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Forced Migration in a Moral Polity and the Public Role of Migration Research

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Abstract

Many countries in Europe receiving refugees are signatories to human rights conventions, and we can thus speak of a moral polity. Yet we also find externalisation of migration control and widespread refusal to receive forced migrants. This observation raises three questions. First, in what sense can we speak of a moral polity around forced migration? In other words, what are the existing elements of a global regime around forced migration? Second, how is the discrepancy between human rights declarations on the one hand and restrictive policies on the other hand reflected in exclusion and inequalities? This question is placed in the context of the externalisation of control which has spurred the securitisation of migration with respect to socio-psychological, political-legal, and economic aspects. The main argument is that the dissonance between moral proclamations, on the one hand, and inaction on norms combined with externalisation of migration control on the other, has contributed to an increase in irregular migration and a decrease in protection for forced migrants and their families. In short, the consequences of externalisation are mostly the exact opposite of what has been declared or intended. Third, in conclusion, given the crucial importance of the politics and policies around forced migration, deeper reflection is needed concerning the public involvement of social scientists who deal with forced migration. Two interventions by social scientists are discussed in more detail. The argument is that the major role of migration research beyond the academic realm is not primarily to engage in policy advice and consultancy but to play an active role providing meaning and orientation for participants and audiences in public debates.

Introduction

In his recollections of the pre-World War One world in Europe, the writer Stefan Zweig described the closure of national borders as a loss of a cosmopolitan spirit which had until then characterised an important part of the European intellectual milieu (2013[1942]). More recently, shortly after the fall of the Berlin Wall, ironically, a new surge of walling and fencing has set in with increasing ferocity. In 1990, only 15 national states had walls or fences at their borders; by 2016, the number had grown to nearly 70 (Marshall 2018). These fortifications have come at a price. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), between 2005 and 2014 about 40,000 people died attempting to cross a border.¹ And these are only the most obvious forms of restrictionist policies directed against cross-border mobility of forced migrants viz. Forcibly Displaced People² not wanted by immigration states. The latest wave of more restrictive migration policies has come at a time when armed conflicts all over the world have led to a significant increase—estimated to be by more than 200 per cent over the past decade—in forced migration toward European countries (Eurostat 2016). Against this background, the following pages address several issues. First, the current state of the global regime around forced migration is described. Second, the main efforts to restrict the inflow of migrants (for example, through remote control and the externalisation of border controls from Europe to Africa) are examined, including the impact of the construction of migrants as a threat— securitisation—on migrants, civil societies, and states involved. A third set of issues concerns the possibilities of migration researchers to intervene in the public sphere to shape debates around forced migration.

The main argument here is that the migration politics and policies of fencing and wall building, of fortification and restriction, have resulted in an externalisation of the costs of migration, including the social-psychological mechanism that shifts responsibilities onto migrants and countries of transit and origin. This development implies an imposition of a legal-institutional framework of migration control upon the countries bordering the European Union (EU), in Eastern Europe and North Africa, and an offloading of the economic costs of restricted mobilities to the locations of origin. Externalisation here refers to extraterritorial state

¹ <http://missingmigrants.iom.int>

² Forced Migration or Forcibly Displaced People (FDPs) is 'a general term that refers to the movements of refugees and internally displaced people (those displaced by conflicts within their country of origin) as well as people displaced by natural or environmental disasters, chemical or nuclear disasters, famine, or development projects'. <http://www.columbia.edu/itc/hs/pubhealth/modules/forcedMigration/definitions.html>. The term forced migration is therefore broader than the refugee definition of the Geneva Convention (1951).

actions that hinder mobile persons and groups from entering the legal jurisdictions of states. Such measures encompass direct intervention in border control abroad as well as more indirect actions, such as cooperation with countries of transit and origin in migration control practices (Frelick et al. 2016, 193). The effect is increasingly to render these persons, including asylum seekers, legally inadmissible without individually considering the merits of their protection claims. The actors involved are states and polities on the national and supranational level, but may also include those from businesses, such as airlines, or civil society bodies, such as (I)NGOs administering programmes. Similar processes can be observed in other parts of the world, most notably at the US-Mexico border into Central America, with control policies reaching at least as far as Colombia and Ecuador; and Australia's 'Pacific Solution' extending from the Indian subcontinent through Southeast Asia and the Persian Gulf to Indonesia and the Philippines.

The structure of this analysis is as follows. First, the implications of the absence of a global regime for migration are discussed. It should be noted that although there is no explicit global governance regime, there are elements of a regime in cross-border migration in the form of international norms constituting a world polity as a moral polity—basic norms regulating openings and closures for cross-border migrants, the most foundational of which are the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, ILO conventions, and the Geneva Convention on Refugees. In addition, the rudiments of a global regime also comprise some national state and supranational policies. Second, one such element of a governance order is the externalisation of the costs of migration control and the transposition of legal-institutional frameworks from the EU to states in Africa. This part describes various types of externalisation, ranging from social-psychological through political-legal to economic ones. One crucial part of political-legal and economic externalisation is the linkage of migration control and securitisation by sending and transit countries to development aid. This section also raises the often neglected issues around the responsibility to protect refugees in the regions of origin. Third, the discussion delves into the question of how migration researchers themselves are participants in public debates, focusing on how concepts may migrate in between research and the public sphere.

Part I: The world polity as a moral polity

While we do not find a global regime for migration and other forms of mobility as we do, for example, in the realm of trade (e.g. WTO), it is still useful to take a comprehensive view of global interdependence and diffusion of norms, in this case those norms relating to human rights of migrants and refugees. While such norms do not exclusively govern how states control migrants, they do play a role in the governance of migration, particularly so in the case of those states designated as liberal democracies in Europe, North America, and East Asia. State behaviours in the observance and implementation of human rights are ambiguous. On the one hand, sovereign states are the prime actors who construct human rights norms on the international level and put them into the form of conventions. On the other hand, states have a great deal of discretion in implementing the norms by either circumventing or ignoring them. It seems that the failure of human rights governance and thus the moral global polity is inevitable.

Still, there are countervailing tendencies. The most important ones are the international organisations themselves created by states, such as the UN. Organisations such as the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency) act as a voice for refugees; to a much lesser extent this can also be said of the IOM in the case of labour migration, the IOM being an intergovernmental organisation within the UN system. Moreover, there are multiple human rights non-governmental organisations (NGOs) which serve as collective norm entrepreneurs and constantly publicise and scandalise human rights abuses. Mechanisms such as the ‘boomerang effect’, for example, help to ensure that criticism not heeded by states violating human rights is directed to liberal governments—which, at times, help to table these issues (Keck and Sikkink 1998). In other words, states that initially resist internal and international pressures risk greater future pressure, as domestic NGO activists enter into cross-border alliances. What we have seen in the field of forced migration, however, is not a boomerang effect but publics mobilising on the local and national levels in countries of origin and destination, and also engaging in transnational diffusion of protest.

Some collective action around these themes has indeed materialised, for example, among undocumented migrants. Empirical research, including a longitudinal study on Los Angeles, Paris, and Amsterdam from 1970 to 2015, indicates that (forced) migrants have mobilised, for example, in conjunction with potential coalition partners in local sites. For instance, beginning in the 1970s, in Los Angeles, the organisation of new arrivals coalesced around es-

established migrant organisations; in Paris and Amsterdam around leftist and class-based organisations (Nicholls and Uitermark 2016). While there has been considerable variation in modes of organisation and political activism, human rights considerations have played an increasingly important role in migrant mobilisation in all of these cases. This observation also applies to mobilisation among undocumented migrants in Berlin, Montréal, and Paris who are located at the borders of citizenship regimes in making claims around rights, services, and recognition (Monforte and Dufour 2011). While the concrete content, conditions, and forms of mobilisation vary greatly among these cities in Europe and North America, coalitions with other groups have helped to give demands public visibility. It is important to observe that the transnational ties of undocumented migrants and refugees extending across the cities named and into locales of transit and origin could only be mobilised in conjunction with local coalitions. In other words, political transnationalisation needed a local counterpart to be at least somewhat effective (Steinhilper 2017). In sum, what is at stake in most protests by refugees and their advocates is not so much a subversive potential to change actually existing legal norms, but an appeal to states and international organisations to live up to the fundamental norms they have signed on to, but which are often subverted by restrictive national legislation.

In approaching the elements of a regime engaged in forced migration control but also resisting actual implementation, the concept of world polity (Meyer et al. 1997) is especially helpful. It refers to the idea that the national state has steadily expanded as a form of organisation across the world since the 19th century and that certain ideas and norms about how to organise public life were diffused along with this process—for example, ways to tax the population, educate the young, train the military, and (crucial in our context) giving agency to states in controlling their borders. In the latter field, such norms included devising ways to distinguish mobility as short-term and welcome movement from migration as longer-term movement applying to certain categories of individuals and groups, and the very rules regulating movements based on such distinctions. World polity ‘is constituted by distinct culture—a set of fundamental principles and models, mainly ontological and cognitive in character, defining the nature and purposes of social actors and action’ (Boli and Thomas 1997). In the case of forced migration and refugees these principles refer to the meta-norm of human rights, and the right to exit. The world polity concept is useful because it directs our attention to the observation that, formally, certain norms, such as basic human rights expressed in international conventions, have found entry into the migration regulations of immigration states. The externalisation of migration control, which can be observed with increasing frequency and intensity since the 1990s and again since 2015, however, serves to circumvent or avoid the implications of norms such as non-discrimination or *non-refoulement* of refu-

gees. In the process, debates and costs are externalised from the respective national realm. Externalisation here refers to the transfer of migration control, nowadays sometimes called migration management, to third countries, through fencing and gate-keeping, in exchange for development aid. Fencing includes not only the building of physical walls but also the whole gamut of surveillance technologies. A case in point is the EURODAC (European Dactyloscopy), a fingerprinting system seeking to ensure that persons cannot claim asylum in more than one EU member state, as well as legal regulations pertaining to admission to the territory and the granting of legal status. This kind of measure enhances the gate-keeping function which transit and origin countries fulfil in the overall scheme of reducing migration to Europe but also of selecting those migrants who are indeed economically wanted and sometimes even culturally welcome.

While national immigration policies vary between countries, the current and general trend is toward the tightening of migration policies in almost all traditional immigration countries: more precisely, easing migration for those deemed in demand—the high skilled—and making it harder for those economically not welcome (Beine et al. 2016). At this point internalisation processes already enter the picture: in destination countries securitisation, that is the perception of migration and migrants as a threat to welfare, cultural homogeneity, and physical security, has gained in importance, especially after the 9/11 attacks (Lazaridis and Wadia 2015). Securitisation is institutionalised by bureaucratic decisions and practices that create a sense of insecurity and unease. But securitisation is also part and parcel of externalisation policies; for example, by conceiving of migrants as part of a problem of terrorism. A ‘migration-security nexus’ has emerged (Faist 2003). As a result, not only have existing institutional practices changed, but new institutions have emerged. The EU border control agency, Frontex (later reorganised as the European Border Surveillance System, Eurosur), was founded in 2004 to protect EU borders more efficiently from irregular inflows of migrants, illustrating how migration can provoke the emergence of new institutions. Institutional practices and the distribution of tasks have also changed within the EU. Yet the next step, namely burden sharing among EU states, has not (yet) occurred. Nevertheless, despite increasing externalisation and securitisation, we should not forget—as noted above—that resistance to such policies is occurring among both migrants themselves and their advocates in countries of origin and destination. Such collective action sets a counterweight to public debates which focus on moral-cultural issues—for example, around migrants from Muslim countries who are considered to be a threat by nationalist populists. Resistance to such discourses brings back elements of a world polity characterised by the semantics of human rights issues related to people fleeing hardship and violence to strive for a better life.

These developments are symptomatic of the post-Cold War global political order. The early 1990s were still characterised by assumptions about the onward march of democracy and benign capitalism, as anticipated by many a public intellectual. For example, Francis Fukuyama's 'end of history' meant the end of ideological warfare (Fukuyama 1992). However, not only has ideology (as expressed in religiously connotated conflicts) not subsided since the 1990s but we live, materially speaking, in one of the most unequal periods of modernity, ever since the recording of income and wealth data began in the early 19th century (Piketty 2014). The relative material disparities between centre and periphery, global South and global North, have never been higher: by the late 20th century, location or citizenship has become a more important proxy for global income inequality than heterogeneities such as class. The latter was more important than location in the late 19th century (Milanovic 2016). In this context, at least since the late 1970s, the meta-norm of human rights has been a key political narrative to challenge not only gross material inequalities but also cultural misrecognition. Appeals to human rights, in the case of refugees as well, can be seen as a result of norms spreading in a sort of world moral polity. The world polity we live in can indeed be characterised as a moral polity, that is, in a very broad sense a set of rules and norms which make the claim to be of global reach: it is steeped in the ensemble of rights conventions based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), including the 1951 Geneva Refugee Convention.

When viewed in this perspective, this moral polity has been characterised by a tremendous mismatch in legal recognition of the human rights of refugees on the one hand and humanitarian responses on the other. It is not those countries that have ratified the Geneva Convention of 1951 and the New York Protocol of 1967 which house most of the world's refugees or forced migrants.³ It is mostly countries that have not ratified these conventions and protocols which do. For example, the countries with the largest absolute numbers are Pakistan and Iran (from Afghanistan) and Turkey; in terms of per capita figures, it is Lebanon. Overall, close to 85 per cent of forced migrants are housed by countries in the global South (Eurostat 2017). UNHCR estimates that Forcibly Displaced Persons are displaced for 17 years on average (UNHCR 2018), which raises the issue of not only humanitarian but also development

³ Forced migration constitutes a significant share of migration worldwide. Globally, there were about 244 million migrants (2015); among those were about 69 million forced migrants (2017). Among forced migrants, about 26 million were classified as refugees according to the Geneva Convention. The majority of forced migrants come from five war zones: Afghanistan, Somalia, Iraq, Syria, and Sudan. Not included in these numbers are the approximately 40 to 50 million IDPs and those fleeing due to environmental degradation or due to development-induced displacement and, increasingly, climate change (IOM 2018, 2; Faist 2018).

responses. By contrast, even countries that, during the refugee ‘crisis’ in 2015, took in a relatively high number of refugees by European standards, such as Germany and Sweden, have reinforced rather restrictive policies when it comes to defining which countries of origin are safe. On the supranational level, in early 2016, the EU concluded an agreement with Turkey to deport refugees who make it to Greece—and, in exchange, contribute to financing the costs for mostly Syrian refugees in Turkey, and to resettle refugees from Turkey in the EU. According to human rights organisations such as Amnesty International, the human rights situation in Turkey does not warrant the return of refugees from Greece to Turkey (Stock et al. 2016). The EU-Turkey agreement is a clear instance of externalisation of control and costs through installing Turkey as a gatekeeper.

Part II: Three types of externalisation and securitisation

Externalisation of border control and associated costs as an important element of the governance of migration has had significant impact on forced migrants in particular, the largest group of migrants coming to Europe since the early 2010s. European countries have quickly and consistently moved from the ‘responsibility to protect’ (Borgia 2015) to externalising R2P. Through a sort of forward control, migrants do not even reach the territory of the immigration countries and, therefore, the ‘liberal paradox’ viz. liberal dilemma (cf. Hollifield 2004) does not arise. According to the liberal dilemma, most liberal democracies have, on the one hand, undertaken obligations to honour human rights conventions, such as the Geneva Convention on refugees, and to extend fundamental rights even to non-citizen populations on their territory. On the other hand, these democracies seek to restrict the large-scale entry of forced migrants because of—among other reasons—security concerns, contentious politics around welfare state resources and regulations, and issues which are labelled cultural conflicts centred on religion and ways of life. Once forced migrants reach the territories of liberal democracies, thanks to human rights norms the likelihood of their staying is rather high, even in the case of non-recognition as asylum seekers. An important specific reason can be found in the *non-refoulement* principle, the rule that asylum seekers cannot be returned to countries where they face life-threatening circumstances. It is against this background that externalisation is an attractive policy choice for destination countries.

In principle, there are three basic types of externalisation which can characterise the policies and politics of Europe as an ‘armed lifeboat’ (Parenti 2012, 235). First, there is social-

psychological externalisation—in a Freudian sense, a sort of projection by shifting moral responsibility. Blaming certain categories of (forced) migrants for their own fate, as evidenced by terms such as 'economic refugees' or 'bogus asylum seekers', is an example of this kind of externalisation. The process involves the (re)production of categorical and often durable boundaries distinguishing deserving from illegitimate migrants, and tends to go along with perceiving illegitimate migrants as a security threat—a further element of securitisation of migration. Second, we can speak of political-legal externalisation. This type consists of an external projection of EU rules to North African, Middle Eastern, and East European countries as gatekeepers in order to ensure migration control by European standards and interests—often in exchange for development aid and resources for migration control. These regions of origin and transit have become 'the wardens of the European border regime' (de Genova 2017, 17). The third type of externalisation is economic, in which the material costs of taking care of refugees and migrants are shifted to transit and origin countries. This includes bearing the costs for re-integration of deported migrants by countries of readmission and return. Interestingly, however, externalisation and securitisation policies raise the issue of the responsibilities European states have not only toward those at their doorsteps but also toward those who do not have the resources to migrate to Europe and remain (relatively) immobile in the regions of origin.

Social-psychological externalisation

In democracies, in particular, we would expect political contestation over what is morally right, appropriate, and reasonable in a certain political sphere. When it comes to forced migration, world polity as a moral polity highlights the transactions between destination countries in the global North on the one hand and, on the other hand, the emigration countries of the global South where forced migrants take the exit option and depart in search of protection elsewhere. The moral polity thus refers to expectations and the policies and politics around the rights and obligations between states and citizens—in this case the rights of forced migrants on the one hand, and the obligations of origin, transit, and destination states, on the other.

In order to understand the sharp resistance to refugee intake in most European states in recent decades, we need to consider another tension which finds expression in the welfare

dilemma. In a way, it underlies the liberal dilemma. This welfare dilemma points to the tension between social rights of citizens in national welfare states⁴ which are opposed by the drive for liberalised trade and exchange and a deregulation of labour regulations. This dilemma creates an inherent tension in the national state as a welfare state versus its incarnation as a capitalist competition state. While the latter pushes for more open borders, the former erects barriers: ‘... the relatively free movement of labor across national frontiers exposes the tension between closed welfare states and open economies and that, ultimately, national welfare states cannot coexist with the free movement of labor’ (Freeman 1986, 51). The protection of social rights for the citizens of immigration states indicates that transnationality with respect to human mobility is seen in a negative way, while free mobility of capital and goods is seen as positive. In short, states treat different forms of transnationalisation quite unequally. The welfare dilemma has sharpened in recent years: the deregulation of markets has led to increasing income inequalities also within the heartland of capitalist states of the global North, although the overall rate of global poverty has fallen over the past 30 years, at least when measured by controversial World Bank standards (cf. Deaton 2004). Also, the delegitimisation of selecting migrants by origin—for example, along heterogeneities such as ethnicity and nationality—leads those immigration sceptics who affirm liberal anti-racism norms not to couch their position in ethno-cultural terms exclusively, arguing instead that they are concerned about pressure on the welfare state and jobs. Right-wing (populist) political parties have taken up this issue and advocate thoroughly restrictive positions toward humanitarian migration based on both welfare and cultural considerations (Faist 2019, chapter 8). With respect to socio-cultural recognition of migrants, even mainstream political parties across Europe have at least to some degree claimed that migration from Muslim countries into Europe constitutes a social problem (Odmalm 2014). All of which is to say that social rights tend to be culturalised and politically re-nationalised to a certain extent.

Obviously, and increasingly, countries in the global North have not lived up to the idea of universal human rights. Instead, law and policies have been employed to restrict the flow of forced migrants. For example, a decreasing percentage of asylum seekers are granted secure protection status across countries in the global North (Sigona 2017); for instance, the share of those who receive a temporary status such as *Duldung* in Germany has been on the increase. Such an approach sends a message to states all across Europe to shed their re-

⁴ In a very broad sense, the term ‘welfare state’ here refers to national states involved in the well-being of its citizens, expressed mainly in regulations concerning social protection.

sponsibility and further shift the burden to the countries of origin and the migrants themselves. In sum, forced migrants thus have fewer and fewer options for protection and resettlement in European countries. EU policies therefore have set in motion a cascade of displacing responsibilities.

When we look at the governments and the peoples in the countries of refuge in Europe, there are distinctive defence mechanisms in destination countries. Clearly, there is a huge discrepancy between knowledge about moral responsibility on the one hand and actual behaviour on the other hand. The tension between (such moral) knowledge and action is often not resolved, a phenomenon called cognitive dissonance (Festinger 1957; see also Bauman 2016). As a consequence of the unresolved discrepancy between moral obligations and inaction or unwillingness to act upon such duties, responsibility is shifted and externalised; a phenomenon Immanuel Kant and David Hume remarked upon early on (Smith 1994, 4-15). In the European case, a consequence would be to externalise responsibility by identifying (the majority of) forced migrants as 'illegal migrants' despite the fact that restrictive border controls around the Mediterranean allow for illegal entry only into the member states of the EU.⁵ Governments of EU member states externalise control and shelter to the periphery of Europe, in North Africa and Eastern Europe. More generally, externalisation thus makes it easier to argue that 'we' are not responsible.

Clearly, restrictions on forced migrants and refugees are implemented contrary to all declarations. Yet the expansive diffusion of the human rights narrative as a moral obligation since the late 1970s (Moyn 2010) has raised expectations around the world overall and in emigration and transit countries such as Turkey, Ukraine, Senegal, and Morocco (Hemmerechts et al. 2014). For many forced migrants, while the expectations of finding refuge have increased in light of human rights declarations and humanitarian proclamations, the actual opportunities have not. Quite to the contrary, the latter have been decreasing since 2015.⁶ On the part of forced migrants, this situation is likely to result in relative deprivation, that is, the widening chasm between growing expectations for human rights to be honoured on the one hand, and receding opportunities for finding protection on the other hand. Their experience leads forced migrants to be profoundly disappointed with the promises of receiving countries (Monsutti

⁵ This fact is important because Article 31 of the Geneva Convention of 1951 stipulates that refugees cannot be punished for illegal entry into the territory of a contracting state.

⁶ But even now, as Slavoj Žižek observed, the attraction of Europe is strong. He asked: 'Isn't the very fact that millions want to go to Europe proof that people still see something in Europe?' (2016)

and Balci 2014). In this crucial aspect, the current situation differs from the era of the Cold War from the late 1940s to the late 1980s. During the Cold War the main narrative centred on freedom and democracy versus communism and oppression. Accordingly, refugees from Communist countries could reasonably expect protection in the liberal democracies of the West—to the detriment of refugees from right-wing authoritarian countries, often supported by the US and its allies (Zolberg et al. 1989). There may have also been a discrepancy between rhetoric and action on the part of liberal democracies. However, this was embedded in the fault line between the communism of peoples' democracies versus the capitalist liberal world, a dichotomy that is absent from today's world.

In brief, a moral polity, very much like a moral economy, is built on the logic of appropriateness (see e.g. Thompson 1991 on the concept of moral economy). The reasonable expectation of those adversely affected by violence and threat to be granted protection or at least shelter—an expectation supported by the spread of human rights norms in the world polity—is out of balance with reality. The result has been, on the part of forced migrants, an ever increasing tendency toward disappointment of expectations nourished by human rights conventions (not necessarily directly, but certainly indirectly by widely publicised declarations of European politicians to apply human rights standards), and, on the part of receiving countries, efforts to delegitimise various forms of migration and render them illegal. In other words, both the mechanism of relative deprivation on the part of forced migrants and cognitive dissonance on the part of the receivers have been operating. On the part of the receivers, the labelling of certain forced migrants as illegitimate refugees and the externalisation of control have continued to escalate (cf. Gammeltoft-Hansen 2011).

Externalisation also breeds concomitant internalisation: those who have entered immigration states in Europe, those found not deserving protection, are sometimes extradited and sent back to countries of origin, though this practice is somewhat checked by the *non-refoulement* rule (Menjívar 2014). Externalisation mechanisms also feed more restrictive internal boundaries in immigration countries. The confluence of nationalism and restrictionist migration policies devalues certain categories of migrants, who are classified as not deserving full protection, e.g. 'bogus asylum seekers' or 'economic refugees'. In this context of restriction, the actual and potential destination states have made greater efforts to distinguish (again) between 'deserving' and illegitimate migrants. In Germany, for example, 'deserving' migrants have been those coming from acute and active civil wars (above all from Syria), whereas those originating in countries with diffuse violence (for example, Nigeria) have been regarded more critically (Ahrens 2017). What can be observed is a further downward spiral in that such categories of persons are frequently connected to terrorists and rapists in mass media por-

trayals (Hemmelmann and Wegner 2017). In short, the securitisation of mobility across borders has resulted in new boundaries around the categories of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. The latter have been reconstructed as ‘mere’ migrants.

From a welfare-state perspective, making a distinction between deserving and illegitimate migrants serves to separate those ready for integration into education and the labour market but also the respective national cultures from those who allegedly fit into neither the economic nor the cultural sphere. These developments add to the welfare dilemma: migrants can be seen as unwanted economic and welfare competitors. The debates on migrants and refugees in 2015 have reinvigorated the conclusion that South-North mobility is also the belated harvest of centuries of (post-)colonial subjugation of large parts of the world through European states. What is even more troubling is that externalisation has continued this trajectory in a path-dependent way. In sum, there are heavy costs of externalisation: remote control enhances right-wing populism because restrictive migration control can be taken as evidence that there is a clear and eminent danger emerging from cross-border migration.

To add a caveat, the world polity as a moral polity is not exclusively built on the semantics of (individual) rights. The analysis so far has centred on liberal democracies in the global North and their dealings with forced migrants from the global South, and for this reason an emphasis has been placed on the rights discourse. But for those states situated ‘in between’, the situation may be different. Take a case such as Turkey. The reference to (human) rights in dealing with refugees has been much less pronounced than in the EU. Moreover, Turkey has not signed the protocol to the Geneva Convention extending its reach beyond refugees hailing from Europe. In this case, the roughly three and a half million Syrian refugees who have entered since 2011 are not welfare state subjects with clearly defined human and social rights. Most of them live outside refugee camps and are self-settled (Stock et al. 2016). In order to legitimise hosting refugees from war-torn and devastated Syria, the Turkish government has not used human rights rhetoric. It has repeatedly proclaimed that Syrian refugees ‘are our Muslim brothers and sisters’ and has thus emphasised an ‘Islamic solidarity’ discourse and to some extent a ‘common Ottoman heritage’ rhetoric (Daniş and Nalzi 2018).

Political-legal externalisation

In the legal-political realm externalisation means the use of extraterritorial measures to prevent migrants from setting foot onto the territories of destination countries or making them legally inadmissible by not considering their claims to protection. Examples of such

measures are admission policies, visa regimes, and mobility or migration partnerships with countries of origin and transit. There may be truly win-win benefits such as developing the rule of law, honouring human rights, or resolving conflict (Faist et al. 2018). Yet the main outcome so far has been to avoid the triggering of protection obligations which set in once asylum seekers reach the jurisdictions of countries that are signatories to the Geneva Convention and other humanitarian standards applying to forced migrants (Agier 2013). In other words, restrictions set in before migrants reach their shores, relegating migrants to countries of first arrival. For example, countries of transit or origin are declared to be a ‘safe third country’ or ‘first country of asylum’. As to the latter, the (by now de facto largely non-operative) Dublin Regulation⁷ states that the country of arrival is the one in which the asylum seeker must apply, which has the effect of placing inordinate economic burdens on Mediterranean countries such as Greece, Spain and Italy—a sort of internal externalisation within the EU. Other instances are bilateral readmission agreements between Italy and Libya during the Gaddafi regime, and nowadays efforts by the EU to fend off boats carrying migrants departing from Libya, Egypt, Senegal and Tunisia. Again, additional burdens are placed on third countries to seek to ensure the protection of migrants’ safety and rights (Atger 2013).

Externalising control policies by the EU has been part of its foreign policy and has been characterised by a restrictive and repressive approach. Political-legal externalisation is an integral part of the EU’s Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM). A tangible manifestation is the Migration Compact and the New Partnership Framework (2016) which the EU and its member states have been seeking to enter into with states adjoining their southern and eastern borders. This type of control not only aims at states and governments outside the EU but implies subcontracting, and thus achieving rule transmission via international NGOs, such as UNHCR and IOM. These latter organisations act partly as brokers and transmitters of externalisation. UNHCR, given its solid mandate on refugees, has been somewhat better able to maintain its role as a counterweight to outright externalisation (Lavenex 2015). The IOM—true to its mandate as an intergovernmental organisation—has been involved in repatriating but also deporting migrants and (failed) asylum seekers. The principle upon which legal externalisation rests is conditionality: incentives for cooperation are provided to origin and transit states but also penalties for non-cooperation in migration control. Incentives and penalties are clearly inscribed into more general external EU relations. For ex-

⁷ The Dublin Regulation (EU Regulation No. 604/2013) determines the EU member state responsible to handle an application for asylum seekers seeking protection under the Geneva Convention.

ample, the EU has a readmission clause built into all external trade agreements since the early 2000s. Nonetheless, even in the face of an uneven transfer of EU rules, there is room for manoeuvre on the part of the rule recipients. Spaces of sovereignty and resistance coexist. In other words, sending and transit states are not simply victims of the imposition of legal rules but have room for manoeuvre to negotiate the terms of cooperation. The EU-Turkey deal of 2016, for example, attests not only to successful externalisation on the part of the EU but also to Turkey's gate-keeping role in this case (Collett 2016).

We can distinguish the manifest and latent functions of the transfer of rules and institutions from the global North to the global South. The manifest function is to reduce 'migration pressure' by limiting migration in the short run and giving potential migrants a life perspective in the regions of origin in the long run. Yet there is also a latent function. It is to show the efficacy and resoluteness of EU member state governments and the EU Commission by handling a cross-border phenomenon that constitutes a potential threat. In this case the main addressees are the voters in immigration countries of the global North. As to internalisation in the destination countries themselves, criminal law has been increasingly used to control migrants, e.g. when deporting irregular migrants as in the case of the Netherlands (Staring 2004).⁸ Thus the addressees of such externalisation policies are as much the voting publics in the EU as they are governments in sending and transit countries, involved (I)NGOs, and the actual and potential migrants themselves.

As part of externalisation efforts, remote control, that is, the outsourcing of migration control, is not a new policy concept; it was applied, for example, by US authorities in giving visas in the late 19th century and the early 20th century for prospective European emigrants on their way to the Americas (Zolberg 2006, 11, 110-13, 240-41). In the early 1990s the EU began its efforts to control its outer borders by vetting potential migrants in their countries of origin through visa requirements and checks at points of embarkation. The visa system and the Schengen requirements produce exactly the illegal practices of accessing visas that they are presumably meant to forestall (Alpes 2011; Ambrosini 2017). In other words, 'smuggling should certainly not be seen as the *cause* of irregular migration, which is however the rationale underlying policies to "combat illegal migration". On the contrary, the growing importance of smuggling is rather a *response* to increasing migration restrictions and repres-

⁸ More restrictive border policies against forced migrants in the 2000s have rendered it more difficult for irregular migrants to access social protection. One of the reasons is that irregular migrants are in fear of being detected and deported even more than before (Vonk and Walsum 2013).

sion' (de Haas 2007: 26). At the very least, one might argue, what we see are the unintended consequences of externalisation and securitisation which cause an upward spiral. Militarised borders between but also within African countries create higher risks for migrants, who in turn have to invest more resources to overcome these obstacles. Part of the process is the professionalisation of smuggling networks—more profit could be made but the journeys also became more dangerous. A case in point is Agadez in Niger, one of the hubs on travels from South to North in Africa. The original smugglers were displaced by a new group of smugglers who nowadays take even more insecure roads through the Sahara to avoid border controls. In due course the Sahara has developed, as did the Mediterranean, into a 'mass grave' or a 'cemetery' (Brachet 2018). In short, the control policies designed to reduce the dangers of illegal migration turned into drivers of the very process they are meant to combat.

Such policies have ripple effects for the conditions in North African countries. Since mobility routes have become more dangerous in sub-Saharan and Saharan Africa, many migrants sidestep the traditional pathways and travel westward via Algeria and Morocco. One result has been that the Spanish enclaves on the African continent, Ceuta and Melilla at the Moroccan coast, have become hotspots once gain. In this case the Moroccan state has taken over the function of controlling migrants who attempt to cross the fortifications. Whoever seeks to make it into this Spanish enclave has to surmount three fences of six metres in height, and must cross multiple trenches where there are cameras and sensory devices. Even those who make it across these fencing facilities are sometimes deported. The Moroccan army and the staff of the Spanish Guardia Civil cooperate in so-called push backs (instant deportations) from Spain to Morocco.

Closer surveillance has not been effective in reducing the number of deaths at sea in the Mediterranean. Instead, externalising border control has only securitised borders further (Bigo and Guild 2005). As a result, more and more migrants must resort to irregular passage in order to obtain legal access to the instrument of asylum. In these processes, responsibilities have been shifted to private actors, such as airlines—another instance of subcontracting the tasks of migration control, thus blurring the boundaries between public/private realms and giving rise to a sort of hybrid transnational governance of migration (Brochmann et al. 1999). Externalisation has undermined the human security of movers and has arguably increased securitisation of all residents in emigration, transit, and immigration states, as suggested by mounting controls of those present in border regions, migrants and non-migrants alike (Araujo and van Munster 2008). Furthermore, the principle of *non-refoulement* has been called into question. Again, the credibility of the EU as a guardian and enforcer of human rights is diminished by the gap between promises made and actions taken. In sum, externalisation is

an option used by immigration states without impunity. As much as possible, the costs of immigration control and unwanted migrants are pushed back to states bordering the EU and back to emigration regions.

The countries of migrant origin thus face formidable challenges in the age of externalisation and securitisation. First, the global North serves as a sort of role model for restrictive refugee policies. For example, many North African states now require visas. Second, many of these states use migration as a bargaining chip vis-à-vis European states and obstruct EU transit policy. At the same time there is also resistance to externalisation policies run by European countries and the EU. Mali is a case in point. In 2009, a retraction agreement with France was not signed, and in 2016/17 another one with the EU failed to materialise. One of the most important reasons was massive civil societal protests against these treaties (Soukouna 2012; Traoré 2016). The European focus on illegal migration within and out of the African continent is reductionist for at least two reasons. First, the majority of migration from South to North within Africa does not have Europe as its prime destination. Meant to prevent movement to Europe, migration control measures implemented in African countries also interrupt intra-African migration mobilities. After all, with respect to trans-Saharan migration, only an estimated 10 to 20 per cent wish to continue their journey to Europe (Brachet 2016). Second, up until now, the majority of Africans immigrating into Europe have entered with valid documents. Irregular migration, such as crossing the Mediterranean on unseaworthy boats, has not been as pronounced until recently (Kleist and Thorsen 2017). Nonetheless, these two perceptions—Europe as the main destination of migration, and the prevalence of illegal migration—also characterise the political-economic responses to migration which nowadays pursue a double-pronged approach not only of control (via externalisation) but also of development cooperation in exchange for increased control activities through African countries. The effect is that the control–development nexus is guided by securitisation aspects and does not take as seriously aspects of human, social, and economic development in the regions of migrant origin.

In the European destinations, among the consequences of externalisation, many more forced migrants enjoy temporary protection only, without their families able to join them. There have also been dramatic increases in voluntary repatriations and mass deportations from regions of immigration and transition back into countries of origin or other countries along the routes of migrants. Many of the voluntary returns are more or less ‘mandatory’ and ‘a form of facilitated self-deportation’ (Collyer 2018: 124). In order to understand the associated phenomena, the metaphor of communicating tubes in a world perspective is helpful. Non-admission in countries of refuge means the need for re-integration in other regions. The very few studies

available suggest that among migrants repatriated in the framework of the IOM about 70 per cent of rejected asylum seekers who returned to their countries of origin in Africa and Asia could not be re-integrated (Koser and Kuschminder 2015). This is not to say that ‘voluntary and sustainable return’—if indeed voluntary—would not be a desirable political goal (Cassarino 2016). But externalisation undermines the requirements needed for successful return which are that ‘returnees have work experience appropriate for skills, while away; return with substantial capital, and are able to plan for return’ (Collyer 2018: 123). In short, externalisation and securitisation make preparedness and embeddedness for return migration impossible. Nonetheless, family networks and civil society in regions of origin such as Sub-Saharan Africa have acted as a sort of counterweight, as do the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine (UEMOA). Ironically, it is not only ECOWAS which is negatively affected by externalisation policies. It is also the EU itself. There is no solidarity among EU member states in burden sharing—great hopes are set in ‘deals’ with Turkey and other transit countries.

Economic externalisation

The mechanisms of externalisation can also be observed in the economic realm. Securitising borders clearly interrupts daily cross-border mobilities: for example, excessive border control has a negative impact on trade relations between African countries. Migration control policies in the central Sahara concerning Niger, Chad, Algeria, and Libya have not only profoundly changed migration practices, but have also contributed to a transformation of local economic structures, pushing them toward an even greater degree of informality and clandestineness. In this way, greater restrictions via remote control have supported not only human smuggling but also human trafficking (Zhang et al. 2018). Thus, externalisation is economically disadvantageous for both transit and origin countries. Also, the deportation of migrants from Africa back to the countries of origin blocks potential knowledge transfer which proceeds through channels established by migrants who reach their destinations, or return voluntarily (e.g. Schultz 2017).

Not only has the risk of the violation of human rights increased in the wake of externalisation and securitisation. There is yet another, potentially unintended effect at work. Reduced migration across continents also decreases the chances to improve the lives of family and community members at home through remittances (Nshimbi 2017). Furthermore, informal channels to remit funds between immigration and emigration countries have been increasingly shut down for security reasons after 9/11 with the rationalisation that these channels could

act as conduits for financing terrorism (Cochrane 2015, 94). This state of affairs contradicts the declared policy goal to strengthen development ‘from below’ through migrants themselves—a goal pursued, with renewed emphasis since the early 2000s, by many international organisations in the UN system and many immigration country governments. These observations are important since we know that the amount of remittances far surpasses all the funds flowing from the global North to the global South as part of official development cooperation (ODA). All in all, these policy developments prioritise security over development concerns, disregarding the fact that migration usually occurs within transnational social spaces, which constitute dense concatenations of social ties of movers and relatively immobile actors within migration systems.

Overall, the growing securitisation of European borders is inextricably linked to the debate on migration and development. As such, securitisation is not a completely new process. It emerged in the late 19th century, and emphasised ideas such as nation, national welfare, and security. What is new is the explicit policy connection to development. Nowadays, migrants are held responsible for developing their countries of origin, and the latter receive development aid in exchange for increased control of emigration and transit migration (Faist 2008). The manifest function of development cooperation in exchange for migration control is to legitimise restrictive border policies. One of the latent functions is to shift responsibility for development to cross-border migrants and for control to countries of origin and transit. As to its preventive aspect, there is no evidence, however, that the development aid extended in exchange for building up the infrastructure for migration control on behalf of European powers has brought visible economic development to North and West African countries (Schapendonk 2017). Another aspect comes in: research findings indicate that socio-economic development as we know it will most likely *increase* migration on the short run, rather than reduce it, the latter being an effect seen only in the long run. This is because development will both increase the means to migrate and—even faster, by way of relative deprivation—the expectations of the potential migrants to achieve a better life abroad⁹.

In sum, processes of externalisation and internalisation in both emigration, transit, and immigration states are connected in that both restrictive forms of remote control and border controls have pushed and contributed to increasing securitisation of migration policy. Within the political sphere of national immigration states, the processes of securitisation have in turn

⁹ The high correlation between economic development (measured by GDP per capita) and the official emigration rate is captured by the ‘inverted U-curve’ (Faini and Venturini 1994).

been augmented by right-wing populist tendencies across Europe. We also see such tendencies in African states by way of emulation, as evidenced by the situation in South Africa, where—among others—migrants from Zimbabwe have been targeted by xenophobic violence (Crush and Chikanda 2014). The acceleration of securitisation, namely, seeing migrants as burdens and threats, comes on top of structural antinomies between the competition vs. the welfare state (welfare dilemma), and the rule of law vs. national democracies (liberal dilemma), which characterise liberal democratic immigration states in the global North (Faist 2019). In a nutshell, as ‘borders have expanded outwards, they also have expanded inwards’ (Hansen and Papademetriou 2014, 3); put simply, securitisation consists of both externalisation and internationalisation, (re)constituting the putative inside and outside of national states in a moral polity.

In sum, against this structural background it has been exceedingly hard to address the negative effects of externalisation and securitisation. Perhaps because of the lack of a coalition between human rights advocates and radical dissidents, neither group has succeeded in bringing about a transformation of order away from exclusive state control and toward individual free choice of movement. There are two structural obstacles to the realisation of human rights in this context. First, there is an imbalance in human rights-based conventions which favours states vis-à-vis forced migrants. While the Geneva Convention and the respective Protocols, for example, specify the rights of refugees, there is no similar concretion on the obligations of states. The consequences are dire. For instance, over the past decade there have been debates on how to categorise those who lose their habitat and are forced to relocate in the wake of environmental destruction and climate change. It is unlikely, given the framing of international agreements, that states will recognise any responsibility in the near future. Second, much of the human rights work of NGOs engaged in refugee work, such as those active in the Mediterranean, fluctuates between de-politicisation and a focus on saving ‘bare life’ (Agamben 1998) and re-politicisation in using their influence to campaign for different border and migration policies.

Moving beyond the Eurocentric gaze? Impacts on the regions of origin

To argue that economic development will not necessarily decrease the amount of migration in the short run is not to say that policies directed at improving the socio-economic conditions of forced migrants are irrelevant and should not be pursued. This issue is directly connected to the idea of a moral polity, namely the idea that there is some sort of responsibility—based on respecting basic human rights—not only for those forced migrants who make it to the bor-

ders of European countries but also for those who could not escape the countries of origin in which a civil war may have made life unbearable, and for those who fled into adjoining countries. Take the example of Syria: about six million Syrians have been displaced in their own country; about four to five million fled into Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon; and only about one million made it into Europe. The human security situation is worst for those still within Syria, somewhat better for those who made it into adjoining countries, and best for those who received secure protection. It is also important to consider that those who moved farthest, those who succeeded in reaching Europe, are those who have been better off financially and socio-economically. For example, only a minority of all Syrian refugees made it into Germany; but among those who did, the rate of those holding academic degrees was much higher than among the overall Syrian population (cf. Betts and Collier 2018). This is to say that those who have to remain in the region of origin are socio-economically disadvantaged.¹⁰ Viewed globally, cross-border migration from the global South to the global North in fact is a phenomenon mostly confined to the upper world quintile, that is, movement within the richest 20 per cent of the world, measured by income (Korzeniewicz and Moran 2009, chapter 2).

This observation raises the question of policies not simply directed at the borders of Europe and forward control in countries of origin and transit but at the fate of those refugees who are relatively immobile. Yet the discussions are mainly geared toward either border control in Europe or remote control interconnected with development cooperation. The latter issue is rarely connected to the question of how a moral polity based on meta-norms such as human rights can effectively provide not only humanitarian help but also long-term prospects through creating employment opportunities for forced migrants in the regions of origin.¹¹ There are indeed policy proposals that favour such policies, for example, by enticing entrepreneurs to countries adjoining conflict zones—in the case of Syria, for instance, to Jordan (Betts and Collier 2018). If such measures are intended to help groups who remain in or near conflict zones by strengthening their economic autonomy, then they could help to reduce the suffering of forced migrants, but would not necessarily minimise the desire to move onwards. How such and other proposals have been introduced by social scientists into public debates is the topic of the following and last section of this analysis.

¹⁰ Those migrating within the borders of their states of origin are much more numerous than international migrants, ca. 740 million (2009) internal migrants or internally displaced compared to about 244 million (2015) cross-border migrants (IOM 2018, 2).

¹¹ There is no doubt that setting up a special window for admissions through asylum protects refugees from harm. At the same time, it is said to prevent refugees from finding durable solutions to secure an economic livelihood (e.g. Long 2013).

Part III: Changing the terms of debate? Social sciences in the public sphere

Based on the foregoing analysis, we may think that the ‘enlightenment’ function of the social sciences is crucial (Weiss 1979). By pointing out, among other things, for example, that cognitive dissonance and relative deprivation have converged into producing what many perceive as a migration or refugee ‘crisis’, social scientists can diffuse academic knowledge into the public sphere and contribute to setting an agenda for public debate. In this situation, social scientific findings on structural and physical violence, securitisation, inequalities, or development may influence the definition of situations and perceptions through the diffusion of concepts, terms, and theories into the public sphere¹² (and back). Here, two questions are addressed in sequence. First, how have social scientists engaged in the public sphere with respect to forced migration? Second, would sociological concepts and empirical results on forced migration be more useful if they could be more easily applied instrumentally?

As to the first question it is useful to look at how academic researchers have actually intervened in public debates on forced migration. Two examples may serve as ideal-typical approaches to how social scientists have recently spoken on forced migration in the public sphere: first, the study by Alexander Betts and Paul Collier on *Refuge* (2018), and, second, the utopian proposal *Refugia* (2018) by Robin Cohen and Nicholas Van Hear.

Alexander Betts, a political scientist, and Paul Collier, a development economist, seek to convince their audience, via their status as experts and perhaps as public intellectuals with a proposal to make refugees self-sufficient, gain economic autonomy, and empower forced migrants to help themselves. In essence, their claim is that refugees need more than humanitarian help, more than food, tents, and blankets. Betts and Collier argue that refugees can offer tangible economic benefits to their adopted countries if given the right to work and education. The authors even claim that thusly empowered refugees may eventually rebuild their countries of origin. Their intervention constitutes a plea for taking advantage of the agency of refugees, connected with policy proposals such as Special Enterprise Zones for

¹² John Maynard Keynes indicated a link between the intellectual and the political world: ‘Practical men, who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influences, are usually the slave of some defunct economist. Madmen in authority, who hear voices in the air, are distilling the frenzy from some academic scribbler of a few years back. Not, indeed, immediately, but after a certain interval’ (Keynes 1970, 361).

manufacturing at the borders of the countries of origin (as in Jordan bordering Syria). In this way, Betts and Collier have adjusted to the restrictive moods of publics and governments in Europe which seek to avoid taking in asylum seekers, and granting them secure legal status. They also appeal to market-liberal tenets which hold that migrants are the best agents of their own socio-economic development, and they extend this idea to refugees as well. In addition, they heed the insight that there is no clear-cut distinction to be observed empirically between refugees and migrants, implying that decisions on granting asylum are quite difficult to take.¹³ One could say that Betts and Collier are advocates of migrant and refugee management by shifting some responsibility from protection in potential countries of destination in Europe to helping countries around the source regions to make refugees economically self-sufficient.¹⁴ The authors outline clear implications for policy-makers, chastising the ‘headless hearts’ of German Chancellor Angela Merkel and her associates for opening the gates for a short while during the summer of 2015 and thus allegedly spurring the brain drain from countries such as Syria—where the ‘brains’ would be direly needed to rebuild the country. Ultimately, theirs is a plea for developmentally-oriented externalisation, away and separate from securitisation, by focusing on the resources of migrants themselves and not on their rights.

Quite to the contrary, Robin Cohen, a sociologist, and Nicholas Van Hear, a social anthropologist, insist on a rights-based approach to increase the autonomy of forced migrants. Instead of focusing on the selected (economic) policy schemes central to the work of Betts and Collier, they emphasise political autonomy and empowerment. They suggest a status for refugees—most of whom live in camps—akin to full membership in a transnational polity scattered across the globe, called *Refugia*. Their self-admittedly utopian proposal includes a

¹³ This idea comes close to the idea of mixed migration. Mixed migration suggests that causes and motivations can be mixed at the beginning of the journey, can change during movement, or shift during the sojourn. Moreover, people can move in mixed migratory flows, or find themselves in mixed migrant communities during the journey or after arrival (van Hear 2009). To start with, there are mixed motives for migration, such as economic, social (family), lifestyle, and political. Furthermore, the motivations keep changing en route. For example, refugees from the Syrian war may escape violence and the threat to bare existence; once they have reached a safe haven, their motivations to move on may change to economic ones. Syrian refugees may find an abode in adjacent countries such as Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey; they may, however, move onward because of poor living conditions and few economic prospects. In essence, while they remain forced migrants, they first move for reasons of physical survival and then out of economic necessity. This means that the temporalities in current migration flows are altering, and perhaps for very different reasons, such as changing immigration policies, the rise of migration industries, human

trafficking networks, or improvements in communication and transportation technologies as well as migrants’ long-term aspirations. In addition, migration groups may include people who move to escape conflict as well as those who are seeking socio-economic betterment—sometimes also called ‘composite flows’ by UNHCR.

¹⁴ The pioneer in institutionalising policies meant to improve economic self-reliance of refugees and thus ‘durable solutions’ has been Uganda (Refugees Act of 2006). In that country, refugees have received land to farm on their own, for example (see e.g. Watera et al. 2017).

‘Sesame passport’ which would allow for mobility across borders between camps but importantly also allow access to credit, basic social rights, and work. This sort of passport is reminiscent of the Nansen Passport in between the two World Wars of the 20th century. Taking a decidedly transnational approach, Cohen and Van Hear advocate a transnational *polis*, not a territorial state. Nonetheless, this kind of refugee polity which allows for a great deal of self-administration would need to conform to the law of the respective host states which are scattered across the globe. In order to ensure the political engagement of forced migrants and legitimacy of the transnational polis, the two scholars propose a global parliament. There are models upon which such a representation could be devised, such as the parliament convened by Tamils during their struggle for independence in Sri Lanka. In order to finance *Refugia*, Cohen and Van Hear suggest a sort of Tobin tax levied on tourism and the arms trade, supplemented by the financial remittances of refugees. In this way, Cohen and Van Hear look at refugees not only as agents in their own right with respect to making a living but also as political decision-makers.

While there is no ‘global public sphere’ (Jürgen Habermas, cit. by Volkmer 2014) in the strong sense of the term, the proposals by the two sets of authors speak to a cross-border public consisting of various epistemic networks of social scientists in migration and refugee studies but also to policy makers, mostly in Europe, North America, Australia, and Japan. It is too early to determine whether the two books or at least one of them contribute to agenda setting on dealing with the migrant viz. refugee issues in the European public sphere. Nonetheless, given the high visibility of Betts and Collier in policy circles, it stands to reason that their proposal is much more widely known among policy makers.¹⁵ Nevertheless, both sets of proposals have gained attention at least in research circles. There are opportunities, in principle, as migration has transmuted into one of the central topics of European politics. The President of the European Council, Donald Tusk, even claimed: ‘Today everything is migration’ (2015, cited in de Genova 2017, 1). Whether or not the two proposals will make a difference with respect to informing public debate depends, beyond access of researchers to policy makers, whether the ideas proposed—economic policies or transnational polity—meet favourable contexts and can be connected to plausible concepts. For example, mixed migration, pioneered by Nicholas Van Hear, is used to guide the practices of UNHCR; another concept, transnationalism, is used by policy-makers in Spain and France to guide develop-

¹⁵ This hunch is also based on interviews available on websites of mass media in which Betts and Collier mention their role as policy advisors.

ment programmes supported by migrant organisations (Lacomba and Cloquell 2014). It is in this way that social scientists are themselves brokers bridging ‘structural holes’ (Burt 1992) between the spheres of policy, civil society, and research, all of which function along different principles and rationalities. They act as experts but also as advocates, either for government or for forced migrants. As utilisation of knowledge research reported above suggests more generally, the impact of such proposals is often more indirect and guides perceptions and ways of thinking, in this case around (forced) migration.

The two studies are examples of thinking ‘outside the box’—the rights-based approach imagines a transnational polity, and the resource-based approach is a straightforward market-liberal scheme. Yet the latter is a rather technocratic perspective, seeking to implement grand investment schemes in insecure regions of conflict. It is a textbook example of social engineering, assuming that social scientists and bureaucrats know what forced migrants want. In this respect the proposal by Cohen and Van Hear is quite different. It takes the agency of forced migrants beyond economic activities seriously. It recognises that the (im)moral polity of forced migration, as evidenced by the increasing lack of interest by states in refugees, could also create opportunities for a transnational polity of forced migrants who are able to take decisions for themselves.

The two policy proposals discussed raise more fundamental issues regarding the nexus of research, public debates and policy making. Therefore, as to the second question, the often-mentioned gap between research in the social sciences, on the one hand, and social action and praxis, on the other (the gap hypothesis), comes to mind. Hope is frequently expressed in academic and policy circles that political action could be systematically based on knowledge about calculable causal relations, as the term ‘evidence-based policy’ rather than ‘dogma’ would suggest (cf. Boswell 2009). Yet this question is ultimately misleading. In essence, the gap hypothesis decries the observation that, compared to the stock of scientific knowledge, its de facto usage in public policies is insufficient. Some reasons alleged for this gap are that the transfer of academic knowledge is difficult because of different ‘languages’, and that the capacity of the policy practitioners who read scientific results is very limited. Yet the gap hypothesis misses the point, since the rationalities in science differ from those in politics and policy. Two types of knowledge can be contrasted, namely, instrumental knowledge, which is oriented toward the means to achieve goals, and reflexive knowledge, which is geared toward a higher level of insight. This stark distinction is reminiscent of Kant’s

moral imperative,¹⁶ which argues against using persons as means rather than ends. In other words, the (social) sciences are seeking truth rather than making decisions. This distinction dovetails with the difference between formal and material rationality, between instrumental rationality and reason (Weber 1968 [1922], 5-14). In other words, while knowledge about causal relations may make political action more rational in a formal sense, it may also be put to service to engage in normatively undesirable undertakings. Eventually, social scientific knowledge is *welt-anschaulich* (related to a worldview) and thus primarily has a function of producing orientation and meaning. Most important concepts, such as integration, inequality, or development, are not value neutral. One does not need to adhere to a criticism of the 'strong programme of science' (Barnes 1974) and thus engage in a social reductionist interpretation of the social sciences to realise that the questions posed by social scientists and the interpretations of research results are guided by normatively bounded ideas. Furthermore, when talking about the effects of a policy, one cannot simply say, when A then B, etc.; one needs to know about the consequences of specific and complex sets of factors. Yet such knowledge is not simply stored in the warehouse of the social sciences. There is certainly no recipe-like knowledge in the form of easy rules to follow (Luhmann 1992). This means that social engineering is out of the question.

Often, the functions of social scientists in political debates around forced migration, 'borderisation', and securitisation are described in terms of policy consultancy. However, in the social sciences themselves another function is usually emphasised, namely the production of orientation and meaning in the local, national, and global public spheres. Thus, the impact of social scientific knowledge is often indirect, shaping the ways issues are discussed in the public sphere (Beck and Bonß 1989). In sum, these considerations suggest that social scientific knowledge is not prescriptive but points to analytical and explanatory knowledge which can, in principle, provide orientation and meaning. It also indicates that the indirect impact of social scientific knowledge means that actors in the public sphere and in the realms of policy attribute meanings quite different from social scientists.

Some researchers with ambitions for societal impact place their hopes on civil society and advocate for sociology as an integral part of civil society (Burawoy 2005). In this perspective it is societal transformation which occupies centre stage. The agenda of transformation includes yet reaches much beyond cross-border migration. Some civil society actors pursue an

¹⁶ <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/kant-moral/>

agenda of open borders and thus also of increased cultural diversity. Others, present at the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), stress that international institutions need to be reformed in order to create the foundations for fair migration. Such demands also go along with changes in international, national, regional, and local institutions enabling the rule of law, the observation of human rights, and calls for fundamental changes in the world trade system, but also stricter regulations of financial flows. This suggests that the struggles over the welfare dilemma and the liberal dilemma with respect to forced migration need to be considered in the context of ongoing struggles over social transformation – with the latter driving the issues and dilemmas at stake but also being shaped by the active involvement of civil society actors.

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