiguously and regularly jumps from talking about refugees to migrants without clarification. To help avoid reproducing such ambiguity and the various connotations associated with state categorisations I also use the term *people on the move*. The Border Violence Monitoring Network (BVMN) explain the term as a way 'to broaden the definition of refugees taking into account the dramatic impacts of climate change, economic and social inequality, political authoritarianism, terrorism and organized crime' (2022, p. 1). The term also helps to identify the topological nature of displacement and avoids defining global phenomena as bounded within a particular space.

2.2 Mobility justice and migration

The broad concept *mobility justice* (see below) is used to study migration in the book *Mobilities, Mobility Justice and Social Justice* (Butz & Cook, 2018a). Ilcan's chapter deals with Syrian struggles for migration justice, referring to a greater distribution of access to movement, safety, and rights and citizenship (2018). She highlights how Syrian migrants in neighbouring countries sought to resist the uneven access to mobility by demanding inclusion and recognition in host states, seeking mobility justice by refusing the label of victim and positioning themselves as political subjects. Outside of Sheller's (2018) work there is not so much literature connecting mobility justice and migration.

2.3 Critical analysis of migration policy

The critical policy analysis method that I adopt in this thesis has been shown to be of high value for understanding migration policy (Cleton & Meier, 2023). A key text which uses the 'What's the problem represented to be?' (WPR) approach (see methods section) is Chan's (2018) analysis of Australian policy on skilled labour migration. The article argues that the policy changes the way the problem is represented from an issue of supply to one of demand driven migration. This rests on the conceptual logic of human capital theory, which is argued to be inadequate. It also offers a short genealogy of the discriminatory developments in Australian immigration policy; the institutional practices are shown to be influenced by this history.

Another article which looks at 'irregular migration' in the Scandinavian context offers an insight into how problem representations (re)produce deviant target populations and cement the deserving and undeserving binary (Jørgensen, 2012). The 'irregular migrant' is constructed as an illegal entity that is not entitled to the territorialised human rights afforded to citizens. Rigby et al (2021) also find that the binary of legal and illegal/clandestine is attached to child asylum claimants in the UK depending on their route. 'Irregular migrant' children are represented as risky and less deserving of protection. The literature using the WPR approach does not, however, deal directly with EU policy.

2.4 Analysis of EU migration policy

The literature on EU migration policy is vast. One issue highlighted is that the balancing act between migration management and EU values is strongly tipped towards the former (Triandafyllidou & Dimitriadi, 2014) with development funds being diverted towards migration management and border control (Barana, 2017; Youngs & Zihnioğlu, 2021). It is also argued that 'migration management aid primarily strengthens security actors, leading to more authoritarian practices within recipient states' and that focusing on education and healthcare institutions, as well as opening more avenues for regular mobility can more effectively support populations in authoritarian states (Norman & Micinski, 2022). Additionally, development aid and its instruments, such as the Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, are seen to reshape external geopolitics due to the focus on migration routes, leaving countries and regions outside of 'migration crossroads' without support (Zardo, 2022).

The validity of addressing 'root causes' and the effects on migration are also contested. It is suggested that the EU commission pursued this direction because it 'bridged the concerns of different audiences', i.e., those seeking migration controls and those hoping to maintain development policies (Zaun & Nantermoz, 2022, p. 524). Importantly, it is argued that slowing migration by addressing 'root causes' through development aid is a pseudo-causal narrative. That is, the causal claim that aid reduces migration is disproven, and research has shown that development aid has little impact on employment and economic growth, as well as the fact that outmigration actually increases due to economic development (Zaun & Nantermoz, 2022). The use of a disproven casual claim in EU policy highlights the extent to which policy is formulated on assumptions about causes of migration (Baldwin-Edwards et al., 2019).

Although some of this literature differs to my epistemological stance in this thesis, it reveals the unexamined ways of thinking which underpin migration policy.

Furthermore, past iterations of addressing 'root causes' are shown to have a gap between rhetoric and action but also that many migration factors are misunderstood in policy (2004). Castles (2004) highlights how trade restrictions cost 'developing countries' twice as much as they receive in aid, and that there is a hypocrisy in the EU's demand to access commodity and service markets in such countries but restrict access to their own. He gives the example of the EU exporting agricultural products which hugely damages production in areas such as Sub-Saharan Africa (Castles, 2004, p. 221). He also posits that migration policy fails due to poorly conceived, narrow, and contradictory proposals that do not cater to the long-term approach needed in migration policy.

Regarding the 2015 European Agenda on Migration policy there are several articles discussing it from various positions. Baldwin-Edwards et al, discuss the issues surrounding evidence based policy in which EU policy seems at odds with evidence produced across the social sciences (2019). The 2015 agenda is mentioned as being flawed due to the evidence showing that political and human rights factors such as persecution, insecurity, and a lack of rights contribute to migration aspirations, rather than economic factors. Similarly, Reslow (2019) studies the unintended consequences of EU migration policy, showing how the 2015 agenda's development plans will likely lead to migration as more people will have the capability to do so. Another paper critiques the EU's conditional use of development aid in exchange for third country migration management (Davitti & La Chimia, 2017). The authors argue it is possibly in breach of international law, as the EU is supporting direct or indirect refoulment of people on the move by relying on the concept of safe third country, even when they are in fact not safe. The EU is said to be using aid to persuade third countries to cooperate with 'pullbacks', readmission and return, as well as halting migration 'flows', in addition to there being a lack of mechanisms in place to ensure the money is used for development purposes.

2.5 Climate (im)mobilities

In addition to the above, there is a growing literature on the 'heterogenous and political character of mobility and immobility in the context of climate change' (Boas et al., 2022, p.

3367). This reinterprets the view that climate change will lead to mass migration and instead highlights the diversity of (im)mobilities, e.g., being trapped after environmental disasters, short-term displacement, and voluntary immobility. These can be thought of as climate mobilities. This diversity is said to be sensationalised by governments, NGOs, UN agencies, and journalists that represent climate change as producing the 'threat' of one-way, long distance, permanent migration (e.g., from the Asia and Africa to the EU) (Durand-Delacre et al., 2021). A result of this are the measures taken in anticipation of the supposed risk in the form of strengthening border control and migration governance.

The above literature gives a nuanced insight into migration research. The complexity of aspirations and capabilities across vastly differing contexts makes generalising theory difficult, and often reductionist. There is a need to challenge taken-for-granted positions and observe the particular, but always in a way that is aware of the connected, relational nature of (im)mobility across space. There is also a host of evidence which counters the EU policy narratives and assumptions regarding migration drivers and effectiveness of development aid, as well as there being problematic uses of aid in mobility governance.

3. Theoretical Framework

3.1 Mobilities paradigm

The mobilities paradigm looks at how the movement of people, things, and ideas continuously carve out new social, physical, and ideological paths and networks across the globe. This movement, along with its representations and practices, has spurred many in the social sciences to centre mobility as a major aspect of contemporary and historical phenomena (Cresswell, 2006; Urry, 2010). Various international crises have at their core the problem of mobility (Sheller, 2018) and scholars have argued for new theoretical and methodological formulations in order to adequately understand contemporary life (Cresswell, 2010; Sheller & Urry, 2006).

Mobility is an ontological issue because it is fundamental to the workings of reality. As De Genova (LNUC Concurrences, 2017) states, humans have always pushed against barriers and environmental boundaries, with expeditions across the entirety of the earth's surface. Mobility technology has led us across oceans and even outside of the earth's atmosphere, although these mobilities are tied to others' displacement or immobility (i.e., colonial genocide, climate destruction, 'Whitey on the Moon'). Ultimately, all forms of life, including animals, viruses, insects, seeds, etc., rely on movement for their existence. Thus, a 'mobile ontology, in which movement is primary as a foundational condition of being, space, subjects, and power, helps us to imagine the constituent relationality of the world in a new way' (Sheller, 2018, p. 9).

However, it is important to highlight the immobility and moorings which accompany mobility (Hannam et al., 2006). Indeed, others have criticised mobility researchers for brushing over the extent to which people are immobilised by the infrastructures (and regimes) of mobility that enable movement for some (Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013). This is a point which Human Geographers, such as Massey (2008), made years prior to the 'mobilities turn' and is a relevant critique which I deal with throughout this thesis. Another issue raised by Jessop et al (2008, p. 391) highlights the eagerness across multiple sociospatial lexicons to privilege a single dimension of social relations as the essential feature of contemporary or historical life. This can distort research by neglecting other intellectual tools which may be better suited to

examine sociospatial phenomena. This is true, but I think one way to combat the limiting effects of sedentary perspectives (such as territory being a bounded, fixed container of social relations) is to focus on the relational mobilities which constitute space and social relations. However, to avoid privileging mobility as the essential feature of current social relations I incorporate perspectives from outside the mobilities paradigm without simply reinterpreting them.

The paradigm is also not particularly novel but instead attempts to foreground mobility in a multidisciplinary way across multiple scales. Within the history of Geographic thought it has links to transport studies, time geography (Hägerstrand, 1970), and perhaps even Humboldt and Ritter, who saw society and nature entwined, and connection across diversity (Cresswell, 2013a, p. 40). As well as those who proposed a new relational, regional approach (Allen et al., 1998). In terms of studying uneven mobilities, it draws from radical geography which frames space as fundamental in the production of uneven power relations (Harvey, 1988; Smith, 1990). Uneven spatial development is tied to uneven mobilities. The more general post-structuralist shift in Geography can also be seen as an influence.

3.2 Social justice

Past iterations of social justice have predominantly rested on the modernist idea that perfectly just institutions, when working from set principles, can support socially just relations (Butz & Cook, 2018b). Rawls (1999 [1971]) famous theory of justice emphasises the role of the state in mediating the creation of perfect institutions who implement principles of justice relating to the just distribution of social benefits and burdens. This conceptualisation of justice, however, has been criticised for an over focus on the role of the state and institutions as mechanisms for achieving justice, the limitations of a purely distributive justice, and the implications of globalisation (Butz & Cook, 2018b). What additional forms of justice can offer is the extension of participation in debates and organisation outside local or national boundaries, to incorporate all involved in contemporary transnational issues (Butz & Cook, 2018b).

3.3 Mobility justice

Building on this, mobility justice develops the notion of justice from the perspective of the mobilities paradigm. Freedom of mobility is considered a universal human right but in practice there are multiple barriers. These factors inhibit access to space, citizenship, and resources in varying ways and across multiple scales (Sheller, 2018, p. 20). Broadly speaking, mobility justice is concerned with the normative aim of reducing 'social inequality by removing obstacles to peoples' everyday mobilities' (Ponzanesi, 2019, pp. 548–549). For Sheller (2018), justice is an unstable, multi-scalar concept made up of mobile assemblages of subjects, contexts, and political practices which are made and are in a perpetual state of becoming. For example, contemporary social movements such as Black Lives Matter, Occupy, and indigenous land protests show the locally rooted yet global reach of resistance to a diversity of injustices and how they are interconnected. Mobility justice gives theoretical space for contemporary issues to be adequately examined and posits that a foundational part of justice is addressing the diverse (im)mobilities which underpin urban, migration, and climate crises. Scales from bodily, street, city, region, nation to planetary are incorporated in a way which highlights their simultaneity and connectedness. These (im)mobilities are situated and governed though 'entrenched neoliberal and neoimperial regimes of racialized mobility management, securitization, and territorialized injustice (e.g., extraction, exclusion, eviction, incarceration, and expulsion)' (Sheller, 2018, p. 21).

3.3.1   Conceptualising across justice

To broaden the scope of justice to incorporate the wider intersection of issues and their relationship to (im)mobility, Sheller (2018, pp. 31–35) proposes an interplay between five conceptions of justice (see figure 2). Along with the just *distribution* of benefits and burdens, *deliberative* justice refers to the recognition of previously excluded community actors as legitimate participants in decision making processes. It involves an egalitarian approach where public participation in decision making is key. This links to *procedural* justice, the meaningful, often bottom-up, participation that centres understandable information (requiring community participation in knowledge production), and informed consent based on local knowledge, not just expert.

Lastly, *restorative* and *epistemic* justice look at the need for reparations and the creation of new knowledges. An example of restorative justice is the admission of responsibility by oil companies, elites travellers, and militaries for their major role in the climate crisis, war, and

displacement of peoples. Restorative justice for people on the move in the Sahel region, for instance, could be in the form of recognition and reparation, funds governed by local needs, not securitisation by European military action creating instability and displacement (Guichaoua & Goxho, 2022). Furthermore, local or marginalised knowledges which are excluded by authorities in knowledge production can support new decision-making systems that empower the groups who face mobility injustice. This relates to procedural justice but goes beyond it by proactively seeking out new facts and forms of knowledge. It identifies how public policy is shaped by knowledge which regularly excludes bottom-up perspectives and community needs, instead privileging the quantitative analysis of 'experts' which sustains a knowledge system that does not include lived experiences.

DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE

Transport Equity   Accessibility   Minimum Capabilities

Ⅴ

DELIBERATIVE JUSTICE

Recognition   Deliberation   Participation

Ⅴ

PROCEDURAL JUSTICE

Information   Understanding   Informed Consent

Ⅴ

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Admission   Truth & Reconciliation   Reparations

Ⅴ

EPISTEMIC JUSTICE

Proactive Knowledge Production   Ongoing Process of Adaptation

Figure 2 (Sheller, 2018, p. 35)

3.3.2 Spatialising justice

Importantly for this paper the concept of spatial justice introduces the geographical influence on mobility justice. Sheller (2018, p. 36) notes how Lefebvre's work on the right to the city and Harvey's focus on territorial social justice initiated the concept. More specifically, mobility justice adopts and modifies Soja's work on spatial justice (Soja, 2010). Situating spatial justice within a mobile ontology is argued to highlight the ways in which unjust urban space depends on and is reproduced by unjust mobilities over multiple scales (Sheller, 2018, p. 37), something which Soja avoids confronting. Spatial and mobile injustices are entwinned. A mobility justice approach sees space as being produced through mobility access, as well as producing mobile political subjects. Thus, spatial injustice is tied to uneven access to mobility.

Mobility justice opens up the discussion of justice to include broader (im)mobilities which have made and remade space relationally across multiple scales. The concept adopts the perspective of planetary urbanism, which sees urbanisation as a global process including 'planetary infrastructures of capital circulation, nutrient and energy flow, and resource extraction' (Brenner, 2013, p. 108). Following from Lefebvre's thesis that urbanisation is a global phenomenon distinctly tied to the development of capitalism ([1970] 2003), planetary urbanisation highlights the simultaneity of scalar processes across the planet (Brenner, 2014). For example, those living in urban Europe are tied to the plastic and paper waste which until recently was shipped to Chinese recycling centres and returned to Europe as packaging for Chinese products (Tamma, 2018). In turn, the container shipping industry (Levinson, 2016) which supports this process reveals the relationship between the global mobility of goods and the localised material infrastructure which makes it possible. The world is seen as a process of 'becoming' in relation to multi-scalar mobilities.

3.3.3 Relational space and mobile ontology

The mobilities paradigm can better formulate justice by developing its normative claims from a mobile ontology, which sees justice as a 'process of emergent relationships' rather than an end goal or aspirational idea (Sheller, 2018, p. 20). The mobile ontology also highlights the issue of beginning from the Cartesian assumption that absolute space exists as an empty container for mobility to happen within or across. Conversely, mobility justice takes the relational approach

which posits that mobility produces space. The production of mobility spaces develops through an interdependent relationship with (im)mobile subjects. This recognition of space as relational allows for new possibilities; if space is continuously (re)made it can be directed towards more positive outcomes. Sheller (2018) identifies the relation between bodily and global justice, as well as with more-than-human factors. Mobility justice connects the political struggles of 'transport justice, spatial justice, migrant justice, environmental justice, [and] climate justice' (2018, p. 135) by highlighting the forms of (im)mobility which shape them.

3.3.4   What is a mobility regime?

Within the context of a heterogeneous globalisation process, Shamir (2005) critiques the idea of an age of flows and free movement to suggest that a mobility regime exists which is oriented towards closure and blocking mobility for certain groups. Schiller & Salazar (2013) build on this to highlight how mobility regimes intersect, normalising certain groups movement while criminalising, stigmatising, and entrapping others. Here the mobility/immobility binary is disrupted by looking at how both can be a luxury and a painful necessity. For example, the unruly mobility of refugees and asylum-seekers who travel into the EU unofficially is disciplined through forced immobility once they apply for asylum within a certain district. Those without documents, however, may need to move to avoid surveillance (Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013, p. 8). Similarly, the 'failed citizen' using state welfare may also face immobilisation as stipulated by welfare regulation or, conversely, be forced to become more mobile in search of work depending on state policy (Sager, 2018). Mobility Regimes are the 'unequal globe-spanning relationships of power' which govern the representations and practices of movement (Schapendonk et al., 2020, p. 213).

Uneven mobility is formed through mobility regimes. It is the way spatial and symbolical designs create differing levels of movement as well as access to modes of movement, such as smooth, speedy travel or risk and friction (Sheller, 2016). One example is the mobility regime governing movement across the Aegean Sea. Most Western tourists can take a EUR 25 ferry from Lesbos to Turkey with a convenient 'e-Visa' application online. While those forced to use smugglers pay on average EUR 3000 for the same journey (a similar cost to renting a luxury yacht). The taken for granted 'truth' that movement into a territory must be controlled assumes the existence of risk external to that territory. Such risk is territorialised, leading to uneven global visa restrictions which 'blacklist' certain populations (van Houtum, 2010). Thus,

the practices and infrastructures of mobility governance rely on such assumptions and impact on 'who and what can move (or stay put), when, where, how, under what conditions, and with what meanings' (Sheller, 2018, p. 11). The politics of mobility governance make up the uneven mobility regimes across the global.

3.3.5   Migrant justice

The category of migrant is again questioned here, Sheller (2018, p. 126) sees the distinction between migrant (someone subject to national law) and refugee (someone with international protection) as becoming blurred. With the categorising of who is entitled to protection so unclear, the moral argument is made which questions how so many are dying at the borders of modern liberal democracies which champion civil freedoms and human rights. The question of whether the EU system is a just one becomes crucial when refugee deaths, luxury tourism, and global shipping and trading mobilities all play out in Mediterranean mobility regimes. Additionally, migrant justice is seen as inherently connected to other justice movements. The connection is related to privileged groups' extensive air travel, vehicle usage, and greater energy consumption, which distribute harm unevenly across the world and impacts mostly on those who do not take part in the privileged forms of mobility. It instead harms the lower-income regions around the world (Sheller, 2018, pp. 135–136).

It is also important to contextualise the relationality of migrant justice. When Schindel (2022, p. 441) refers to the slow violence produced in border regions such as Melilla-Morocco, where migrants are channelled, diverted, mistreated, and abandoned, she seeks to highlight the violence of 'the global economic and political order' which forces so many thousands of people to migrate in the first place. It is true that, '[t]he violence of mobility is as crucial ... as the freedom of mobility' (Sheller, 2018, p. 115). The EU's open internal borders contrast with the violence of its border externalisation and migration management programmes (Casas-Cortes et al., 2016a, 2016b; van Houtum, 2010). This then links to the historical analysis which argues that mobility restrictions based on racial difference have been part of the European cosmopolitan project from the beginning (Bhambra, 2017). Colonial subjects were denied access and economically and socially discriminated against, immobilising those who were once citizens of European states who dominated over them (Bhambra, 2017). Racialised (im)mobility is persists today (De Genova, 2016; Isakjee et al., 2020). I continue in this vein by incorporating scholars such as Rodney (2018) in order to situate EU policy problematisations

within the context of European colonial legacies. Thus, mobility justice contributes to migrant justice by examining the ways that EU bordering in the Melilla-Morocco region is historically informed. It is visible today through the privileging of tourist mobilities, prioritising spaces of luxury over catering for human rights (see figure 3).

Figure 3 (The Guardian, 2014)

4. Methodology

4.1 Methods

To analyse my chosen material, I adopt the 'What's the Problem Represented to be?' (WPR) approach. It is a conceptual checklist drawing from a Foucauldian perspective; a tool or resource for interrogating public policy (Bacchi, 2012a). The method was conceived and developed by Bacchi (2009; Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016) to offer researchers a critical framework to conduct policy analysis. The WPR approach attempts to address the methodological deficit in discourse analysis and theorising, in which there is a lack of prescribed methods or guidelines for conducting research (Chan, 2018, p. 24). It 'opens up a method of investigation into aspects seldomly addressed in other approaches' (Riemann, 2023, p. 152) such as policy assumptions and silences. Although highly interpretative, the justification and value of this qualitative analysis is the possibility of progressing knowledge, I interpret the policy through a critical theoretical foundation to gain a deeper understanding of the complexity of mobility governance and to make visible the underlying power relations. That is, the way people seek to govern the conduct of others.

The WPR approach proposes a set of questions which researchers can ask of a given policy (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016, p. 20). It begins by working backwards from the policy's solutions or proposals as a way to unearth the implicit representations of what the policy deems to be a problem – a problem representation. By beginning with the understanding 'that what one proposes to do about something reveals what one thinks is problematic' (Bacchi, 2012a, p. 21), makes visible the politics of certain problem representations (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016, p. 16). Through articulating what needs to change, policy constitutes problems. Problems are made with ascribed meanings that 'affect what gets done or not done' to the point that peoples lived experiences are shaped by how problems are understood (Bacchi, 2012a, p. 22). From this perspective, 'representations of 'problems' play a central role in how we are governed' (Bacchi, 2009, p. xi), thus, people are governed through problematisations (see below) rather than policy.

Below I list and explain all seven questions. However, for this thesis I have answered questions 1 – 5. Although question 6 is important and interesting, I felt a deeper analysis of the policies' taken-for-granted assumptions, histories, silences, and effects would provide more focused and delimited results. It is also highlighted that there is no need to answer all the questions, instead the 'conceptual checklist' can be used to guide the researchers' interests while also opening up new understandings.

Question 1: What's the problem represented to be in a specific policy or policies?

The first question provides a 'way in' to critiquing a policy. By beginning with how a problem is represented within a policy, researchers are provided an insight into the thinking behind the proposal; the researcher does not impose an interpretation onto the policy but *gets* the problem representation *from* the policy (Bacchi, 2019, 2:55). The problem representation is implicit within the policy and so tells the researcher about the policy. This is an important point because it helps avoid the issue of confirmation bias. The researcher is not acquiring a god's eye view, but they are beginning from a place involving less interpretation.

Importantly, question 1 not only acts as a starting point of analysis but continuously supports the researcher in prising new insights from the policy. One can ask again and again what the problem is represented to be. The WPR approach can be repeatedly applied as a problem may have additional problem representations lodged within it; problem representations 'nest' or are embedded within one another (Bacchi, 2009, p. 21). Key terms or topics from a problem representation should themselves be probed to develop a much more nuanced and critical understanding of the policy. Bacchi (2015) highlights this in a WPR analysis of policy on alcohol use. The problem of elevated alcohol use is claimed to be related to work-place stress, which, once the WPR questioning has been conducted, is problematised as an individualised issue of the worker and their 'stress management' skills, neglecting the 'possible impact of deleterious working conditions' (Bacchi, 2015, p. 138). Reapplying question 1 therefore offers a rich understanding of the unexamined ways of thinking inherent in policy proposals.

Question 2: What deep-seated presuppositions or assumptions underlie this representation of the "problem" (problem representation)?

This question aims to highlight how a problem representation is possible, to tease out the knowledges which are giving it intelligibility. Similar to an archaeology of knowledge, it points to the 'familiar notions' and 'unexamined ways of thinking' (Foucault, 2001, p. 456) which form the basis of the proposal, i.e., the meanings which are needed for it to make sense; the background knowledges (Bacchi, 2009, p. 5). The assumptions and presuppositions are not those of the authors or in the heads of the policy workers, instead, they are present within the problem representations. This directs the focus away from biases or vested interests and towards an understanding of the forms of knowledge that are needed for proposals to be intelligible. This reveals the ontological positioning of the WPR approach which views reality as 'becoming', it is not fix but is constituted through knowledges (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016, p. 15). If policy produces problems, then it is the presuppositions which allow those problems to be disseminated and collectively understood.

This question can be best answered by identifying binaries, concepts, and categories (Bacchi, 2009). The conceptual logics, or 'the meanings that must be in place for a particular problem representation... to make sense' (Bacchi, 2009, p. 5), are best understood by asking how, rather than why something happens. Social phenomena often rests on binaries, which work with exclusion and are hierarchical, e.g., citizen/illegal immigrant. Concepts refer to abstract, contested labels. By identifying the meaning ascribed to them, one can defer how the policy represents the problem in a specific way. Similarly, the task of troubling people categories such as age-groups, citizens, or students can highlight how they function in giving meaning to the problem representation.

Question 3: How has this representation of the 'problem' come about?

Here Bacchi (2009, p. 10) draws from a Foucauldian genealogy to reflect on the non-discursive practices, developments, and decisions which contribute to the formation of problem representations. It traces the roots of a constituted problem to highlight the twist and turns which led to it, rather than relying on assumptions or viewing it as a natural evolution over time. The introduction of specific laws, for instance, which redirected history in a way that could easily have taken an alternative route. Such as the non-discursive practices of passport controls and state formation. The aim is 'the de-inevitabilization of the present' (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016, p. 46) and instead identify the contingent political and cultural conditions which lead to the dominance of certain problematisations.

Question 4: What is left unproblematic in this problem representation? Where are the silences? Can the "problem" be conceptualized differently?

The importance of this question is its ability to highlight limitations of policy problem representations. It highlights which voices are excluded and which discourses are ignored. The aim is to look at how the silences within policy further simplify and mystify complex social phenomena which develop in relation to multiple factors. Identifying alternative ways to think about a problem, by troubling binaries, categories, and concepts, or by cross-cultural or temporal comparisons, can help to make visible how groups are governed. For this question I have used secondary literature to highlight alternative problematisations which remain silent in the policy, e.g., the case of climate refugees.

Question 5: What effects (discursive, subjectification, lived) are produced by this representation of the "problem"?

The concern here is to 'bridge a symbolic-material division' by reflecting on the effects that accompany problem representations (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016, p. 23). The effects are distinguished between discursive, subjectification, and lived, although they are interconnected and overlapping. Discursive effects are the implications of framing problems in certain ways with the pursual of some presuppositions over others, linking with question 2 and 3. While subjectification effects relate to the becoming of particular types of subjects, i.e., 'discourses make certain subject positions available' which impact on how people feel about themselves and others (Bacchi, 2009, p. 16). Lived effects are the actual day-to-day limitations and experiences which culminate from policy proposals and problem representations. The focus is the uneven impact that problem representations have.

Question 6: How and where has this representation of the "problem" been produced, disseminated and defended? How has it been and/or how can it be disrupted and replaced?

Building on question 3, this question 'highlights the practices that install and authorize a particular problem representation' while also reflecting on resistance and the counter usage of discourses to challenge the dominant problematisation. For example, Haitian slaves used the

discourse of inalienable rights following the French revolution to resist the European slave industry. The media play a large role in disseminating and supporting problem representations.

Question 7: Apply this list of questions to your own problem representations.

The final step is to take on the reflexive activity of analysing one's own document or proposals with the previous 6 questions. This can highlight how the researcher is situated within knowledge through precise and demanding introspection.

To conduct the WPR approach a did a close reading of the material. Working backwards, I highlighted the solutions, proposals, and funding allocations to see what the problem was represented to be. For example, the proposal to fund development programmes in countries of origin represents the problem to be one of underdevelopment. From this I identified binaries, people categories, and key concepts to seek out presuppositions. This allowed me to look deeper at genealogies of dominant discourses, at the silences, and the effects. I used secondary literature for this. I then incorporated a less rigorous analysis of the proposals I suggest as relating to mobility justice and critical geography. Although I spend less time on question 7 regarding my own proposals, it still adds a level of reflexivity that is revealing and productive.

I began with the 2015 European Agenda on Migration (see below) as a base, which became the foundation of the policy analysis. I then incorporated the newer migration policy from 2020 as way to add a temporal element. I did this to see how EU problematising altered over time or responded to criticism. Although the focus is predominantly on the 2015 policy, including the 2020 policy opened up an analysis of possible changes in problem representations. However, this turned out not to be the case and the policy was relatively consistent in the problem representations I chose to focus on. I narrowed down on problem representations which I saw to be the most relevant in terms of mobility justice or their proportion within the policy, e.g., the largest amount of funding was allocated to development and aid in the 'addressing root causes' section. Thus, this became a significant focus.

4.2 Problematisation

The term problematisation has two main understandings. Most commonly it is used when conducting critical analysis of something or to question an interpretation. However, for Bacchi, and other Foucault-influenced post-structural policy analysis, the term is used to mean the way in which issues are made into problems of a certain type (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016, p. 39); problematisation refers to how problems are constituted. One example of this relates to the politics of mobility, in which the meaning attributed to migration can be problematised in different ways. That is, as an invasive drain on limited national resources, requiring swift deportation measures, or, as a solution to the problem of limited domestic skilled labour that can be remedied through demand-based immigration policy[1]. Therefore, the problematisation of migration has material implications for people on the move (see question 5 below) and differentiates subjects and how they are governed. Daily life is thus linked to the problem representations within policy (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016, p. 23). The problematisation of certain issues is how we come to think about that issue as a problem, which is central to the governing process (Bacchi, 2009, p. xi).

Here, I would also like distinguish between *problem representations* and *problematisations*. The two are coextensive but Bacchi's problem representation term is intended to be broader and signals to the ways in which all policy (and other forms of) proposals contain implicit representations of the problem they address (Bacchi, 2018). For Foucault, problematisation was both a method of analysis and a historical process of producing objects of thought (Bacchi, 2012b, p. 1). The word is used as both a verb and noun, respectively. So that the verb is the challenging of taken-for-granted truths, as mentioned above, and the noun is the way objects of thought have come to be, e.g., the problematisation of sexuality is the study of the practices, politics, and ethics which constitute sexuality as an object of thought (Bacchi, 2012b, p. 2). However, Foucault identifies specific times and places of important shifts in the noun form of problematisations and how that shifts in forms of governance. Whereas Bacchi is interested in continuously identifying problem representations and their relationship to governance through policy and other proposals. She clears up the definition of problematisation by stating: 'the term problematisation refers to the ways in which particular issues are conceived as 'problems', identifying the thinking behind particular forms of rule' (Bacchi, 2009, p. 30). And, proposes the term problem representation to make explicit her use of the problematisation concept and the analysis of problems with the novel WPR approach.

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[1] See Chan (2018) for a WPR analysis of the supple and demand problematisations in Australian immigration policy on human capital in the labour market.

From here on out problematisation will be used like Bacchi proposes above, whether as verb or noun it will refer to the ways in which problems are constituted.

4.3 Policy

A policy is often framed as something good, a positive intervention to define rules and conduct. The traditional approach to policy studies see a public policy is a government program which sets out to 'fix' a certain objective problem that exists independently of government and policy makers. However, more contemporary policy analysis has broken from this rationalist, positivist outlook. New critical outlooks from the 1970's, informed by feminist and Marxist perspectives, viewed policy less as social justice and more as social control, value laden, contested, socially constructed, and 'situated' (Blackmore & Lauder, 2005). Instead, poststructuralist perspectives take a more powerful theoretical stance which identifies that 'power works through institutionalized discursive hierarchies in which some policy discourses are treated as 'truths' while more radical perspectives are marginalized' (Blackmore & Lauder, 2005, p. 99). The problem of childhood obesity, for instance, can be represented in different ways, e.g. a problem of inactivity amongst children or of unethical advertising of fast-food products (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016, p. 17). However, this silences the idea that class position effects health. For this thesis, then, I follow on from Bacchi with the poststructuralist understanding that '[p]olicies *give shape* to 'problems'; they do not *address* them' (2009, p. x; emphasis in original). In this sense, policies are seen as discourses which produce truth and knowledge, leading to more of a focus on 'the way policy makes people' than those who make policy (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016, p. 8).

It should also be made clear that the WPR approach is not limited to policy and that the questions are applicable to a wide range of discourses, where discourse refers to 'knowledges rather than to language' (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016, p. 21). For example, theoretical and methodological propositions within academia are types of solutions which harbour problematisations and underlying presuppositions (Bacchi, 2012a, pp. 22–23), hence question 7 which asks the researcher to apply the WPR questions to their own research or document. The method is useful to interrogate any prescriptive material that offers a 'guide to conduct', thus the broad post-structuralist definition of government as the 'conduct of conduct' is adopted; 'government refers to any form of activity that aims to shape, guide, or affect the conduct of people' (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016, p. 5). Power is viewed as being heterogeneous

and dispersed across society, not simply contained in legislative or political institutions, understanding the discursive regulation of such power is therefore key to critical research.

4.4 Material

It is suggested by Dimitriadi (2015) that the European Agenda for Migration policy (European Commission, 2015) is neither new nor 'bold' in the way it addressed migration. For this reason, it is useful to study as it resembles the broader history of mobility governance in the EU. The policy was a reaction to mass drownings in the Mediterranean and the increase in unofficial crossings in 2015. One significance is that it suggests a holistic approach, bringing together existing policy regarding security, labour, and asylum. This was helpful as it condensed issues of mobility governance into one document, meaning the proposals resemble the wider EU viewpoint, not just the Migration and Home Affairs department.

The policy is a 'communication' from the European Commission. The European Commission is the EU institution which most resembles a government, its function is to initiate policy and manager and mediate internal and external relations (Cini & Borragan, 2009). The communication on migration is a strategic document outlining migration management and defining future mobility governance. It is an important document as it laid the foundations for mobility governance over five years and shaped how the EU and its member-states problematised mobility. I also incorporate the 'New Pact on Migration and Asylum' (European Commission, 2020), although, to delimit the research I decided to focus mainly on the 2015 European Agenda. I also make use of relevant documents from other EU bodies such as the European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS, 2021, 2022), to highlight the dialogue occurring throughout the EU.

4.5 Philosophy of science

As mentioned, the mobile ontology is key here. I also arrived at the issue of mobility and the EU with specific value commitments and views on what ought to be done. Thus, I consider this thesis to be somewhat positioned in the broad social scientific paradigm of critical theory (not to be mistaken with the narrower definition of Critical Theory developed by the Frankfurt School). Lincoln & Guba (1994) helpfully distinguish between several competing paradigms in

qualitative research. In this respect, I also drift significantly into the constructivist paradigm. I view reality as being highly mediated by what it is possible to say and think, that discourses shape our interaction with the world. My analysis of the policy is therefore situated within my assumptions about the world, although I do seek to challenge these.

Mobility justice is more firmly positioned within a critical theory approach as it seeks to redistribute, transform, and declare what ought to be done, as can be seen in the list of mobility justice principles (Sheller, 2018, p. 173). I agree that proposals should be made to alter the negative effects of current power relations. This creates a tension with the Foucauldian inspired philosophy of the methodology which, although 'promotes a view of research as political practice' to support egalitarian politics (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016, p. 25), refuses to advocate for specific reforms. I think it is possible, and more productive, to use the reflexive criticality of Foucauldian methods while also advocating for concrete proposals regarding justice and social change.

The methodology has somewhat of an emancipatory element in that it 'takes the side of those who are harmed. The goal is to intervene to challenge problem representations that have ... deleterious effects' (Bacchi, 2009, p. 44). So, by progressing cautiously with the propositions made by mobility justice theorists in relation to EU policy, I develop a methodology which is normative but which remains alert to people categories, binaries, and generalising (contested) concepts. My aim is also not to acquire the 'truth', but to look deeper into *how* the EU governs through problem representations and thus possible alternatives that could avoid negative effects.

4.6 Limitations and ethics

A limitation with this more hermeneutic type of research is that it cannot make claims of absolute truth or objectivity. This distinguishes it from traditional science in that it cannot be intersubjectively verifiable. Another important limitation is the 'paranoid readings' or the 'hermeneutic of suspicion' which can occur when studying texts (Sedgwick, 1997). This highlights the propensity of critical research to seek out what is already known, to conduct research in an anticipatory way. It asks whether anything is accomplished by exposing oppressive systems and what value that the knowledge has. In my case, I previously

experienced and read about the issues relating to racialised EU mobility controls, and so a paranoid reading is likely. However, I think the WPR method deals with this limitation by going beyond the task of simply tracking and exposing the uneven mobility regimes which the EU sustains. It goes beyond the rhetoric/reality gap between policy and the experiences of people on the move. By analysing the policy in relation to mobility justice, it becomes possible for less harmful proposals to be formulated and for change to occur.

Although there are less ethical considerations with regard to studying policy, there is the consideration that those most affected by it are not part of the discussion. In some ways this further excludes the already marginalised voices of people on the move. However, I decided to delimit the research to policy to avoid the ethical implications of seeking out people negatively affected by migration policy. Additionally, any pictures I have used are publicly available and the identities of the people included are not published.

5. Problem Representations

'[M]igration control is really about regulating North-South relationships and maintaining inequality. Only when the central objective shifts to one of reducing inequality will migration control become both successful and – eventually – superfluous' (Castles, 2004, pp. 223–224).

This chapter will explore several problem representations from the 2015 European Agenda on Migration in relation to other EU documents. I focus on the four 'pillars' that are outlined in the policy with specific focus on 'root causes' and 'legal migration'. I discuss each representation with reference to the WPR questions. The questions will be applied throughout the chapter in an integrated style with use of parenthesis (Bacchi, 2009). For example, presuppositions (Q.2), silences (Q.4), and effects (Q.5) within a problem representation are discussed with reference to the WPR question in order to clearly mark which question I am tackling throughout the analysis. I have also parenthesised question 7 when suggesting alternative proposals which link to my theoretical framework. I add an additional number here which relates to question 1 – 6, e.g., (Q.7.1) is an alternative problematisation, (Q.7.2) are the presuppositions which allow it to be intelligible.

5.1 'Reducing the incentives for irregular migration'

One problem representation is that there are too many incentives for irregular migration. This issue is problematised in three explicit ways: root causes, smuggling and trafficking, and return of unsuccessful asylum claimants and other mobile groups.

5.1.1 'Addressing the root causes of irregular and forced displacement in third countries'

Addressing root causes is a key problematisation whereby the proposal is to entwine migration governance with development and aid (Q.1). Migration is thus represented to be a problem of development and external political 'cooperation'. Hence: '[p]artnership with countries of origin and transit is crucial' for tackling irregular migration (European Commission, 2015, p. 8). The solution is that migration will become a high priority for EU delegations in key third countries, where 'European migration liaison officers will be seconded in EU Delegations' (ibid). EU

delegations 'act as the eyes, ears and mouthpiece of the European Commission' (European Commission, n.d.-a) and are part of the externalisation efforts of the EU. Thus, an increased presence of migration officials in countries of origin and transit is needed. To enhance cooperation between the Immigration Liaison Officers Network (the member-states' representatives in a non-member state who facilitate EU measures to combat irregular migration), European delegations, 'and with local authorities and civil society, with the purpose of gathering, exchanging and analysing information' (European Commission, 2015, p. 8).

The proposed solution is then evidenced by the success of cooperation efforts with Turkey, a transit country. The EU contributed EUR 79 million in the year prior to the 2015 agenda being written, to support their 'refugee management system and to help prevent hazardous journeys in the Eastern Mediterranean' (European Commission, 2015, p. 8). This provides an answer to the question of how cooperation will actually tackle 'irregular' migration. The nested problem representation, which is embedded within the problem of a lack of cooperation, is the lack of external barriers. The solution is the immobilisation of migrants in transit countries by funding third countries' ability to house, process, and police people on the move. The solution here is therefore not to tackle root causes but to immobilise those already traveling to the EU. The funding of refugee management systems and prevention of irregular migration represents the problem to be the freedom of passage for those fleeing global issues, i.e., a lack of border control and absorption of refugees in third counties. Good political cooperation and partnership is framed as the exchange of funds for migrant immobilisation. A significant portion of the *addressing the root causes* section is concerned with policing the mobility of migrants in transit countries via externalisation programmes. Indeed, '[d]eploying a dedicated Frontex liaison officer in Turkey will take cooperation one step further' (European Commission, 2015, p. 8). The externalisation of the EU border is an explicit solution within the problematising of addressing root causes.

This is made sense of by the creation of a binary (Q.2). The people category of the migrant is simplified into a clear good/bad hierarchy, as seen in the policy introduction; 'a coherent and comprehensive approach to reap the benefits and address the challenges deriving from migration' (European Commission, 2015, p. 2). The benefits relate to (good) legal migration (see section 5.4) as opposed to the challenges faced by (bad) 'illegal' migration. It is clear that

'[o]ne side is privileged, considered to be more important or more valued than the other side' (Bacchi, 2009, p. 7). This presupposition simplifies movement and results in the silencing (Q.4) of several issues relating to 'illegal' migrants, which I explore below. It also creates positive connotations around skilled labour and economically productive migration as opposed to the negative associations ascribed to the victim or unruly migrant who are either beneficiaries of the EU's good will or criminalised and forced into precarity.

Additionally, with regard to Turkey, a significant development in their history is its relationship with the Kurdish ethnic group (Q.3). Turkish practices of migration governance are shaped by the border policy which developed due to political conflict. The 'Kurdish policy' impacts on the EU's externalisation of border control. Turkey has been selectively channelling migrants fleeing Syria, where Kurdish mobility resembles 'a menace' to Turkish identity; resulting in Turkey initially refusing to offer resettlement or aid to Kurds, followed by only partial resettlement of refugees from Kurdish regions in Syria (Koca, 2022). Thus, the EU's designation of Turkey as a safe third country and the funding for refugee management ignores the specific historical developments which result in selective application of human rights and the channelling of mobility based on ethnicity. In this case the EU is complicit in ethic discrimination.

The problem representation of a lack of external barriers is highlighted elsewhere in the policy. With regard to the EU's immediate response to irregular migration over the Mediterranean the policy proposes that existing external programmes and policy will receive more funding and that they can be incorporated into the effort to prevent hazardous journeys (European Commission, 2015, p. 5). The focus is on regional development in Northern Africa; an international multipurpose centre (offering protection and resettlement in addition to deterring migration and assisting in voluntary return) in Niger, and integrating migration governance into the 'Common Security and Defence Policy' (CSDP) in the Sahel region (European Commission, 2015, p. 5). Through funding external cooperation initiatives, the policy proposes that external action will reduce the harm caused by 'irregular' migration. The problem is again represented to be a lack of international cooperation and partnership between the EU and regions of origin or transit.

The above problematisation is premised in the conceptual logic of absolute space (Q.2). This sedentary ontological position morally and ideological privileges dwelling. By doing this, EU policy is able to create distance from their relational role in the processes which occur in the 'places of origin'; events such as '[c]ivil war, persecution, poverty, and climate change all feed directly and immediately into migration' (European Commission, 2015, p. 7), but these events are relational in space-time. Such an 'event or a thing at a point in space cannot be understood by appeal to what exists only at that point. It depends upon everything else going on around it' (Harvey, 2006, p. 274). These four examples of root causes of migration are spatially and temporally connected to Europe. The assumption of absolute space allows the EU to distance themselves from their relational connection to these 'global issues'. In relation to war, the vagueness around root causes creates a 'mystification [and] helps avoid discussion around more tangible practices, such as the involvement of … European countries in at least some of the wars that have led populations … to become forcibly displaced' which 'helps eschew responsibility' (Rigby et al., 2021, p. 512). Therefore, what is left unproblematic (Q.4) is the relationality in which spatial phenomena occurs, and which subjectification relates to.

Theories of absolute space regarding territory coincide with specific historical developments (Q.3). The myth (or assumption, Q.2) that all forms of territorial behaviours, like private property and nation building are due to a natural evolutionary urge, conveniently arose during political contestations during the 17th century and the development of the nation-state as fixed, unambiguous, and secure (Harvey, 2009, Chapter 8). To establish a territorialised national identity took decades of effort, such as mapping and collective cultural and history production. The construction of an imagined community (Anderson, 1991) relies on technology and the problematisation of territorial social cohesion, e.g. the printing press and public schooling systems, as well as other cultural and economic processes. The EU, then, problematises outside mobility based on the Cartesian concept of absolute space and whereby administering territory was a natural progression of belonging. A belonging which can only be constituted in relation to an Other.

Poverty migration is also a contested concept, an assumption (Q.2) based on a myth of invasion (de Haas, 2008) about migration drivers which remains silent (Q.4) on the reality that most people, even populations struggling to meet their basic needs, do not migrate (Schewel, 2020). Instead, addressing root causes through development aid is argued to be beneficial for

authoritative states (Norman & Micinski, 2022), as they use the fund to enhance and consolidate power over rivals under the guise of securitisation and migration management (Cold-Ravnkilde & Nissen, 2020). Paradoxically, political instability and human rights factors are show to raise migration aspiration (Baldwin-Edwards et al., 2019). Thus, the above assumptions have the lived effect of encouraging migration aspirations (Q.5).

Additionally, the planetary nature of climate change is intrinsically tied to infrastructures of global mobility regimes, including transport of people and goods, and communication and logistics networks (Sheller, 2018, p. 137), which the EU is an integral part of. Mobility justice goes beyond the Western focus on positivist knowledge to include subjugated discourse. So that racialised mobile subjects and their position within a mobility regime are understood as historically constituted and tied to multiple scales. For example, the first-class European business traveller is understood as contributing to the displacement of climate refugees. Similarly, their access to air travel is based on colonial extraction of wealth; elite mobility infrastructures are foundational to, not a produce of, global inequalities.

5.1.1.1 Climate mobility and climate refugees

A key silence (Q.4) is the lack of procedure for climate refugees, even though climate change is highlighted as a root cause of migration (it is mentioned once throughout the entire policy). The EU commissions 'New Pact on Migration and Asylum' policy from 2020 also remains silent on climate refugees. The policy mentions 'climate change' a total of four times but in the ambiguous context of improving migration governance through cooperation with partner countries (European Commission, 2020, p. 17). Here the problem representation relies on the concept of 'mass climate migration' (Q.2), which correlates with the myth of invasion (de Haas, 2008). This sensational representation of the effects of climate change (Boas et al., 2022; Durand-Delacre et al., 2021) is used to argue for anticipatory measure to be made to further entrench mobility governance on populations most affected by climate change. For instance, EU policy consistently claims that 'migration should be built in as a core issue' in EU partnerships with third countries (European Commission, 2015, pp. 7–8, 2020, p. 17). This is shown to direct development funds predominantly towards border and migration management (Grün, 2018; Youngs & Zihnioğlu, 2021).

What is left unproblematic is the EU's relational position within the planetary nature of production (Q.4). Firstly, the discursive effect (Q.5) of this silence is that the EU becomes an entity separate from any negative associations to climate change. It discursively positions itself upon a climate pedestal with the narrative of itself as a leading normative power in CO2 emission reduction, when in fact these emissions are simply outsourced (Bachram, 2004); external industries manufacture products shipped to EU consumers (Goldenberg, 2014). Carbon reductions in the EU is only possible by outsourcing carbon intensive processes to the global South through a type of spatial and temporal fix which displaces responsibility geographically and pushes it into the future, creating what some call climate colonialism (Bhambra & Newell, 2022). This creates a feedback loop whereby the displacement of climate colonialism gives the impression that the EU is taking responsibility and making change while bolstering the 'threat' narrative of future mass climate migration from the South to the North (a threat pushed into the future by the inaction of outsourcing emissions). In turn, framing the EU as superior results in the binary (Q.2) of an inferior global South whose high emissions are leading to climate change. Responsibility is distorted. This reproduces the threat of 'mass climate migration' which allows the policy to represent the problem to be a lack of migration governance (European Commission, 2015, p. 7, 2020, p. 17)

Thus, an alternative problematisation (Q.7.1) is that climate refugees are displaced due to global infrastructures of elite mobility and that the EU has a significant role in such uneven mobility regimes (regimes which both contribute to climate displacement and are also selective, create friction, channel through dangerous routes, and are unevenly distributed, for climate refugees). The incorporation of planetary urbanism in the mobility justice framework makes this comprehensible by assuming a topological spatial approach (Q.7.2). It breaks free of the 'epistemological straitjacket' which has limited urban and national studies throughout the social sciences in order to view such phenomena as a relational process rather than having 'territorial distinctiveness, coherence, and boundedness' (Brenner, 2013, pp. 104–105). Mobility justice helps identify the unaccounted ways that the EU is connected to climate change as a root cause of migration.

Additionally, the 1951 Refugee Convention does not cover those affected by climate change and there is also no clear definition of what a climate refugee is. Although recent EU documents have tackled the issue, such as the European Parliamentary Research Service's

(EPRS, 2022) proposal for dealing with climate refugees, the lack of relational understanding or taking responsibility for climate change hinders the process. In terms of mobility justice, Sheller (2018, pp. 135–136) states there must be an international agreement on asylum for climate refugees as well as restorative justice in the form of resettlement, specifically the ability for resettlement in those countries which have contributed most to climate change. Presently, the EU is making only rhetorical gestures; identifying that '[i]t would be in keeping with its role as a leading actor against climate change were the EU to push for the recognition of the status of climate refugee' (EPRS, 2022, p. 2). However, member-states are adverse to the creation of a climate refugee category and, ultimately, what took presentence was to address root causes through development and security partnership in the commission's migration policy (EPRS, 2021, p. 10).

One EU proposal which seeks to develop recognition, and thus inclusion in the Refugee Convention, for climate induced migration is the EPRS proposal for a legal definition of what a climate refugee is (EPRS, 2021). Based on the so-called Nansen principles, the proposal deals with who should take responsibility for those displaced by climate change, international support for prevention and building resilience, and developing legal frameworks at multiple scales to protect climate refugees. In fact, 'consent, empowerment, participation and partnerships with those directly affected' is a key proposal, echoing aspects of a mobility justice approach in terms of deliberative and procedural justice (EPRS, 2021, p. 8).

Similarly, a new people category suggests a level of epistemic justice in the form of new knowledge which fills the silence in the EU migration policies. This allows for a new way of thinking about mobility; it provides the conceptual logic necessary to implement less harmful policies (Q.7.2). Categorising people in this way does, however, reduce the multiplicity of the individual to an essentialised subject, repositioning them as a migrant victim. Meaning, due to the creation of a new legal category, representations of movement from outside the EU's space in absolute terms continues to fall into other racialised and classed categories which disregard the historical and spatial ties the EU has globally. Some effects (Q.5) of this are seen in the subjectification of 'the climate refugee as a racialized, passive and helpless victim' through visual discourse on climate induced migration in the MENA region. Which is used to 'turn a future and complex issue into a governable object in the present' (Methmann & Rothe, 2014, p. 175). This can be seen in the redirecting of development funds towards migration

management to deal with the supposed future threat of mass climate migration. This brings to light a limitation of the mobility justice proposal to provide asylum for climate refugees as it neglects to consider the ways that new categories lead to new governing techniques.

The practices of movement will also likely remain extremely dangerous for climate refugees. The high level of predicted numbers for climate change displacement (EPRS, 2022) are highly contested and said to do more harm by fuelling anti-immigrant populism and increased funding for border control and restrictive migration policy (Durand-Delacre et al., 2021). However, those that do seek safety in the countries which are most responsible for climate change will face similar issues to those currently covered by the Refugee Convention. Seeing as the limited number of proposed resettlement offers (a 'single European pledge of 20,000 resettlement places' for 2015-2016, European Commission, 2015, p. 20) was only 1.5% of the total 1.3 million asylum claims made in 2015, it seems a new legal category will not reduce the number of people forced to use unofficial routes outside of resettlement schemes. Giving more reason for networks of smugglers to exist. Judging by the current situation, pursuing humanitarian gains within the context of proliferating external bordering will only produce further dehumanisation (or, animalisation) of people on the move (Vaughan-Williams, 2015).

One point to make however is that there is an element of distributive justice in terms of 'mechanisms for allocating resources to the least territorially advantaged, poorest regions' (Sheller, 2018, p. 36). Meaning, the allocation of 'EUR 96.8 billion for the 2014-2020 period, [for] EU external cooperation assistance, and in particular development cooperation' (European Commission, 2015, p. 8) shows how the EU is seeking to do just what spatial justice theorists have advocated for. Although, as Harvey (1988, p. 99) notes, distribution to one scale (in this case, distribution of funds to the nation-state or regional scale) often does not mean equal or adequate distribution of funds or resources at an individual scale. The policy also does not address any mechanism to ensure a broader range of justice (conceptualised in mobility justice). This hinders the ability and success of distributing funds due to the inability to assess needs, something which mobility justice would allow space for, e.g., participation and informed consent across multiple scales from those territories receiving development funds. As mentioned above, it also bolsters authoritative states.

5.1.1.2 Colonial legacies

Similarly, root causes have distinct genealogies which can be traced to reveal the developments of specific practices and how problems are made (Q.3). Thus, to consider colonial legacies when discussing third country civil war, persecution, and poverty, is extremely relevant. Relating to restorative justice most immediately, the impact of colonialism on postcolonial societies is important when considering the EU's relationship to root causes of migration. For example, Lange & Dawson (2009) tests whether colonialism leaves a legacy of civil violence, which, although they show is not a universal cause, highlights how communal, or ethnic, group violence in postcolonial societies appears to relate to several forms of 'divide-and-rule' policy initiated by colonial powers. For instance, their findings support the suggestion that Belgium emphasised the distinction between the Hutus and Tutsis in Rwanda, promoting the discrimination which culminated in genocide. The dividing practices involved in colonial policy has a subjectification effect (Q.5) in which constructing opposition groups based on ethic difference proved to be a key governing mechanism. Following this genealogy shows how the problem of civil war is bound to the power relations between colonised and coloniser and the practices that the latter enacted.

Similarly, France, too, enabled the 1994 violence by sustaining close political and military ties with the Habyarimana regime in order to hold power in central Africa, followed by a prolonged distortion of truth, covering up its involvement, and protecting perpetrators (Al Jazeera, 2021). This refusal of recognition, admission, or reparations hinders any possibility of mobility justice (hundreds of thousands of refugees sought asylum in neighbouring countries) which could provide the context for those across the region to pursue reconciliation, and the safety and capacity to return or seek refuge in those nation-states which contributed to the conflict. Migrant and mobility justice thus depends on the acknowledgment of colonially constructed divisions. Ranging from the 'arbitrary boundary-making' of colonial administrators, to policy encouraging ethnic divides (Lange & Dawson, 2009, p. 789), such practices develop a form of mobility governance which today is assumed to be an inevitability. Mobility justice would need EU member-states to go beyond performative gestures to implement long standing participatory mechanisms which allow marginalised mobile subjects to take part in the distribution of mobility accessibility while being sensitive to the connected nature of mobility with climate change and producing immobility (Q.7.1).

Therefore, to go beyond the gap between policy rhetoric and reality is to address the root causes in a more substantial way. This would require the EU to recognise the link between mobility, such as air travel infrastructure moored throughout European space and connecting it to the world and outsourcing of carbon intensive industry, to the displacement of people due to climate change. The recognition of climate refugees is one step in which EU problematising can reduce harmful effects caused by their current policy proposals. Although, this new proposal must be analysed with the same rigor as existing mobility categories to avoid manufacturing new harms. For example, the proposal may contribute to the assumption of mass climate migration, an imagined future threat population, which is seen to encourage huge spending on border and mobility controls.

5.1.2 'The fight against smugglers and traffickers'

The problem representation here is a lack of connection between international legal apparatus and migration management (Q.1). Vulnerable migrants are said to be exploited by international criminal networks of smugglers and traffickers. The proposal is again to improve cooperation with third countries through intensifying the focus of migration governance through the CSDP operations. The proposal is situated within a law-and-order discourse which works on the presupposition (Q.2) that 'high risk, low return' environments of disciplining (more powers to prosecute, confiscate finances, and fines) will solve the problem (European Commission, 2015, pp. 8–9, 2020, pp. 15–16). The additional proposals are to pool information amongst EU agencies which will be open to member-states; assist in identifying, investigating, and prosecuting smugglers; cooperation with Financial Intelligence Units; 'identify, capture and destroy vessels' used by smugglers (European Commission, 2015, p. 9); and to tackle illegal employment within the EU of trafficked people. These proposals problematise the issue of smuggling and trafficking as mostly an external issue whereby exploitative criminal networks prey upon the migrant. It therefore also operates in the more recent assumption that borderwork is also a humanitarian issue (Q.2) (Pallister-Wilkins, 2017).

There is a highly functioning physical, social, and political infrastructure which supports the potential for movement in the Aegean Sea. However, mobility here is also highly regulated, surveilled, and filtered. On the one hand there is an elite mobility infrastructure for tourism, producing smooth, safe, friction-free travel ranging from ferries to private yachts. While on the other, the full force of state military and security power is used to destroy the modes of

mobility used by smugglers as well as to dismantle the 'criminal networks' which subvert EU border friction by providing alternative routes. Mobility justice highlights how 'throughout history subversive mobilities have challenged the injustices of dominant mobility regimes and offered other epistemic meanings and spatial moves' (Sheller, 2018, p. 19). Networks of subversive mobility are not inherently criminal. Categorising them as such has a genealogy (Q.3), where, in the 1990's and 2000's a more assertive effort was made to categorise smuggling as a crime (Garelli & Tazzioli, 2018), at a time when border control was being moved to the EU's external regions and dissolved internally. Thus, dismantling the network capital of subversive mobilities became a law-and-order issue. Challenging the EU imposed friction of the visa regime and physical border (of fences, walls, coast guards, etc.) disrupts the injustice of mobility across the Aegean Sea to allow the privilege of human rights to be enjoyed by (some) previously excluded subjects. Transgressive infrastructure and networks which supports the mobility of racialised others is assumed to be criminal (Q.2), whereas elite mobility and tourism is situated in the presupposition of mobility as freedom (the Western fantasy of exploration, paradise islands, etc.). This leads to a form of 'global apartheid' due to racialised territorial restrictions on official mobility (van Houtum, 2010).

Additionally, nested within the binary of good/bad migrant is the binary of migrants as either victims or unruly threats (Q.2). This removes the autonomy of people on the move who are 'under conditions in which the use of a human smuggler is the only hope they have to escape the social injustices of war' (Ilcan, 2018, p. 61). When the label of victim is applied it refuses the complexity of experiences and denies mobile subjects the entitlements and rights afforded to political subjects. The victim label perpetuates precarity by immobilising people in countries of origin or transit. For instance, those Syrian's in Lebanon seeking the recognition of refugee status and rights of a citizen (access to employment, education, and healthcare) do so to avoid the precarity of living as an invisible victim reliant on aid (Ilcan, 2018). The EU propose this option; their aid effectively forces many people on the move into precarious immobility, struggling for recognition in a country of transit (European Commission, 2015, p. 8). With no option to gain the recognition of a politic subject, those with the capability will of course be more inclined to continue moving, aspiring for the freedom which rights enable. The EU promotes globally the idea that it is a space of freedom and rights. But its policy clearly highlights how the victim is preferable due to its solution of aid. The opposite in this binary is the unruly mobility of those using smugglers. The EUR 860 million sent to Lebanon since 2011 (European Commission, 2023) promotes the immobility of Syrians. Refugee management aid

encourages the use of smugglers as it is the only option available for people to gain visibility and rights.

5.1.3 'Return'

'Unsuccessful asylum claimants who try to avoid return, visa overstayers, and migrants living in a permanent state of irregularity constitute a serious problem' (European Commission, 2015, p. 7).

The clearly demarcated problem in the 2015 policy is stated to be an inefficient returns system where 'relatively few return decisions are enforced'; less than 40% in 2013 (European Commission, 2015, p. 9). The nested problem representations are, firstly, that migrants who stay without the legal right are fuelling political movements that 'criticise or stigmatise migration' and hinder the integration of 'rightful' migrants (European Commission, 2015, p. 7), i.e., the migrant is responsible for the hostile attitudes of EU citizens. Secondly, policy must 'ensure that third countries fulfil their international obligation to take back their own nationals residing irregularly in Europe' (European Commission, 2015, p. 9). Suggesting that third countries are not fulfilling this obligation. The EU proposes to support third countries' capacity to manage returns as well as to prioritise the revision of readmission agreements with 'the main countries of origin of irregular migrants' (European Commission, 2015, p. 10). This is part of the broader problem representation throughout the policy which constitutes the problem to be a lack of external migration management.

A further proposal is to increase Frontex's ability to provide 'comprehensive operational assistance'; the policy states how the agency cannot currently 'initiate its own' return missions, and so proposes an amendment of the 'Frontex legal basis to strengthen its role on return' (European Commission, 2015, p. 10). This solution reorients the perspective to the internal and problematises the lack of power which Frontex has to initiate returns. The problem is represented to be a lack of EU power to make returns, the proposal is a cohesive system where the EU can monitor and return people from throughout its territory.

This problem representation relies on the assumption that some mobilities are suspicious (Q.2) as well as creates a mobile subject (Q.5) who is undeserving, opportunistic, and whose mobility

is problematic. This is evident when in the policy it is claimed that '[t]oo many requests are unfounded: in 2014, 55% of the asylum requests resulted in a negative decision and for some nationalities almost all asylum requests were rejected' (European Commission, 2015, p. 12). Certain mobilities are constituted as unwarranted and in need of punishment in the form of detention and removal, to reinstate immobility of such persons outside the EU. Over half of the mobile subjects are problematised such that asylum claimants are represented to be abusing the asylum system; their mobility also hinders the possibility for those in need of accessing protection.

This example of EU policy encoding mobilities with different meanings also relates to Hoskins' (2006) discussion of how abstract and universal forms of mobility are produced in relation to national identity. This process hides the fact that the forms of mobility are 'predicated on the definition of Other mobilities as threatening, transgressive, and abject' (2006, p. 178). Thus, the cosmopolitan project of internal EU mobility distorts and hides the exclusion of the external mobilities encoded as threatening and transgressive. It is predicated (Q.3) on immobilising and excluding previous colonial subjects of European imperial nations (Bhambra, 2017). It also highlights how transgression is encoded onto entire categories. The biopolitical inscription of nationality onto the mobile body creates categories of people whose mobility is allocated a universal character. The proposal for a 'swift processing of unfounded asylum applications' from countries designated as safe produces a universal form of mobility which is deviant (European Commission, 2015, p. 13). This relies on the contested concept of 'safe third country' (Q.2). The subjectification effect (Q.5) is that those nationalities where 'almost all asylum requests were rejected' (European Commission, 2015, p. 12) are designated a universal character of bad mobility, which is in need of monitoring. Some national identities are therefore encoded with an opportunistic, unwarranted mobility and categorised as a suspect population. The body is tied to the nation-state scale in the same way that it is tied to the global scale when spoken about as being an international migrant.

This supports existing literature which suggests asylum and irregularity are individualised as a voluntary choice (Huot et al., 2016; Jørgensen, 2012). The current political rationalities in neoliberal Europe obscure global conditions and allow the EU to relinquish responsibility for their role in producing global issue which lead to migration and asylum claims. The assumption (Q.2) that people can have irregular mobility also leads to states relinquishing their human

rights responsibilities as they become territorialised and reduced to citizenship-based rights (Jørgensen, 2012, p. 52). The safe countries list therefore recategorises possible 'refugee' groups into 'irregular migrant' groups (Schuster, 2011).

5.2 'Border management – saving lives and securing external borders'

The budget for Frontex operations (Triton and Poseidon) is tripled for 2015-16. One solution to death at sea is therefore seen as a need to merge border control with humanitarianism. This has been criticised by Pallister-Wilkins (2017), who highlights how the merging of border control and humanitarianism creates new spaces of governance and that policing and rescue are not separate practices (Pallister-Wilkins, 2015). The consolidation of border control through 'further pooling of certain coast guard functions at the EU level' and developing a 'Union standard for border management' (European Commission, 2015, p. 11) problematises the issue as being a fragmented approach to border management. Representing the problem in this way allows the EU to adopt a new type of nation-state role where governing mobility reproduces elements of nationalist belonging at a trans-national scale. The imagining of an intrinsic Europeanness of EU member-states which transcends time, echo's the narrative of nationalism. Similar traits are found in the way the border is problematised, most significantly the proposal for pooling data and information around the concept of 'smart borders'.

Information gathering turns suspect populations into knowable populations that can be governed (Vaughan-Williams, 2015, p. 8). Hence, the invention of the passport and the nation-states monopoly of legitimate mobility (Torpey, 2000), as well as other information systems, developed simultaneously with the need to police global mobility (Q.3). The problem representation (Q.1) is a lack of collectivised information that all member-states can access. The problem of monitoring unknown populations whose mobility is seen as deviant is a development which parallels the naturalising of territorial behaviours such as private property and nation building.

5.3 'Europe's duty to protect: a strong common asylum policy'

As mentioned above, this section problematises unfounded asylum requests from third countries designated as safe. What is left unproblematic is the systems which member-states

use to define deserving asylum claimants (Q.4). There is no mention of the way in which countries are categorised as safe or not. As mentioned above, the lack of climate refugee protection is key here. How, for instance, can the diverse reasons for migration be judged when legislation around protection is so contested? The assumption that diverse social and spatial territories can be systematically categorised contributes to the uneven governing of mobility which is driven by state interests. Furthermore, when the proposal is to accelerate this process, it does not seem there will be sufficient resources to consider individual cases in detail. Here the infrastructure for speedy, privileged travel is utilised in the immobilisation of those deemed undeserving of protection, such as charter flight deportations.

Another proposal is that 'Member States must also implement fully the rules on taking migrants' fingerprints at the borders' with the additional hope of using facial recognition in the future (European Commission, 2015, p. 13). This ties to the presupposition that unknown subjects are a risk (Q.2). In relation to uneven mobility regimes, the 'suspect countries' which house 'suspect populations' are a risk due to their mobility being conflated with crime and undesired immigration, which would unsettle the stable and secure social fabric of privileged EU space (Shamir, 2005, pp. 203–204). The policy problematises in a way that makes EU human rights treaties and core values a low priority.

5.4 'A new policy on legal migration'

The recognition of only certain people as being legitimate of receiving formal access to mobility rests on the good/bad migrant binary in the legal/illegal form driven by access to 'human capital' (Q.2). Here, legal movement is tied to benefiting economic systems whereas illegal movement is associated with everything else. That is, the victim and unruly migrant. It produces a mobility regime which allows the migration discourse to be directed by the political economy of EU member-states in relation to global capital. Filtering mobility occurs where the meaning ascribed to movement relates to 'feeding' the economy. By representing the problem to be an aging European population soon to be suffering from economic issues due to a lack of labour force, the category of productive migrant is demarcated as a specific kind of worker which can benefit the EU economy, i.e., 'highly skilled' and within a certain industry (European Commission, 2015, p. 14, 2020, p. 24). This immobilises third country populations based on existing class divides, reproducing but also producing new class divisions relating to mobility. It allows those who already have access to training and the capability of mobility to access EU

space. In a sense, the legal route section is a global job advertisement for the EU and an investment into its future. It shapes the middle and upper classes of third country nationals who are seeking out the privilege of mobility by problematising the economic needs of the EU, detailing the industries which are in need. This problem representation is essentially communicating to the world that specific training equates mobility. Somewhat reminiscent of the colonial reorganisation of external economies to meet domestic needs (Ocheni & Nwankwo, 2012). However, now, mobility is a resource which is accessible through education or training in line with the EU's domestic needs.

Problematising the need for highly skilled labour in terms of educational level, higher-educated labour, links to the lived effect (Q.5) of outsourcing carbon intensive industry. The effect of outsourcing these industries results in an economy based on highly skilled jobs and the need to 'transition towards a green and digital economy' (European Commission, 2020, p. 25). The nested problem representation is the inability to meet the needs of this labour market from within the EU. It rests on the concept (Q.2) of 'priority workers' where skilled labour is defined in relation to the economic needs of a state (Koser & Salt, 1997, p. 287). The EU actively constructs mobility regimes that are directed by labour demands as opposed to human rights. This is evident in the allocation of 775,000 residency permits for employment purposes in 2018 contrasted with the 29,500 refugee resettlement places allocated over two years from 2020 (European Commission, 2020, pp. 22, 24).

Additionally, the EU is actively promoting underdevelopment by introducing 'brain-drain' mechanisms, such as the Blue Card Directive (European Commission, 2015, p. 15, 2020, p. 25). Here I use underdevelopment, as defined by Rodney (2018), to mean a process where development is accompanied by underdevelopment due to an exploitative relationship[2]. Indeed, '[w]hen the terms of trade are set by one country in a manner entirely advantageous to itself, then the trade is usually detrimental to the trading partner' (Rodney, 2018, p. 34). As problematised in the policy, 'Europe is competing with other economies to attract workers with the skills it needs' (European Commission, 2015, p. 14), the issue of competition is represented as an aging population within an economy reliant on high skilled jobs, whereby

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[2] The term also denotes how, in the context of European colonialism in Africa, a more-than-economic underdevelopment took place in relation to already exiting African social structures, e.g., philosophy, politics, etc. And how cultural difference was constructed as either developed or underdeveloped.

the need to train and meet labour market needs will not be met from within. Thus, '[m]igration will increasingly be an important way to enhance the sustainability of our welfare system and to ensure sustainable growth of the EU economy' (European Commission, 2015, p. 14). Problematising the need to funnel skilled labour into EU industries perpetuates and reshapes underdevelopment.

The policy does mention 'horizontal' partnerships with countries of origin, where development is used to enhance economic opportunities (European Commission, 2015, p. 16). But the use of development aid, as mentioned above, comes with a cost. For example, excluding third countries from EU markets while demanding access to theirs has more damage than can be fixed via aid (Castles, 2004; Ighobor, 2014). The partnerships discussed in the policy are therefore not as mutually beneficial as they make out to be. The (im)mobility of goods affects human (im)mobility.

In addition, regarding EU member-states, an important point to make is that the construction of the European welfare state relied heavily on the financial gains made through colonialism (Q.3) (Bhambra & Holmwood, 2018; Sager, 2018). By looking at the mutual formation of class and race, Bhambra & Holmwood (2018) show how European colonialism organised access to politics and social rights on a racialised basis. Problematising labour market needs creates mobility only for those who possess the 'human capital' needed by the EU to sustain privileges gained through colonialism, it leaves unproblematic the exclusion of those affected by it, i.e., the descendants of colonial subjects (Q.4). In this regard, 'migration control is really about regulating North-South relationships and maintaining inequality' (Castles, 2004, pp. 223–224).

This is antithetical to mobility justice. It is another form of extraction, in which the granting of mobility and inclusion in the EU's labour market represents a neo-colonial form of resource extraction, where new routes are created to channel 'human capital' into EU space. The non-recognition of people effected by European colonial histories is also a denial of restorative justice as well as meaningful participation in mobility governance. An alternative proposal (Q.7.1) follows the argument that the country which benefits from skilled worker immigration should repay the country of origin from which a person migrates, to make up for the 'state's lost return on their investment' (Annunziato, 2018). For the EU, this would mean a tariff would

be paid to the country of origin for each participant of the legal migration scheme. However, consideration would need to be directed towards the presupposition that the state is the only possible form of international organisation (Q.7.2), as well as the power relations which result from systems of debt. Or, indeed, that mobility must be dictated by one's relationship to the economy.

Similarly, Massey (2013) argues that countries such as India, Sri Lanka, Ghana, and South Africa are subsidising the reproduction of London when healthcare workers move to the city after being trained in their country of origin. She also proposes repayments be made to the counties of origin for their lose. However, the proposal is framed as an alternative globalisation where non-state institutions such as trade unions and health care systems are integrated across space. This level of connect between postcolonial spaces is an example of mobility justice. However, EU legal migration schemes remain silent (Q.4) on the contradiction of addressing root causes in the form of tackling unemployment and poverty while also encouraging uneven mobility regimes which reproduce EU space while underdeveloping places of origin. Seeing as access to mobility shapes social inequalities, the EU is actively disrupting global development by explicitly contributing to underdevelopment and in turn global inequality.

Mobility justice also helps to see how the EU policy constitutes global mobility regimes by shaping class divisions. It makes mobile certain groups (highly skilled workers) by problematising economic needs. The policy constitutes new mobile subjects within the presupposition of good/bad migration (Q.2). This binary creates the discursive effect (Q.5) of a move away from human rights. This contradiction leaves unproblematic (Q.4) the resulting uneven global mobility regime of filtering and channelling groups. The EU problematises in a way which modifies access to mobility by directing away from human rights in favour of skilled labour. Therefore, the policy constitutes new subject hierarchies. By consolidating mobility problematising into one document, i.e., labour, security, and human rights, the EU is clearly communicating these hierarchies as part of their holistic migration policy. The effect (Q.5) is that mobility is dictated by the subject's relationship to the economy.

5.4.1   Integration

This section of the policy discusses internal EU integration funding. It could be argued it is providing some level of distributive as well as deliberative justice. It is working across multiple scales (national, local, and civil society) to 'improve language and professional skills, improve access to services, promote access to the labour market, [and] inclusive education [to] foster inter-cultural exchanges' most prominently to asylum seekers, refugees, and children (European Commission, 2015, p. 16). Funding civil society initiatives may also involve a type of epistemic justice in that it allows mobile subjects to resist harmful narratives or subject types which are attributed to them. This space could generate knowledges outside of the categories and binaries which presuppositions about migration are based on. The lived effect (Q.5) of integration funding is that people seeking protection get access to cultural, social, and economic opportunities.

However, as mentioned, it leaves silent the role EU member-states played, or play, in displacing people (Q.4), in addition to the issues of nationalism and national identity of which it is assumed would be best for migrants to integrate into (Q.2). The recent developments in what it means to be European is revealing (Q.3). That is, '[m]embership to the EU started to become associated with a historical belonging to Europe', and to belong requires those who do not belong (van Houtum & Bueno Lacy, 2020, p. 713). The effect is the permanent categorising of subjects as migrants through ethnic or bodily markers (Q.5). As Silverstein (2005, p. 364) makes clear, 'following each geopolitical realignment ... [t]he construction of immigration as a problem of state policy, national cohesion, racial consciousness, and academic study has repeated itself with renewed vigor'. The question of whether the other can belong is repeated and racialised cultural practices are targeted as evidence of non-integration. Mobility is racialised, such that, mobility from certain suspect territories is made a problem requiring multiple funding bodies to remedy.

A final word on this section is that the policy represents the legal routes section as distributive justice relating to mobility accessibility, but it is severely limited to specific 'skilled' subjects, which will change in accordance with economic needs. The selective distribution of mobility options can be seen as 'dividing practices' (Foucault, 2001, p. 208) 'which function to separate groups of people from one another and which can also produce "governable subjects" divided within themselves' (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016, p. 23). Throughout the countries where the EU is promoting their legal route options, access to mobility divides subjects based on the binaries

and categories that it articulates, e.g., the skilled/unskilled subjects internalise the binaries'
hierarchy, this is disseminated globally and creates a political rationality which bolsters uneven
mobility regimes. Thus, the governmentality of (im)mobility relies upon the dissemination of
EU defined hierarchies within origin countries and for them to divide themselves along this
binary, reproducing class divisions.

6. Themes

This section will explore the theme of suspicion. It is a conceptual logic (Q.2) which runs through much of the policy and is tied to the discourse on citizenship.

Problematising the incentives for migration to the EU relies on 'a logic of deterrence' (Q.2) as opposed to the ontological assumption of universal human rights (Human Rights Watch, 2016). The assumption that some mobilities must be restricted is 'fundamental to the founding of white power through the construction and empowerment of a specifically mobile white, heteromasculine, national subject' (Sheller, 2018, p. 17). That is, proposing methods of deterrence has the effect (Q.5) of mobility management leading to the creation of 'classed, racial, sexual, able-bodied, gendered, citizen and non-citizen subjects' (Sheller, 2018, p. 16). Cresswell's (2006) logic of mobility identifies how the category of citizen is only possible through its relationship to the non-citizen or shadow (failed) citizen. Both Sheller and Cresswell posit that ideal mobility is tied to the identity of white, male, able-bodied, western citizens, relying on the subjugation of other mobilities. Glouftsios (2018, p. 194) shows how the EU uses technology and data gathering to create virtual identities 'divided into suspect populations, and then disaggregated into more or less risky subjects'. Certain national subjects are statistically categorised as risky when assessing visa applications leading to discrimination in the form of collective punishment. The effect of this (Q.5) is that entire populations are categorised as suspicious; to deal with the treat of problematic mobility, judicial, political, economic, and territorial expansion is needed in order to expel (Nail, 2015). For example, the EU's expansion into Morocco in which migrants in North Africa (who are often entitled to move freely) are expelled and abandoned in the Algerian desert (Schindel, 2022, p. 438). This categorisation is what generates the EU mobility regime which governs the uneven access to mobility that presently favours certain citizenship categories (i.e., Western nation-states).

The effects here move across the discursive, subjectification, and lived. Two distinct discursive effects are produced which are inscribed onto racialised bodies: the first sees mobility as freedom, that is embedded into 'Western fantasies' of frontierism, conquest, the open road, the paradise island, and speed (Sheller, 2018, p. 17). This relates to the uneven mobility infrastructures which provide smoothness and velocity for elite mobility (Sheller, 2018, p. 129),

while creating friction, exclusion, and slow violence for others (Schindel, 2022). A clear example is the way the EU govern access to air travel and other mobilities via visa policy. Thinking of this in terms of a 'paper border' (van Houtum & Bueno Lacy, 2020) offers an insight into the way the EU is constructing a global mobility regime. The paper border is a global bureaucratic pre-border 'dividing EUropeans from non-EUropeans on the basis of arbitrary geographical discrimination' (van Houtum & Bueno Lacy, 2020, p. 714) resulting in the exclusion of largely Muslim, African, and less affluent countries (van Houtum, 2010). Hence, the lived effect is that some experience the world as open and reachable (time-space compression) and can capitalise on such privileges (the power geometry of time-space compression, D. Massey, 2008) while other groups, entire populations, experience immobility and are categorised in a way that produces 'a potent cultural force in the regulation of movement' (Shamir, 2005, p. 214).

The paper border, as an external mechanism for mobility governance, reveals the connection between lived and discursive effects. The cultural force is the second discursive effect, what Shamir (2005) articulates as a paradigm of suspicion. This is the presupposition which makes intelligible the problematising of external border control, but it also generates a new 'truth' about non-native mobility in the context of contemporary migration to the EU. This paradigm of suspicion posits that mobility is dependent on whether the mobile subject is suspected of criminality, undesirable immigration, or terrorism, often interchangeably (Shamir, 2005, p. 201). This operates in a global mobility regime which is concerned with closure and blocking access as opposed to the discourse of mobility as freedom. He argues that governing the mobility of certain nationalities and localities now also exists in relation to the notion of 'universal dangerous personhoods' (Shamir, 2005, p. 199). Thus, the primary paper border generates the knowledge that large swaths of external territory is housing suspicious mobile subjects who must be monitored and immobilised. Discourses of suspicion allow the 'conceptual link between immigration and social vices such as crime, disease, and moral contamination' (Shamir, 2005, p. 201). They are a counterbalance to discourses of globalisation which claim that access to mobility is distorting national sovereignty and promoting universal human rights[3]. The EU, however, proposes to increase external activity to

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[3] Discourse which is present in concepts such as Normative Power Europe (Manners, 2002). This concept does not consider the way the EU's mobility regime produces harmful discourses on 'bad' mobilities.

stem migration which produces the discursive effect that some external mobilities are suspicious and risky.

The paradigm of suspicion is claimed to be a fundamental aspect of modernity, highlighting how the entwined treats of crime and immigration are consistent in recent Western history (Q.3). This gives some insight into the genealogy of contemporary mobility regimes. The current constellation of mobility builds on this discursive framing of the non-native throughout EU policy.

Moreover, Sheller (2018, p. 13) adopts this line of thinking but suggests that mobility regimes 'function to differentiate, channel, and separate various flows through sifting or sorting devices that speed some kinds of movement while slowing or stopping others'. In this sense the policy is a security discourse in which mobile subjects must be monitored, policed, and effectively detained in countries like Turkey and Libya, as well as literally detained on Greek Islands (International Rescue Committee, n.d.) and in many other internal and external detention facilities (Gerbaudo, 2022). This assumes some mobilities to be a risky (Q.2). When the EU advocates the externalisation of refugee management in Turkey (European Commission, 2015, p. 8, 2020, p. 18), a country ill equipped to do so (Ulusoy, 2016), it contributes to the production of fear of the suspicious outsider (Van Houtum & Pijpers, 2007).

7. Theoretical Contribution

The theoretical contribution I have developed above highlights the benefits of using mobility justice to analyse policy via the WPR approach. Working backward to identify how problems are constituted and their guiding presuppositions allows for better positioning of alternative proposals. It is a method well suited for mobility research because it opens up the multiple ways that mobility is foundational to contemporary issues. Unpicking the subjectification effects can highlight where mobility justice principles might avoid the negative effects associated with current subject positions. For example, troubling the unruly migrant subject by introducing international climate asylum procedures could highlight the multiple reasons people are displaced and avoid the associated harm of simplistic binaries. The unruly migrant then becomes someone entangled in the planetary *problem* of climate change. Mobility justice connects and makes visible the multiple ways that subjects are tied to multi-scalar phenomena, such as outsourcing carbon intensive industries.

The WRP approach pushed my critical theoretical framework out of its comfort zone to reveal limitations. Alternative proposals can also be critically examined to highlight possible harmful effects. The case of climate asylum, for instance, would operate in the human rights discourse which the EU already ascribes to. Meaning people on the move would be faced with similar issues of limited access to official routes and the logic of mobility inherent in systems of citizenship which can only exist in contrast to those that don't belong in a territory. The paradigm of suspicion therefore envelops much of the discourse on the mobility of the Other.

Use of the method with mobility justice also avoids simply calling for better adherence to policy, which is often the result from identifying the gap between rhetoric and reality. The full breadth of mobility justice can support new knowledges, institutions, and practices which challenge, rather than appeal to, the power structures and knowledge which constitute, or are associated with or complicit in the harmful effects of EU migration policy. Seeing mobility problems as constituted within uneven mobility regimes allows them to be remade in ways that do not further entrench uneven power relations. Mobility justice offers a framework for

the remaking process, creating new knowledge and participation systems can disrupt the

dividing practices that result from the presuppositions (re)produced through policy.

8. Conclusion

This thesis has sought to identify how the EU governs mobility and whether EU migration policy contributes to uneven mobility regimes. Through examining the policies I have answered in the affirmative and made an argument for how this is so. The analysis has shown how the policy *makes* certain mobilities a problem and that the formulation of subject hierarchies contributes to how people are governed. I positioned the findings in a historical context with regard to European colonialism. By using the WPR approach I was able to make alternative proposals based on a mobility justice perspective while remaining sensitive to the possibility of undesirable effects.

The policy constituted four main problems: a lack of external migration governance in countries of origin and transit; migration as a law-and-order and security problem; unfounded, opportunistic asylum claims; and a need to attract skilled labour migrants. A key presupposition was that of the suspicious outsider, based in a discourse of citizenship and belonging. This is connected to the use of the Cartesian theory of absolute space which distorts the EU's role as a global actor in which it presents itself as a purely benevolent actor reacting to outside events. The concept of mass migration, or the myth of invasion, is seen to be remedied by development aid, which contributes to political, social, and economic instability and is ultimately damaging to mobility justice.

A key finding is that the policy remained silent on the issue of climate refugees while also attributing climate change as a root cause of migration. I argue that the EU's externalisation efforts are justified through the sensationalised discourse of future mass migration, to govern the anticipated threat population. These threats are contested and fuel instability. The policy supports the sensationalising of a future threat by problematising the need to make migration governance a key aspect of political cooperation across multiple scales. Similarly, the EU's relational connection to climate change, through outsourcing carbon intensive industry, is left silent. This contributes to uneven mobility regimes by removing the possibility of asylum for those most effected by climate change in countries which contribute most significantly. The process of external migration governance further globalises mobility injustice and in some cases has the lived effect of increasing migration aspirations.

The EU's contribution to uneven mobility regimes is built on subject hierarchies. EU migration policy contributes to the development of these hierarchies by constituting problems based on good/bad and victim/unruly binaries. I posit that by consolidating migration governance into one document the EU is more firmly articulating these subject hierarchies. The policy has been foundational in directing the politics of mobility since its release, so has continuously reiterated the good/bad migrant in terms of their relationship to the economy. With the bad migrant being predominantly made up of unruly, unfounded asylum claimants. Problematising asylum claims has the effect of ascribing racialised, unbelonging, problematic mobility onto various suspect populations, which is made sense of as a law-and-order issue. Thus, I show how the unruly migrant is criminalised and the victim migrant is immobilised externally through aid.

I contributed to new knowledge by highlighting the consistency between the 2015 European Agenda and the 2020 New Pact on Migration. The problem representations in 2015 were consistent with the newer 2020 policy. The EU is not altering their approach to mobility governance regardless of the continued harm that the policies produce. I make the argument that mobility is governed by economic needs as opposed to human rights and that these policies are key in how that governing takes place. Underdevelopment occurs in two ways, through 'brain-drain' mechanisms and EU demands for economic liberalisation (such as in Africa). Throughout the thesis I make historical links to Europe's colonial legacies to show how the present (e.g., the root causes and EU welfare) are built on exploitative pasts. Sustaining uneven mobility regimes produces inequality.

Future research with this model could examine more closely the political economy of the EU's relationship with, for example, regions across Africa. Researching how development aid affects a specific region could more strongly bridge the symbolic – material divide. Analysed in relation to EU economic policy might also reveal how alternative proposals for new trade agreements might support mobility justice. Additionally, a more reparative reading of the policy and the positive aspects of EU action, such as providing children with safety, could identify examples of flourishing and solidarity that could be mobilised more widely.

However, the EU does contribute to uneven mobility regimes through the production of subject hierarchies and filtering mobility based on economic needs. The policies are fundamental in mobility governance. They shape what is possible to think and say regarding migration; the silences are as loud and influential as the problems they articulate. Mobility justice confronts the harmful effects produced by EU migration policy and provides alternative options which can broaden our understanding of what is possible. It reveals the connections inherent in contemporary life, across imagined borders from Damascus to Athens. Mobility justice is achievable.

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