TAHRIB – “A SHORTCUT THROUGH HELL”

A MOBILE VIEW ON RISK TAKING ON THE JOURNEY NORTH FROM THE HORN OF AFRICA

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Abstract

‘Illegalised travellers’ from the Horn of Africa often only become visible after they enter the territory of the European Union. The experience of migrants ‘en-route’ and the fact that before seeking their way to the European Union some have lived for years in refugee camps or neighbouring countries in the Global South, often remains in the dark. This research looks at the journeys of travellers from the Horn of Africa. The Somali respondent referred to this journey as, Tahrib. They described it as becoming mobile and navigating thereby through dangerous pastures, to be able to create a better future.

The focus of this project, therefore, was put on the question of, what mobile and immobile externalities and what risks are shaping the journey north from the Horn of Africa towards the ‘better life’ and how do those (from the Horn of Africa) affected by these movements assess the risks connected to the journeys.

To answer this question, a qualitative empirical study was conducted in Nakivale Refugee Settlement and Kampala (Uganda) with prospective travellers and their communities, as well as in Germany and Switzerland with former travellers and activists from the Horn of Africa. The experience and knowledge of the participants were thereby put into the centre of the research.

With the help of three narrations guiding through the different phases of the journey, I could carve out the interconnected risks, mobilities and immobilities shaping each other as well as the journey as it unfolds. This way, the highly complex and extremely violent journey could be analysed. By that, it became evident that many do not leave their countries of origin with the intention of going to Europe. This decision is often made afterwards, influenced by other mobilities and the disappointment over the conditions in neighbouring countries and the global refugee protection system.

The decisions are usually taken despite the knowledge of the risks of the journeys. Risk is here recognised in terms of dangers as well as in possibilities (Bastide 2015). This way risk-taking could be understood as taking your chance in life. Becoming-mobile has then an instrumental value (Carling 2014). It functions to improve the living situation and to take an active role in once own life, trying to reach the ‘better situation’ waiting at the end of ‘the shortcut through hell'.
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1 INTRODUCTION

No one knows exactly how many people perish at sea but most deaths probably go unreported and the bodies of the deceased remain unidentified. Even less is known about those who lose their lives during the desert crossing from sub-Saharan Africa to Libya. Both at sea and in the desert, the casualties are men, women and even children. (Hamood 2006: 7)

Illegalised travellers heading north often only become visible at the border of the Schengen zone; by entering the territory of the European Union (or by dying at its fringes), migrants enter the discourse of the ‘refugee crises’ in Europe. Overlooked are the diverse experiences of illegalised migrants on their journey before they reach the shores of the Mediterranean Sea and the fact that some have lived for years in refugee camps and neighbouring countries in the Global South before seeking their way to Europe. While living and working in one of these camps, the Nakivale Refugee Settlement in Uganda, I noticed that these irregularised journeys to Europe have become part of the everyday life of communities originating from the Horn of Africa, namely Somalis, Eritrean, and Ethiopians.

The region of the Horn of Africa has long been affected by poverty, political suppression, internal conflict, inter-state war, external intervention and, in the case of Somalia, the complete collapse of the state (Asres 2008). This has led to the forced displacement of thousands of people. For over a decade, the communities in the countries of origin and countries of refuge in East Africa have been exposed to this form of high-risk migration. Somalis and Eritrean are among the top-ten Mediterranean Sea arrivals, which represents 87% of all migrants arriving in Europe via the Mediterranean Sea (UNHCR Mediterranean 2016).

The traditional focus in academia on the countries of arrival and determinants/aspiration of migration has widened in recent years; however, there is still a lack of empirical research done on the journey itself, which understands migration as a process of moving (Gerard & Pickering 2013; Schapendonk 2012; 2010). Journeys have been, for the most part, overlooked “as an empirical object” in migration studies. Schapendonk (2012, p.123) leads this back to the fact that mobility in general has been approached from a sedentarist perspective and treated as “residual death time” by social science (see also Cresswell 2006; Sheller & Urry 2006).

It is striking that migration has predominantly been analysed from a sedentarist perspective; it is merely seen as a movement from one settled stage at the place of departure (dis-placement) to another settled stage at the destination (re-placement). (Schapendonk 2012, p.123)
When it comes to the movement from the Horn of Africa we find a rich tradition of reports conducted by human rights groups (Human Rights Watch 2014; 2015; AI 2010; JRS 2009) and in recent years by international organisations such as UNHCR, UNDOC, or IOM. While certain aspects of the journey have been dealt with in more detail (for example, transit migration in Libya and Sudan or human smuggling (Belloni 2016; Boubakri 2004; Brachet 2012; Hamood 2006; Reitano & Tinti 2015)), there is still a lack of academic work on these journeys, especially when it comes to “empirical research that has sought out the voices of those negotiating these borderlands” (Gerard & Pickering 2013, p.342).

Therefore, this project tries to add an empirical study to the body of academic literature, which has put the perceptions and experience of “those negotiating these borderlands” in the centre of the research. In the following, I will lay out the objectives and the focal point of this study in more detail and present the research question framing it.

1.1 FOCAL POINT

This project began with informal talks in the communities in Nakivale Refugee Settlement, Uganda and ended with problem-centred interviews in Europe with people who had experienced these journeys. Hence, it is developed out of the views and perceptions of those affected by the phenomenon. The starting point for this research is the Somali word ‘Tahrib’, describing the journey towards the north. In practice, the term includes three dimensions: first the mobility, “moving from one place to another place” (FG_04, 12/09/2015); second, the risk and danger you encounter while moving through “crossing a lot of dangerous and risky places” (FG_04, 12/09/2015); third, the ‘better situation’ or the ‘better life’ at which the journey is directed.

Therefore, this research plans to look at trajectories north from the Horn of Africa with a focus on the North-East-African and central Mediterranean routes (Horn of Africa/East Africa-Sudan-Libya-Italy), which currently appears to be the most important route (Sahan Foundation & IGAD 2016) and was the one my five respondents in Europe had travelled. The largest group using this route from the Horn of Africa are Eritreans, Somalis, and Ethiopians. From Sudan onwards, they share this route with other groups, the largest among them being the Sudanese.

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1 The term originates from Arabic, where it means “trafficking”. In the Nakivale Refugee Settlement, it was also used by Eritreans and Ethiopians alongside expressions in their own languages.
In Uganda, I conducted interviews with representatives of all three groups of nationalities: Somalis, Eritrean and, to a lesser extent, Ethiopians. In Europe I was only able to find Somali respondents and one Eritrean activist. This was mainly because of the sensitivity of the topic and the reluctance of people to share their stories. Though, there are differences between the experience of the groups ‘en-route’ mainly because of their religious background (Christians, especially women, seem to be more exposed to the violence of Muslim traffickers, residents, and smugglers) they still share, principally, the same experience.

1.2 OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In the centre will be the experiences and perceptions of those affected by the journey, meaning prospective and former travellers, relatives, friends, and community leaders from the Horn of Africa (Somalia, Eritrea, and Ethiopia). Thereby, the objective is to show the complexity of these journeys and the diverse risks encountered ‘en-route’ by way of analysing the many externalities influencing it on a micro level. In order to fine tune the analysis, I conceptualize, following Schapendonk (2012; 2011; 2010), these externalities as different interconnected mobilities and immobilities. Considering the risks people are willing to take, the project aims, in a second step, to provide an understanding of how those affected by the movement assess and relate to the risk taking of the journey, thereby concentrating on a micro-level of perception and decision-making and emphasising on aspects of agency to contradict the victimisation, which often accompanies the examination of violence and threats in the context of migration.

To approach these objectives, the following research question was developed:

What mobile and immobile externalities and what risks shape the journey north from the Horn of Africa towards the ‘better life’ and how do those (from the Horn of Africa) affected by these movements assess the risk connected to the journeys?

To answer the question in more depth, this project looks at four sub-questions. The first two questions will provide an overview of the journey, thereby explaining the encountered risks as well as the mobile and immobile influences in more detail. The third looks at the concept underlying the notion of the ‘better life’ the journey is directed towards. The fourth question examines the way those affected by the journey evaluate and explain it.

1. What risks can be identified on the journeys north from the Horn of Africa?
2. What mobilities and immobilities shape the journeys north from the Horn of Africa?
In general, this project hopes to add complexity with an empirical study and widen the knowledge about these journeys and about the experience, decisions, and perceptions of those affected by it, thereby adding aspects to a theoretical discussion on migration journeys as a process of moving. Over all, I do not claim to give the “speechless” speech but rather to shed light on a problematic, which is interlinked with European migration and border policy but ignored in the face of the discourse dominating European “refugee crises”.

1.3 OVERVIEW

This study begins with the discussion of theoretical concepts relevant to the journey, beginning with a study of mobilities and the control and management of mobilities. Then, we will look at attempts to conceptualize, categorise, or define migration in general and forced migration and ‘illegal’ migration in particular, in order to define the actors of this research. The theoretical part ends with the introduction of my analytical tools, namely the interconnected mobilities lens, the fragmented journey, and risk.

The second part is concerned with the research process. First, the chosen methodological approach is being discussed. Second, the data collection, as well as methods of data collection and data analysis, will be introduced. Finally, I will discuss ethical problems and my positionality in the research. This chapter is followed by a short contextualisation of the study, where routes as well as the countries of origin will be introduced.

The presentation of my findings will be organized in into two parts, beginning with an overview of the journey, focusing on the encountered risks and the mobile and immobile influences. The next step follows the analysis of the notion of the ‘better life’ and the way the affected population assess the risks and explains risk taking.

Last, I will conclude with a discussion that tries to answer the research questions framing this study, including the discussed theoretical concepts before.
2 THEORISATION

This research studies illegalised movements from the Horn of Africa towards a better life in the Global North, with a focus on the encountered risks and the way the travellers evaluate this high-risk movement. The starting point and focus are the narratives of migrants from the Horn of Africa. Namely, those who have done the journey and those who are planning to do the journey, as well as people affected by it, relatives and friends, community leaders, and activists. This means the perspective is directed at the micro level. Yet, the examined movements are embedded into the global (im-)mobilities regime and its regulation mechanisms (e.g., European border policing). Ignoring this broader context bears the danger of overlooking hierarchies and power relations, which prepare not only the fertile soil for the risks of the journeys, but also the need to engage in this form of high-risk mobility. Castles (2012) underlines the importance of considering the macro structures framing a micro-level study, such as this:

This is particularly important for migration research: it is indeed important to carry out micro-level studies of specific migratory experiences, but they should always be embedded in an understanding of the macro-level structural factors that shape human mobility in a specific historical situation. (Castles 2012, p.16)

Therefore, the theorisation is divided into three parts. The first describes, by including developments of mobilities and border studies, the way human mobilities and immobilities are managed and controlled. This provides the context and broader frame in which the examined movement occurs. The second part looks at the labels and categorisation (forced migrant, refugee, and ‘illegal migrant’) given to people on the move from the Horn of Africa. The last part looks at the motion of the journey itself and analytical tools, which will help us to grasp its complexity.
2.1 PART ONE: MAKING AND MANAGING (IM-)MOBILITIES

This part begins with a short introduction of (im) mobilities research to provide an overview of central topics and developments of the field.

2.1.1 (IM-)MOBILITES RESEARCH – DEVELOPMENTS

To begin with, mobility is neither a phenomenon of recent times nor is it a new subject revolutionising social science. Cresswell (2010) warns that such understanding depicts the past as fixed in contrast to the fluid present; mobility is then always connected to new techniques of transport and communication. However, what has changed, is not that the world became mobile, but that the always existing mobilities in the world have transformed and multiplied in increasingly complex ways (Cresswell 2010; Sheller 2014):

Although mobility is historically significant, and hence not unique to contemporary times, the world is arguably moving differently and in more dynamic, complex and trackable ways than ever before, while facing new challenges of forced mobility and uneven mobility, environmental limits and climate change and the movement of unpredictable risks. (Sheller 2011, p.1)

Although mobility was researched in anthropology, geography, or migration studies before, the fast growing numbers of people on the move, the different forms, and the multiplication of mobilities or the diverse mobile groups (e.g., asylum seekers, students, sports stars, tourists, terrorists, businessmen, backpackers, commuters, or labour migrants) have significantly changed approaches towards mobility in many scientific disciplines.

Over the past decade a new approach to the study of mobilities has been emerging across the social sciences involving research on the combined movements of people, objects, and information in all of their complex relational dynamics. (Sheller 2014, p.789)

In the beginning, this appearance of mobilities in social science has led to a critic on many sedentary theories conceptualising movement as something out of the norm. It was given a negative connotation and put into contrast with fixity, belonging, and boundedness of place and territory (Adey 2006). This understanding locates the constitutional basis of human identity as well as the basic units of social research at “bounded and authentic places or regions or nations” (Sheller & Urry 2006, p.209). With this critic, a re-examination of the conceptualisation of place goes along. Places are no longer regarded as isolated units but as being woven into
networks of connections. Thereby they go beyond the fixed “imagery of terrains”, which are being considered as “fixed geographical containers for social processes” (Sheller & Urry 2006, p.209).

Yet, this can lead, or has led, to the image of a fluid and liquid world without borders and restrictions (Bauman 2000). This notion of a borderless, liquid world tends to overlook power relations, hierarchies, immobilities, the increasing control of and the different access to mobilities as well as the fact that movement and its control is gendered, classed, and racialized (Adey 2006; Hannam et al. 2006; Skeggs 2004; Urry 2007).

Mimi Sheller and John Urry (2006) bundle these critics under the new mobilities paradigm, which rejects the production of a “grand narrative” of a new mobile world. This paradigm understands the different flows of people, goods, information or media not as separated spheres but rather examined them in their “fluid interdependence” (cf. Sheller & Urry 2006, p.212). It further includes the study of immobilities, moorings, borders and gateways, managing, controlling and limiting mobilities, thereby acknowledging that moving can increase status and power the same way it can lead to its deprivation and stigmatisation. Recent developments go beyond scrutinizing different distributions of mobilities and making immobilities and start to question the power relations underpinning and creating these differences (Adey 2006; Bissell & Fuller 2009; Cresswell 2010; Hannam et al. 2006; Hannam et al. 2006; Juntunen et al. 2013; Kalčić 2013; Mountz 2011; Sheller 2014; Sheller 2011; Sheller & Urry 2006).

So, choosing mobilities studies as a starting point for this project helps us to understand the examined journeys as embedded into power structures, e.g., the correlation between development aide and the respective countries cooperation with the European Union in controlling irregularised movements (BBC 2002). It further enables this study to consider immobilities as an integral part of mobilities, thereby also acknowledging the way movement is being managed and controlled.

However, before we look at the way movements are being steered, a few aspects of mobilities have to be further examined. First, the way they diversify and interact and can create new forms of human mobility. Second, the fact that movement is not neutral but has been evaluated differently and is superimposed with, for example, gender or race.
2.1.2 INTERSECTING (IM-)MOBILITIES ARE NOT NEUTRAL

First, there has been a multiplication of different mobilities that become connected to “space compressing communications technology” (Juntunen et al. 2013, p.13). Meaning that goods, people, media, information, images etc. travel faster over longer distances. These different multiplying mobilities are not isolated flows. In contrary, they intersect; they determine and influence each other and have diverse consequences for different people and places. This means that mobilities can create immobilities, the connectedness of some places can cause a greater disconnectedness for other places and acceleration can lead to slowness or deadlock (Sheller & Urry 2006, p.210).

Looking at people on the move, we find their mobility not only influenced and shaped by other intersecting mobilities, we also find different non-physical forms of movement, such as imaginative travel, virtual travel, or communicative travel (Urry 2007), which become later relevant when discussing Schapendonk’s (2010) “interconnected mobilities lens”. Sheller (2011) notes that these forms create, in their reciprocal relationships, new forms of human mobilities. In practice, this interplay can be the high mobility on a virtual and communicative level in combination with little physical mobility, such as a well-connected professional who works from home, or a person who moves physically but has a low motility when it comes to capacities, competencies, or choices, such as a person who is in the hand of a trafficking ring (cf. Sheller 2011, p.5). Recognizing that new forms of human movement can emerge (or re-emerge) out of the interaction of different flows and immobilities can be especially important when analysing irregularised mobilities, which often are characterized by a “tension between movement and non-movement“ (Schapendonk 2010, p.305).

Second, mobilities, in whatever shape they appear, are never neutral. This means movement and fixities are differently evaluated depending on national spaces and historical period, as well as their economic, social, political, and cultural context (Cresswell 2010; Kalčič 2013; Merriman & Cresswell 2011; Sheller 2014; Skeggs 2004; Urry 2007).

Practices are not just ways of getting from A to B; they are, at least partially, discursively constituted. (Cresswell 2010, p.20)

Skeggs (2004), who looks at aspects of gender and class underpinning mobilities, gives the example of the way a fixed home used to be considered as respectable and was an important bourgeoisie attribute. Today, immobility is increasingly linked with failure or as being trapped
or fixed in a place. A successful CV today is one that includes experience abroad. However, the movement of a person who has travelled from Ethiopia to Europe on an irregularised route, will certainly not increase his employability. Recognising that mobilities are not neutral helps us understand migration as a process of movement and not as a “residual death time” (Schapendonk 2012). It further can add to an understanding that today, these connotations are strongly linked to the control and management of mobilities, which will be discussed in the following section.

2.1.3 CONTROLLING HUMAN (IM-)MOBILITIES

Issues of movement, of too little movement or too much or of the wrong sort or at the wrong time, are central to many lives, organisations and governments. (Hannam et al. 2006, p.1)

The regulation of mobilities creates a highly selective system of those who are “allowed” to be mobile and those who are kept in place in this globalized world. While movements of, for example, tourists and experts are legal, desired, and facilitated, other human movements, including the one examined here, are undesirable, illegalised, and remain invisible (Andersson 2014; Juntunen et al. 2013; Rutledge & Roble 2010; Schapendonk 2010; Sheller 2011 & 2014). Therefore, the mobility of some is seen as progressive.

It does not surprise then that mobility has been characterized as one of the most stratifying forces in this world (Schapendonk 2010). It is one of the major recourses of our times and its differential distribution creates “some of the starkest differences today” (Cresswell 2010, p.22). Controlling and managing these resources became one of the major tasks for international organisation, companies, and governments.

2.1.3.1 BORDERS

Mobilities research puts a large focus on the machinery controlling human mobilities; thereby, it intersects with critical border studies. The way mobilities are being controlled and manged is central to this research, as border policy, including European border policy, has direct consequences for the movement of people from the Horn of Africa. These influences do not begin at the fringes of the European territory, but “radiate back from Europe and further into Africa” (Gerard & Pickering 2013, p.342). Thereby, it is important to understand the role of the border in todays globalized world and the power it is given over people on the move, stopping or slowing them down and marginalizing their movement. Therefore, we will have a closer look
at the way borders are conceptualized in a scientific context and the role they play in shaping human mobilities.

Both critical border studies and mobilities research understand that “borders as constituted by the regulation of mobility” (Sheller 2014, p.799). Borders are central to the channelling, limiting, and categorising of human mobilities. Thereby, it is important to not understand them as simple physical lines, separating one territory from the other. Borders are rather temporal sites of negotiation, which constantly change and are “shaped by history, politics, and power as well as by cultural and social issues” (Doris Wastl-Walter 2011, p.1). Most importantly, borders are socially constructed (Bös & Preyer 2002; Khosravi 2010; Newman 2011; Rösler & Wendl 1999):

Someone creates them and, once created, manages them in such a way as to serve the interests of those same power elites. (Newman 2011, p.35)

Hence, borders are not natural but social constructs with a spatial dimension. By using natural barriers, such as deserts, rivers, or mountains, borders are being naturalised and presented as a “primordial and timeless”, part of nature (cf. Khosravi 2010, p.1). Khosravi (2010) explains, how this is connected to the way the nation state defines itself and its sovereignty over its borders. If the state and its borders are seen as something natural, being a non-citizen consequently is unnatural and seen as a threat to the construction of the nation state, its order and, above all, its sovereignty. Crossing the border without the state’s permission means, therefore, to compromise the states sovereignty. Policing mobilities at national borders is, thus, central to states in order to depict the image of a sovereign and controlled state (Agamben 1998; Anderson 2006; Mountz 2011). Mountz (2011, p.255) notes that border policy is, thereby, being linked to policy fields organising “identities and subject positions” in and outside of the state.

The meaning of the border shifts spatially and conceptually and is called upon to perform many tasks. One function is to link the regulation of mobility to identity and territory: to link who one is to location, and in so doing policing national borders around identities. (Mountz 2011, pp.256–257)

This linking of identity to a defined territory is made “violent” for displaced persons on the move between territories – between states. Haddad (2007, p.119) understands the border as dangerous place, where the safe stable inside meets the dangerous mobile outside. People who navigate these zones are, therefore, depicted as dangerous. The ‘illegalised traveller’ therefore, is not only created by the border but also made dangerous by it.
Generally, understanding the logic behind the border and immigration policy can help us to grasp the power relations underpinning the control and management of mobilities at the North-East-African and central Mediterranean route. As the study focuses the micro level, discussing these modes of control can further enable us to analyse the irregularised movement from the Horn of Africa against the background of wider political structures.

2.1.3.2 THE EXTERNALISATION AND MILITARISATION OF THE BORDER

If the border is depicted as a “dangerous place”, where the stable safe inside meets the mobile dangerous outside (Haddad 2007), the increasing militarisation and securitisation of European external borders and the criminalisation of certain mobile groups in the last decades does not surprise (Bigo & Guild 2005; Léonard 2010; Rumford 2006; Spijkerboer 2013; Walters 2006). Military does not mean that borders became impenetrable “electronic walls”, as often suggested by notions such as the “Fortress Europe” (cf. Bigo 2009, p.589). On the contrary, borders do not simply stop mobilities; they regulate and shape flows and create zones of, on the one side, high connectivity and centrality and, on the other side, disconnection, marginality, and social exclusion.

If understood as a dangerous place and dictated by securitisation and militarisation, it only makes sense to place the border and its control further and further away from the actual physical territory, thereby ensuring that the unwanted moving individuals are kept away from the safe and stable inside.

Especially in the context of the European border management, this phenomenon has been examined under the notions of delocalizing borders or externalising border control. The “locus of control” is here moved “from the borders of the state to create new social frontiers both inside and outside of the territory” (Bigo & Guild 2005, p.1)(Anderson 2006; Andersson 2014; Haddad 2007; Khosravi 2010). Moreover, it is connected to the pluralisation of borders (Balibar 2002), which refers to the fact that national borders are no longer only situated at the fringe of the nation’s territory, but that they take different forms, such as citizenship and visa policies, working permission, or passport controls (see e.g., remote control).

In the case of the here examined Afro-European border, this externalisation of control has led to the fact that the borderlands stretch over ever longer distances and reaches now into dusty towns of the Sahara. This means the movement of people from the Horn of Africa is located in

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2 European refers here to the political entity of the European Union. European external borders refers to the borders of the Schengen area, which is not the same as the borders of the political entity of the European Union. This term will be used when I refer directly to polices or issues emerging from decisions and practices of the European Union and its member states.

3 This phenomenon is not unique to the European context, as for example the US-Mexican border shows.
a zone were not only the control of the states they pass through (Sudan and Libya) takes effect but also, though in a more indirect way, the control of the European borders. While, the Mediterranean Sea is a rather visible and extremely ‘effective’ naturalized border, the functioning of the Sahara Desert as a way of keeping Sub-Saharan migrants at a distance is scarcely known. The strategy of placing the border in an geographically extreme hostile environment can be summed up under the sentence of “geography would do the rest” (Cornelius 2005, p.779). The side effect is increasing causalities, as well as the forming of a highly complex and interlinked industry around the illegalised mobile subjects navigating these borderlands.

The “illegality industry” is what Andersson (2014) calls this reproduction of the machinery keeping Libyan, Tunisian, and Italian border guards paid, the smuggler provided with a flow of new and old clients, the aid worker employed, the defence and surveillance industry funded, the European public occupied, the journalist happy with breaking news, and the researcher excited about new emerging topics.

2.1.3.3 THE ILLEGALITY INDUSTRY IN THE AFRO-EUROPEAN BORDERLANDS

Andersson (2014) sees the ‘illegalised migrant’ as a product of what he calls the “Illegality Industry” which is “a particularly expensive and lucrative field” in the migration industry (Andersson 2014, p.14). He examines in his book, Illegality, Inc. Clandestine Migration and the Business of Bordering Europe, this industry in the Afro-European borderlands, which stretches from the coast of the Mediterranean into the Sahara and back to the headquarters of Frontex in Warsaw. Part of this industry is, hence, a variety of actors and profiteers:

Among these characters circulate shadowy presences—journalists and jailers, smugglers and spooks, defence industry contractors and policy makers—as well as the anthropologist, himself part of the industry that has grown up around the illegal immigrant. (Andersson, 2014, p. 10)

These characters as well as the high-risk journeys and the extreme European response to the “statistical minuscule movements” (Andersson 2014, p.6) are thereby a large and important part of the production of the ‘illegalsed’ moving subject. Ticktin (2015) observes that the migration between Africa and Europe is not a new phenomenon, but was made a problem by policing and controlling it:

People have also been crossing from North Africa into Europe — and dying — for many years now. Before the European Union was formed and visas were required, they came and went
without fanfare, according to seasonal labor demands. But after the Schengen accords were signed, such crossings were rendered illegal and they became more dangerous. (Ticktin 2015)

This connection between the closure and the militarisation of borders and rising death rates of border crossers has been observed in border and migration studies in different geographical contexts (Cornelius 2005; Khosravi 2010; Spijkerboer 2013). Khosravi (2010, p. 103) sees this relationship as “conspicuous and undeniable”. Since the 1990s and the continuing closure of not only legal ways into the European Union but also of safe illegalised routes (e.g., traveling by air), the journeys have become more dangerous, smugglers more brutal, and more people have died on the way. One of the main mechanisms of contemporary border politics is to leave the ‘illegalised’ traveller in a space outside of the protection of the law. They are not being killed directly but they are exposed to death. Along goes a process of dehumanisation or animalisation of the people negotiating in these extended borderlands. It is easier to leave non-humans to die (Vaughan-Williams 2015).

The closure of the Atlantic route piled pressure on Greece and then Italy, whose neighbour Libya had perfected the political art of using clandestine migrants as a bargaining chip. The blanket control of the Mediterranean also strengthened smuggling networks and gave rise to ever stranger, and more dangerous, entry methods. The illegality industry and its contradictions – on humanitarianism and violence, visibility and hiddenness, outreach and closure – has molded its raw material of illegality into ever more distressing forms. (Andersson, 2014, p. 274)

In the context of this research, these dynamics can explain the specific conditions mobile people from the Horn of Africa are facing on their route towards the north. Yet, controlling and limiting the mobility of certain groups has not only an effect on their routes and ways of moving but on the places of origin themselves, where some are kept immobile. Carling (2002) discusses this under the term of “involuntary immobility”.

2.1.4 THE MAKING OF INVOLUNTARY IMMOBILITY AND THE ASPIRATIONS OF MIGRATION

We have seen that the management and control of mobilities have created a highly selective system of those who are allowed to be mobile and those who are being stopped. Nevertheless, this does not mean that those kept in place do not aspire to migrate. In contrary, because of “space compressing communications technology” information and images travel faster over longer distances and people are “more aware of their relative position within the increasingly interconnected and networked global reality and are capable of imagining their lives elsewhere”
Therefore, increasing aspirations of migration meets a policy of containment. With migration aspirations I mean, following Carling (2014) and other scholars in the field, a “preference for migration over staying, regardless of the reasons”\(^4\) (Carling 2014, p.2).

Therefore, there is, on the one side, aspirations to migrate and, on the other side, a restrictive migration policy in combination with other factors, such as the lack of financial resources. This leads to the creation of involuntary immobility (Carling 2002; & 2014).

Indeed, one of the most striking aspects of today’s migration order, compared to the recent past, is the degree of conflict over mobility and the frustration about immobility among people in many traditional countries of emigration. (Carling 2002, p.5)

Thus, the greater awareness of one’s own position and this “involuntary immobility” leads again to a high frustration, which can be seen as an important factor of why people choose unauthorized routes towards the Global North (Carling 2014; Schapendonk 2010). Therefore, involuntary immobility also plays a major role in the decision-making process and is relevant when looking at the way people assess movement, especially in comparison to their status quo. The notion of the decision-making process and saying to choose unauthorized roots brings us to notions of forced and voluntary movement and illegality, are highly complex and controversial concepts debated in a public, political, and scientific context. Hence, a deeper examination is needed.

### 2.2 PART TWO: LABELLING AND CATEGORISING THE (IM)-MOBILE SUBJECT

There have been many attempts by migration scholars to conceptualize, categorise, or define forms of forced movement and ‘illegal’ movement. Yet, it is important to keep in mind that when we conceptualise something we do not describe “something that is already out there” we rather construct something as an “object of knowledge”. This means a concept poses something in the external world; it helps us to interpret our surroundings, to make sense of it and act accordingly to it (cf. Turton 2003, p.2). Conceptualizing is then “(…) a process by which we make the world meaningful and therefore knowable” (Turton 2003, p.15).

\(^4\) Migration is seen here as ‘the lesser of two evils’ and is chosen over staying in, for example, poverty, encampment, or conflict zones (Carling 2014, p.2).
The philosopher Ian Hacking (1986) argues that political or scientific constructs help to create “new way’s to be a person” and are not just discursively built. This means people interact with classifications and labels; they are in a reciprocal relationship: labels are formed by the people and the people are formed by the label.

This chapter will help us to sort through the many labels, categories, and definitions given to the examined population, by looking first at the notion of forced mobility, or as it usually is referred to, forced migration. Second, ‘illegal’ mobility (or migration) will be discussed as the examined movement unfolds, for the most part, in an illegalised sphere. Finally, we try to ‘name’ the population examined here.

2.2.1 FORCED MOBILITY

When it comes to the question of why a distinction of forced mobility is needed, it is often argued that “forced migrants have a distinctive experience and distinctive needs” (Turton 2003, p.7). This assumes that there is a “refugee experience”, which depicts them as a homogenous group of passive victims. Yet, considering alone the diversity of the population and their backgrounds, there clearly is “no such thing as ‘the refugee voice’: there are only the experiences, and the voices, of refugees” (Turton 2003, p.7).

Migration studies have long been dominated by dichotomies, such as national vs. international, temporary vs. permanent, and forced (refugee) vs. voluntary (labour) movement (cf. Vullnetari 2012, p.1305). On first sight, there is a clear distinction between voluntary and forced. (Economic) migrants choose to move to improve their status quo, while the forced migrant (usually the refugee) has to leave in order to safe his or her live. Thus, the question of choice and agency is at the heart of this distinction. Scholars have, therefore, separated categories on a continuum of choice.

By trying to separate out categories of migrants along a continuum of choice - free at one end and entirely closed at the other - these schemes are in danger of ignoring the most important quality of all migrants and indeed of all human beings: their agency. (Turton 2003, pp.9–10)

Though this approach includes different degrees and forms of voluntary and forced mobilities, it still is based on choice. Yet, though largely discussed, there is no such thing as a clear division between ‘forced’ and ‘voluntary’ when it comes to the determinants of migrant mobilities (Betts 2013; Carling 2014; Castles 2003; Düvell et al. 2008; Muggah 2000; Turton 2003; Vullnetari
2012), “since all migration involves both choice and constraints” (Carling 2014, p.7). The clear forced/voluntary distinction deprives, first, the forced migrant of his or her agency. Second, it overlooks the complex nature of decision-making processes, which are moulded by politics, economy, religion, cultural surroundings, the family, and the individual. Third, it ignores overlapping categories and individuals who change during their life or on their trajectories between categories (Betts 2013). Fourth, it is oblivious to what Papadopoulou (2005, p.2) calls, the “Migration-Asylum nexus” and forms of “mixed migration” (Vullnetari 2012). This refers to how different forms of human mobility meet in various ways and poses that people fleeing persecution and conflict share the same vulnerabilities and forms of exposure with people who are traditionally labelled as economic migrants (McDowell & Morrell 2010; Papadopoulou 2005).

Within the framework of forced migration, the categorisation of the refugee has a particular position. As the term also possesses a legal definition\(^5\) regulated in the 1951 Refugee Convention, this definition has been criticised for various reasons. Among them we find Eurocentrism (Khosravi 2010; Loescher 2001) and its exclusion of large groups of people, such as IDPS or asylum seekers (e.g. Anderson 2008; Betts 2013; Haddad 2007; McDowell & Morrell 2010; Vullnetari 2012). Excluding these groups means denying them the access to basic human rights and protection. The Geneva Refugee Convention from 1951, defies refugees as people “fleeing targeted persecution by their own governments” (Betts 2013, p.2). However, fewer people are fleeing state persecution and more are fleeing human rights deprivation “resulting from omissions of weak states that are unable or unwilling to ensure fundamental rights” (Betts 2013, p.2).

The consequence is that many people who are forced or who feel forced to cross international borders today do not fit the categories built in 1951. Many people fleeing human rights deprivations in fragile or failed states such as Zimbabwe, Somalia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo in Africa – Haiti, Afghanistan, and Libya elsewhere in the world—look very much like refugees and yet fall outside the definition of a refugee, often being denied protection. (Betts 2013, pp.2–3)

The consequences for the here examined population of the narrow definition of refugees leaves them often without proper protection and a lacking access to fundamental rights ‘en-route’ and in the East African countries they are seeking refuge. This means, the legal definition of refugees excludes many of my respondents. Defining their movement as solely forced would,

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\(^5\) A refugee is someone who “owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.” (www.unhcr.org, 24.08.12)
further, not only simplify the complex decision-making process but also depict them as victims without choice and agency.

As mentioned before, the definition of forced migrants and refugees intersects with the notions of the illegality in many ways. The ‘illegalised’ mobile subject is highly debated under the term of ‘illegal migrant’ and needs further examination.

2.2.2 THE OTHERS – THE ‘ILLEGAL’ MOBILE SUBJECT

(T)he ‘illegal immigrant’ is the absolute Other to the dream of a mobile world: those who cannot – or should not – move. (Andersson, 2014, p. 4)

In the beginning, it should be noted that the term ‘illegal immigrant’ is stigmatizing, derogatory, and incorrect as it implies “that migrants are criminals when they have usually only committed an administrative infraction” (Andersson, 2014, p. 17).

There have been many attempts in social science to conceptualize illegality and the people affected by it (e.g. Anderson 2008; Baldwin-Edwards 2008; Donato & Armenta 2011; Düvell 2008; Guild 2004; Kubal 2012; Nyers 2011). Consequently, there are also many different terms to describe persons with no legal status used by researcher and/or by politicians and the media: irregular, undocumented, unauthorized, or clandestine migrants, (cf. Düvell et al. 2008, p.3) illegals, sans-papier, non-status people, or alien (Nyers 2011), to name but a few. Some of the mentioned are described in “terms of criminality”, while others try to use more “neutral” language; yet, they still adapt “terms of absence or lack” (Nyers 2011, p.132). In short:

Non-status migrants are rarely portrayed in a positive or affirmative light, as fully formed subjects who are capable of autonomy, self-representation, and claim making (Nyers 2011, p.132)

In most cases, ‘illegal migrant’ is defined against the backdrop of migration law as “a person who contravenes the law“ (Kubal 2012, p.2). This “method” of categorizing seems flawed for several reasons. To begin with the most basic, after a “classical jurisprudence a person cannot be illegal” (Kubal 2012, p.2), only acts are illegal, meaning also the migrant is not illegal but illegalised. Second, has illegality, used as an analytical category with reference to migrants, become extremely broad. It thereby tends to overlook the legal complexities, such as in the case of migrants who register officially after entering a country illegally (Andersson 2014). Moreover, it mainly refers to the unauthorized crossing of a national border, which leads to the exclusion of the majority of so called ‘illegal migrants’, who for example consist of people
overstaying their visas (Anderson 2008; Düvell et al. 2008; Khosravi 2010; Kubal 2012). Finally, it should be noted that there is no such thing as a clearer division between legal and illegal, for there are many forms and shades of what Kubal (2012) calls “the ‘in-between’ statuses of semi- legality”6 (Kubal 2012, p.2).

However, illegality is not static: with or without formal changes in the law people may move between different statuses with varying degrees of agency and expedience (Kubal 2012, p.7)

Illegality is, further, hidden in other conceptualisations, such as economic refugee or transit migration and overlaps with “controversial forms and practices of migration” (Düvell 2008, p.484) and with flows of refugees. In fact, the term has embodied a negative connotation, which connects the ‘illegalised migrants’ with criminal activities, such as human trafficking, organ smuggling, or terrorism. All these activities are seen as closely linked to cross-border crime. If we remember that the border is seen as a dangerous place, the person crossing it without permission is then a particular threat to the inside, the identity, the security, and sovereignty of the states:

They mock the state’s sovereign powers and ridicule its border patrols. They carry diseases, strange customs, and a backpack full of poverty. They leech goodwill and resources out of the nation. Their invasion must be halted at all costs. (Andersson 2014, p.5)

Yet, the ‘illegalised migrant’ is not only constructed as perpetrator but also as victim. Therefore, he or she is painted either as an “exploited victim” or as the “abuser of the system” (Anderson 2008, p.8). We can see that the question of agency and choice is again closely connected to this construction. The villain has chosen to violate the law by crossing the border illegally in order to use the system, while the poor victim had no choice. Ticktin (2015), who examines the humanitarian borders, reflects on this distinction and its consequences, where an actual “legal category” becomes a “moral one”. It differentiates the “innocent” and “deserving”—mostly the refugee—and forms the “guilty” and “undeserving” party—mostly the illegalised economic migrant. Thereby, the construction of the innocent victim leaves no place for agency and is far away from any real live experiences. Not even children, so Ticktin (2015), can fit this category of the perfect victim, for by crossing the border “illegally” they are being associated with drug war and crime and lose their innocence in the eyes of this definition.

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6 Kubal (2012) defines semi- legality “as a multi-dimensional space where migrants’ formal relationship with the state interacts with their various forms of agency towards the law.” (Kubal 2012, p.2)
The journeys north that many have endured, often filled with horrific tales of violence and exploitation, would make anyone lose their innocence — if innocence is something anyone can possess, when it requires a sort of freedom from desire, will, or agency. (Ticktin 2015)

Unfortunately, this definition, though constructed, has consequences for the kind of aid and support people are given. This is the case for all the discussed concepts here; therefore, projects of classifying, categorising, or conceptualising migration in academia can have an impact on the people who are being labelled and should be treated with the most possible care.

2.2.3 THE MARGINALIZED TRAVELLER

Thus, why is this an excursion into conceptualisations? The people that have opened up this research topic for me, are the ones carrying and interacting with all this labels—the illegal migrant, the economic migrant, the migrant in transit, the displaced person, the forced migrant, the asylum-seeker, the refugee, the victim, the perpetrator—they have not carried one but all of them at some point or more at the same time. Warsan has left Somalia, to avoid recruitment from Al-Shabaab, he has lived as a recognized refugee in a refugee settlement in Uganda and has moved on to Sudan to flee the poverty and the lack of perspectives. In the desert, he was in the hand of so-called smugglers. He has lived in transit in Libya until he was able to cross ‘illegally’ through the EUropean Sea border to Italy. Now, he sits in a German reception centre waiting for his asylum process to start (cf. Field Notes 09/02/2016). Thus, what or who is he? The answer couldn’t be simpler and should never be different: a human being.

(W)e should be focusing on forced migrants as ‘purposive actors’ - as ordinary people (Turton 2003, p.12)

Andersson (2014) disputes that future generations might ask themselves why, in the beginning of the 21 century, our governments spent so much money and effort to control a relatively little group of people. He thinks that this moment only comes when we understand the ‘illegalised’ migrants as what they are:

nothing more, and nothing less, than people on the move. (Andersson 2014, p.281).

This, however, can only happen when the “illegality industry” stops working. This project reluctantly accepts the need to name its informants to acknowledge the specific context in which their movement happens and the way they make and remake the world around them. During
my conversations, I heard them describe themselves as Somalis, Ethiopians, or Eritreans, as migrants or refugees, or simple as travellers. The latter reminded me of a term used by Khorosravi (2010): the ‘illegalised traveller’. To travel is a movement we choose to engage in, so the notion of agency is present here. Anyhow, standing alone, the word could also describe the tourist or the global business man. The word ‘illegalised’ illuminates, then, that these groups are made illegal and, therefore, experience mobility differently.

Yet, the term ‘illegal’, as we have seen, always implies the violation of migration laws. This, however, is problematic especially in the context of African states, as the notion of ‘illegal entry’ is a concept imposed by European powers (Andersson 2014). For example, when it comes to border crossing in Africa scholars “make reference to the relative ease with which migrants cross international borders and the lack of relevance borders have for them” (Mechlinski 2010, p.97). Further, Kubal (2012, p.8) argues that on a daily basis the travellers’ illegality only plays a role in certain situation and is most of the time irrelevant:

(When conducting fieldwork with migrants in various situations and circumstances, the issues of status or legality very often take a central position only because they are placed there by us, the researchers (…). (Kubal 2012, p.8)

To avoid this, ‘illegalised’ will be changed to ‘marginalised’, which leans on the concept of “marginal mobilities” developed by Juntunen et.al. (Juntunen et al. 2013, p.7). These mobilities are marked, amongst others, by “the sentiments of marginality, liminality and constant negotiation against the sedentary norm of the nation state” (Juntunen et al. 2013, p.7).

Marginalized travellers describe, then, people on the move that face specific hardship. Their movement is, thereby, the product of their own making as well as of certain power relations and “kinetic hierarchies in particular times and places” (Cresswell 2010: 29).

### 2.3 PART THREE: ANALYSING HIGH-RISK JOURNEYS

The focus of this study lies on the risky journeys from the Horn of Africa towards the north. Thereby, it does not understand this journeys as “(...) movement from a place of origin to a certain destination (...) – a single move from here to there“ but rather as “stepwise, multi-local, and process-like phenomena evolving ‘en-route’” (Schapendonk 2012, p.119). It, further,

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7 African border studies understand mobility and borders in Africa as “colored by the continent’s history of colonization” and as characterized by the arbitrary construction of borders imposed by colonial powers and thereby dividing “people belonging to the same tribal or ethnic group” (Zlotnik 2003, p.1).
understands the engagement in these high-risk mobilities as a strategy “of making something new out of making things uncertain” (Juntunen et al. 2013, p.16).

In this section, we will look at three concepts that will be used as analytical tools to help us to grasp the complex narratives of the ‘marginalized travellers’. First, we will look at Schapendonk (2010, 2012) “interconnected mobilities lens”, which helps to identify the influences of externalities on migrant mobilities and shows that they are not an isolated movement. Second, we show, with the concept of the “fragmented journey”, that migrant mobility does not follow a clear plan, route, or geographical goal but is splintered and stepwise. Third, we examine, with the help of risk taking, what it means to become mobile in the context of high-risk migration.

2.3.1 THE ‘INTERCONNECTED MOBILITIES LENS’

In order to understand migrants’ physical mobility in relation to other mobilities and to understand the different factors influencing and shaping the trajectories of mobile people, the project approaches migrant mobilities with the help of Schapendonk’s (2010) “interconnected mobilities lens”. He bases his lens on the above discussed new mobilities paradigm of Sheller and Urry (2006), where different mobilities are being put in relation to each other and in relation to immobilities8. The “interconnected mobilities lens” analyses the trajectory as a process shaped by externalities.

This lens approaches the trajectory not as an isolated straight corridor in the hands of a rational agent, but as an open process influenced by externalities. (Schapendonk 2010, p.298)

Schapendonk (2012; 2010) identifies these externalities as different interconnected mobilities, which are based on types developed by Urry (2007) and specified by Schapendonk (2012; 2010) to migration trajectories.

- **The corporeal mobility of third persons**: “This is intrinsically related to the importance of social networks in migration processes. It is widely agreed that social contacts ease migration processes in terms of financial and psychological costs. However, as it is explained below, the mobility of people not belonging to the social network might also matter.”(Schapendonk 2010, p.298)

8 For example, a pedestrian who wants to cross a busy highway is limited by the mobility of others in the cars. Furthermore, most mobilities are seen as connected to some fix-points. E.g.: In order to be mobile, the airplane needs an airport (cf. Urry/ Sheller 2006).
• **The physical mobility of objects**: This includes consumer goods, (false) passports, and money (from the family, diaspora, or friends).

• **Imaginative travel of migrants**: “Daydreaming and imaginaries might influence migration processes in a profound way, both at home and during the migration process.” (Schapendonk 2010, p.299)

• **Virtual travel of migrants**: “With the help of the internet, television or other media, migrants access fresh information or create new aspirations.” (Schapendonk 2010, p.299)

• **The mobility of information through communication**: “Communicative travel: Especially in case of overland trajectories, migrants are highly dependent on trustworthy and fresh information for their own security as well as for the continuation of their journeys (Schapendonk and van Moppes, 2007). Thereby migrant’s use of ICTs is increasingly important which strengthens their flexibility on the road.” (Schapendonk 2010, p.299)

Hence, there are several mobilities and social relations influencing migrants’ movements, which interact with each other and can support the explanation of individual migration processes (Schapendonk 2012, p.119). The lens helps us to understand the trajectories not as “isolated and straight paths that occur according to well-weighted plans of individual actors“ (Schapendonk 2012, p.123).

The marginalized movement examined here is characterised by “an inherent tension between movement and non-movement” (Schapendonk 2010, p.305), meaning it is essential when looking at mobilities to also examine immobilities and special fixations of people. Schapendonk (2012) argues that mobilities transform and shape places rather than make them irrelevant, as has been argued by authors such as Marc Augé (2009). The emergence of a highly functional migration industry and migration-hubs along the main migration industry, show the way movement has given places along its route a new role and meaning. When examining the journeys of people from the Horn of Africa, the places where movement is stopped or slowed down are often central to direction and velocity of the on-movement.

Therefore, choosing the “interconnected mobilities lens” as a tool to analyse migration trajectories from the horn of Africa does enable us to recognize and examine the “(un)expected twists and turns” of a journey “without claiming that the decisive element can be found in individual agents or abstract structures”. It further helps to recognise the role of immobilities
and moorings as an inherent part of the journey. Therefore, using the “interconnected mobilities lens” allows us to fine-tune the analysis of these journeys.

Thereby, we have to keep in mind that the trajectories are not only influenced by externalities, but that they are also splintered, can change, stop, or slow down for a period of time, as will be discussed with the concept of the “fragmented journey” (Collyer & de Haas 2012).

2.3.2 THE FRAGMENTED JOURNEY

Out of critics on the category of transit migration, Collyer and de Haas (2012) develop the concept of the “fragmented journey”. ‘Transit migration’ is described as “the migration of citizens from distant countries who cross several other countries before they arrive at the external borders of and finally in the EU“ (Düvell 2012, p.416). The category is however highly problematic and contested for several reasons. The term is, for example, highly politicised and often negatively connoted. While international organisations and governments put ‘transit migration’ on the same level as ‘illegalised’ migration and human trafficking and crime, NGOs tend to paint a picture of ‘transit migrants’ as stuck at the walls of Fortress Europe, creating an image of helpless victims (Düvell 2012; Papadopoulou-Kourkoula 2008). As an analytical category, can transit migration add a “conceptual nuance” to the usual dichotomy of migration categories, but still link the movement to fixed intentions and a “fixed special outcome”(cf. Collyer & de Haas 2012, p.476). Thus, it tends to overlook the complex realities in so called ‘transit countries’ and migrant experience en-route. This means marginalized travellers usually do not follow a “straight-forward and pre-known plan”; they may change routes, aspirations, and destination during a journey, they could have “multiple scenarios in their heads”, or they might decide to stay in a country (Schapendonk 2012; 2011; 2010).

Instead of ‘Paris’ or ‘my family in Madrid’ they are moving to ‘Schengen,’ ‘Europe as a place of freedom,’ and a ‘good place to live in’ (Schapendonk 2011). Partly because of migrants’ changing aspirations and abstract destinations, fragmented migration projects evolve ‘en route’ and are therefore dynamic, open, and complex phenomena (...). (Schapendonk 2012, p.121)

The concept of “fragmented journeys” is used to describe the migration itself instead of countries or migrants. It, thereby, is not a clear category, but rather can be used as a focus to analyse mobility patterns, in which migration is conceptualized as a process “in which people

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9 For example, Libya, which is defined as ‘transit country’ has a long tradition of being a destination for labour migrants from sub-Saharan countries (cf. Hamood 2006: 18); therefore, labour migrants are being categorised as irregular migrants heading north.
shift from one categorisation to another” (Collyer & de Haas 2012, p.479). Thus, the concept turns away from fixed points of departure and destination as well as from a linear understanding of migration; hence, including its shifting nature and its varying forms and nuances. Moreover, the clear spatial goal, Europe, is questioned and migration is described as intended to improve the current living situation.

Taking away the clear goal of reaching Europe does not mean depriving the journey of a purpose but rather underlying its functional dimension. Carling (2014) calls this the instrumental value of migration, which differs from an intrinsic value describing a yearning for mobility. Instrumental migration is not primarily related to the desire of being in a different place or being mobile; it is used as an instrument to achieve “another objective” (Carling 2014, p.3). The objective or purpose can be to achieve a better standard of living or, even more clear in its instrumental dimension, to escape crises in order to survive (Betts 2013).

If migration has primarily instrumental value, neither the place of destination nor mobility itself motivates migration. (Carling 2014, p.8)

Subsequently, the concept of the “fragmented journey”, in the context of this project, understands mobilities not only as a movement from one place to another but also as one that includes the capacity of imagining an alternative lifestyle (Juntunen et al. 2013). Therefore, this project understands mobility in itself also as a (survival or live improving) strategy. If becoming mobile means that a person shifts into a more or less unknown and dubious sphere, this means that “in-betweeness and ambiguity are associated with inventiveness and the possibility of making something new out of making things uncertain” (Juntunen et al. 2013, p.16).

The dreams, stories, and imaginaries of the diasporic experience of the West clearly illustrate that young people in Africa are not merely passive victims of the societal crisis that pervades the worlds in which they grow up. Rather, it illustrates the fact that they are searching for their own ways out of a life that they feel to be without a future. (Boeck & Honwana 2005, p.8)

Making things uncertain means, in the context of the trajectories from the Horn of Africa, almost always taking high risks. Although risk is a concept that is often only treated marginal in migration study, it is part of all phases of the migration process and all forms of migration.
2.3.3 UNDERSTANDING RISK

Risk is interwoven into all forms of migration and can be found at all stages of the migration cycle. Migration, further, generates, ameliorates and is being informed by risk and uncertainty. Moreover, because of the violent and deadly journeys of some groups of migrants, dealing with risk becomes a “critical component” of their migration experience (cf. Bastide 2015, p.227). Thus, risk and uncertainty are not neglected concepts in migration studies. Still, their theorisation is often insufficient (Bastide 2015; Hermández-Carretero & Carling 2012; Williams & Baláž 2012).

Risk shapes, and is shaped by, migration: although widely acknowledged, this is unevenly, and mostly only implicitly, theorised and analysed. (Williams & Baláž 2012, p.167)

This part, therefore, starts with a very short look at attempts of theorising risk, specifically when coupled with migration. Next, two examples of studies on (high-risk) migration and risk will be presented in order to see the use of the concept in practice. In the end, an understanding of risk, which can be adapted in the context of this research, is discussed.

2.3.3.1 THEORISING RISK

Risk is not only relevant in the context of migration but, as Zinn (2008b, p.1) puts it, “looms large in present day society”. Risk, therefore, has caught the attention of disciplines, ranging from economics, geography, and international studies to political science, sociology, and psychology. However, academic approaches towards risk differ not only according to their disciplinary field but are also linked to their historical and current socio-political environment. As a result, definitions of risk are numerous. Yet, shared by all is the inherent distinction between reality and possibility, meaning “the concept of risk is tied to the possibility that the future can be altered – or at least perceived as such – by human activities” (Zinn 2008b, p.4).

Risk is seen as related to expectations that are based on experience and knowledge. This means an understanding of risk is linked to the specific cultural, political, and socioeconomic context of the individual. Generally speaking,

A discourse into social risk behaviour is as much a discourse on defining a problem, about different values and lifestyles, power relations, and emotions as it is about “real” risks and their rational management (Zinn 2008b, p.2).
If we look shortly (and very superficially) at approaches, which are or can be linked to migration, we find large differences especially in their conceptualisation. For example, economic theories, such as the Human Capital Theories or New Economics of Migration, understand risk as “real known and measurable.” Sociological and political science theories follow a more collectivist and constructionist approach, meaning they see risk as “discursively constructed in everyday life” (Williams & Baláž 2012, p.172). Yet, there are great variations in the scale of constructivism. The governmentality approach, for example, sees the development of debates on risk as disconnected and without a “relation to the ‘real’ world” (Zinn 2008b, p.6). Approaches evolving around culture and risk understand it as “mediated by social factors”, meaning that risks are being selected and transformed within the societal and institutional discourse. In the centre of this strand of theory lies the argument that perception of and response to the risk of individuals has to “be understood against the background of their embeddedness in a socio-cultural background and identity as a member of a social group” (Zinn 2008b, p.6).

It is problematic is that conceptualisations of risk refer to and have been developed in a context located in the Global North. Brown (2015) shows that theories analysing risk mostly place the concept in a post-traditional and mostly secularist societal background:

More or less implicit within these theoretical traditions for analysing risk (…) are assumptions which locate risk within a certain type of post-industrial society seen as possessing a combination of post-traditional, largely secular and liberal characteristics – where these have regularly come to be viewed as intrinsic to risk. (Brown 2015, p.186)

Desmond (2015), who researched on risk in Tanzania, acknowledges ‘Western’ influences in sub-Saharan Africa (e.g., colonialism or development and aid discourse); yet, it is important to keep in mind that risk in a sub-Saharan Africa has developed in a very different historical and socio-cultural background. This begins with the way the dichotomy of tradition and modernity is imprinted in the concept of risk. Africanist literature sees this dichotomy as inappropriate, as the African modernity has been “defined as a reinvention of traditions (…) and continuity with the past.”(Desmond 2015, p.199)

Douglas (1994) pointed out that risk can be found in different forms and with verifying connotations in other—‘non-western’—societies. Following her, scholars have shown how, in some societies, a magical/ traditional approach towards risk and a technical rational have been

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10 The research focus of Human Capital Theories or New Economics of Migration mainly lies on the individual (the first) and the household (the second) as decision-making units.
combined (cf. Brown 2015, p.193). Thereby, they criticise the dualistic understanding of approaching risk as either rational or non-rational.

Such a dichotomy disregards the benefits of non-rational strategies which enable individuals to act even when faced with overwhelming negative odds of a positive outcome. Beliefs, faith, and hope enable individuals to act in situations which appear too hopeless or impossible to comprehend. (Zinn 2008a, p.442)

Turning away from this dichotomist way of looking at risk taking is especially more important than looking at migration as highlighted in the two studies discussed in the following section.

2.3.3.2 RISK-TAKING IN THE CONTEXT OF (HIGH-RISK) MIGRATION – EXAMPLES

Hermández-Carretero and Carling (2012) examine migration from the shores of Senegal in boats to Spain’s Canary Island (Pirogue Migration) and ask how prospective migrants relate to the risks of migration. Bastide (2015) explores the example of Indonesian labour migrants undertaking transnational journeys and how they deal with the uncertainties and danger of their migration. In the beginning, we find the above discussed critics on an approach towards risk taking, which is solely based on a rationality and excludes the irrational and superstitious world.

Bastide (2015, p.234) further argues that migrants often start their migration process “with little or no guarantee for their safety” (2015, p.234), thereby many make this decision despite their knowledge, which is based on collective or individual experience, about the hazardous routes and the complications awaiting them. He agrees here with Hermández-Carretero and Carling (2012), who note that migrants are aware of the dangers and risks they may encounter. Denying this leads to the danger of creating a simplified image of high-risk migrants where they are seen as “Kamikaze terrorists” associated with the notion of “nothing to lose and everything to gain”.

The migrants are neither suicidal nor irrational, but make decisions within a specific socioeconomic and moral context. (Hermández-Carretero & Carling 2012, p.407)

In the case of the Senegalese Pirogue migrants, this socioeconomic and moral context includes a sense of responsibility towards the family (migration means a sacrifice for the family), pride, honour, “being a man” by facing the danger instead of “being a women” and staying behind, and “breaking out” to possibly achieve personal progress and success (cf. Hermández-Carretero & Carling 2012). Herewith, the highly complex nature of risk taking, which “is shaped by
context-specific interaction of disparate factors” (Hermández-Carretero & Carling 2012, p.407)—factors ranging from economic issues to religion and fate—is displayed.

Interestingly, fate and religion play an important role in the rationalities of migrants’ risk taking and risk-preventing strategies. Bastide (2015) shows how Indonesia migrants “surrender their fate” to God by embarking on these risky journeys, meaning the migration process “is perceived as a display of faith” (Bastide 2015, p.234). If we understand fate as something that is passively met and something that is in conflict with risk taking as a form of calculative rationality, we deprive migrants, who take high risks, of their agency and their capacity to make rational decisions. Yet, several examples from the Indonesian context show how religion and fate give migrants a sense of agency and control, not in the classic way of risk calculation but by accepting its necessity.

Nowhere is this more obvious than in the vocabulary of migrants who consider leaving home a way of challenging their destiny—mengadu nasib: fate is not a given and should not be met passively. It is something one has to actively engage in in order to fulfil its full virtualities (Bastide 2015, p.236).

Religious beliefs affect migrants’ assessment of the magnitude of possible negative outcomes, as Hermández-Carretero and Carling (2012) point out. Death, for example, is seen as an unavoidable part of life. It cannot be altered by humans; it lies in god’s hands alone and is seen as established from the moment of birth. It doesn’t matter where you are, whether you are at home in your bed or on a boat heading towards Europe, if you are supposed to die you die (cf. Hermández-Carretero & Carling 2012, p.451).

The very notion of [taking a] risk is challenged by faith in divine destiny; it is up to God what the outcome of the journey will be. (Hermández-Carretero & Carling 2012, p.415)

2.3.3.3 UNDERSTANDING RISK

This research plans to follow a social-constructionist perspective of risk, which allows “a more fine-grained definition of the term” and understands it as “a specific way to frame reality” (Bastide 2015, p.228). Following Zinn (2008b), we know that, when talking about risks, the future must first be considered partly undetermined. Second, it must be possible “that the future can be altered—or at least perceived as such—by human activities” (Zinn 2008b, p.4). Third, risk is to be recognised in terms of threats or dangers and possibilities (Bastide 2015, p.228).
Risk taking could then be understood as “taking action with outcomes that are uncertain but may be either favourable or unfavourable” (Hermández-Carretero & Carling 2012, p.408). This more open and value free approach of conceptualising risk is appropriate when looking at the overall migration project, as it includes a functional aspect of risk. With this conceptualisation of risk, it is possible to grasp that (high-risk) migration shows the compromises or sacrifices considered necessary to overcome a life of hardship. Thus, migrants “actively engage with the risk and see the perilous journey as a purposeful and justifiable step towards a better future” (Hermández-Carretero & Carling 2012, p.407).

After having examined the theoretical background this study draws on, we will turn to the research process with the methodological approach, the methods of data collection and analysis, and a critical reflection on ethics and positionality.
3 RESEARCH PROCESS

This chapter presents the research process, beginning with a review of the methodological approach. It continues with a discussion of the chosen methods and ends with a reflection on ethical problems and the positionality of the researcher.

3.1 METHODOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS

Methodology and methods are often depicted as being the same. Yet, the latter “are specific techniques used to collect and analyse information or data” while methodology evolves around “the underlying logic of research” (Castles 2012, p.19). Castles (2012, p.19) explains how methodology “involves the systematic application of epistemology to research situations”. In the following section, we take a closer look at the three main approaches applied to this research and why they have been chosen for this particular context, as, in research, “the choice of particular methodologies itself reflects the way migration is conceptualised” (Berriane & de Haas 2012, p.13).

3.1.1 CHOOSING A QUALITATIVE APPROACH

The nature of the research question and the complex and multisided problems of irregularised movements and its trajectories favour an open and flexible approach and demand an in-depth study. A qualitative approach can enable us to put “the perspective of the participants and their diversity” in the centre of the study, and demands the “reflexivity of the researcher and the research” (cf. Flick 2009, p.14). It thereby helps us to overcome “initial preconceptions and frameworks” and can lead “to new theoretical integration” (Mulumba 2007, p.67).

Qualitative data collection can serve as a way to get data in areas of life where quantitative methods are not amenable or if the access to these areas is difficult (e.g., war zones or people on the move) (Glaser & Strauss 1999; Mulumba 2007). This is particularly important because the examined realities are difficult to access as a result of being predominantly located in unstable regions and unfolding in a hidden and often criminalised and quickly changing sphere.
3.1.2 CHOOSING GROUNDED THEORY

Grounded Theory is a theory-generating approach and was developed by the sociologists Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss in the late 1960s (cf. Flick 2009, p.429). This project, however, does not follow strictly the procedure of a Grounded Theory study but instead leans on some of its principals. It does not aim to generate a new theory, but to add knowledge about these journeys and to enrich theoretical reflections on irregularised movements in Africa by adding new aspects to existing approaches. Therefore, a methodology is needed that starts from the experience and knowledge of the participants and not from preconceived concepts.

Grounded theory allows for such an approach, as it approaches data detached from preconceived ideas, placing the actual data, that is the interview or stories told by the interviewees, at the foreground of the research. (Sheridan & Storch 2009, p.4)

Therefore, Grounded Theory enabled this project to place “the actual data” in the centre and to go beyond preconceived ideas. Yet, different aspects were still identified and given a particular shape by the researcher. This means “issues are not something just discovered but are constructed in a specific way” (Flick 2009, p.430). As such, doing a Grounded Theory study has to include a high level of reflexivity and the constant questioning of what was once one position in the field (Kelle 2005; Sheridan & Storch 2009; Tarozzi 2013). This is curtail to this project because of the different background and position of the researcher and research participants (see Chapter 3.5.2).

Finally, Grounded Theory has produced several tools that improve the collecting and analysing of qualitative data (Flick 2009), which are highly useful when trying to follow peoples trajectories via their narratives. The ones used in this project will be discussed in more detail in the following part.

3.1.3 INTEGRATING MOBILITY

Furthermore, this research tries, as is looks at migrant mobility, to integrate mobility itself in its methodological approach. This is done in two main ways. Firstly, my data collection did not happen in one field—in the sense of geographical defined place—but in fields. This partly enables the examination of trajectories as they unfold and avoids at the basic unit of social research being bound to a territory defined by national borders and identity constructions. The
access to places in countries such as Somalia, Eritrea, and Libya is limited and the time and resources of this research were also limited. Thus, this study focuses on Uganda as a destination, ‘transit’, and departure country for people from the Horn of Africa. On the other side, I collected data from those who experienced the journey and now live in Europe (namely in Germany and Switzerland)\textsuperscript{11}.

Secondly, following migrants here means not only spatial but also in the form of following their trajectories and putting them into a broader context by way of collecting live stories of those who already did the journey. This biographical approach advocates “for a broader temporal perspective to analyse migration, for recognition of migrant’s multiple motivations and for acknowledgment that migration is first and foremost a socially embedded event” (Schapendonk 2011, 52-53).

**3.2 DATA COLLECTION**

**3.2.1 SAMPLING**

Because I followed a qualitative approach with a research question focusing more on “meanings in a specific context, were the sample is not intended to be representative” (Sánchez-Ayala 2012, p.128), I did not follow any strict rules regarding sample size. Hence, I chose a non-probability sampling method: snowball sampling. This is especially useful in the case where “the members of the target population are difficult to locate or the researcher does not have the information necessary to locate them” (Sánchez-Ayala 2012, p.129). The target population for this project was spread over two continents, including countries where official and reliable demographic data does not exist.

Both in the Europe (Switzerland and Germany) and in Uganda, getting interviews was very much based on trust, as the departure to Sudan happens, in most cases, secretly and the people who experienced the journeys, as well as family members, were often traumatised and reluctant to talk about the topic. Hence, it was very difficult to establish relationships with participants without a personal recommendation of a common acquaintance or a trustworthy’ person, such as an activist or community leader. I located most of my participants by asking after every

\textsuperscript{11} I managed to collect data in Nakivale Refugee Settlement, in Kampala, as well as in Niedersachsen, Sachsen, Bavaria (Germany) and Geneva (Switzerland).
interview for contacts and recommendations. Thus, using snowball sampling turned out to be a very productive and useful method in this context.

3.2.2 ACCESS TO THE FIELDS

When I began my research, I was doing an internship at Nakivale Refugee Settlement in Uganda. Here, a Somali activist and a friend put me in contact with elders and the chairman of the Somali community, who became our main gatekeeper to the Somali community in Nakivale. He mobilised people for three focus groups and functioned as a translator. To the Eritrean and Ethiopian community, I gained access on the one side via an Ethiopian community worker who introduced me to an Eritrean activist. On the other side, I found participants by directly asking people I knew from interacting on a daily basis if they would like to participate.

Finding participants in Germany was much more difficult than in Uganda, amongst others, because of the fact that I did not live with them in the field (see Chapter 3.5.1). Yet, I decided to follow the same principal as in Uganda, meaning I choose to not work with any NGO or a State actor and accessed the communities via their representatives or activists. My first step was to contact migrant organisations from the Horn of Africa in Germany explaining my project and asking for information. My second step was to ask friends volunteering or working in the asylum sector in Germany, Switzerland, and Austria for personal contacts. Third, I managed, with the help of the snowball method, to get contacts in Europe via participants from Uganda.

To renounce the support of official organisations active in the asylum sector made the allocation of research participants much harder in Europe. Yet, my respondents, who were mostly still in the asylum seeking process, did not relate me to any actor in the field and depicted me more as an outsider to the system they were currently dependent on; this possibly made them more open to discuss sensitive topics.

3.3 DATA COLLECTING METHODS

I chose three different forms of interlocutions: the focus group, the semi-structured interview, and the problem-centred interview. I combined these with “hanging out in the field”, participant observation, and informal conversations.
3.3.1 ABOUT ‘HANGING OUT’, PARTICIPATING, AND CONVERSING

“Hanging out” and Participant Observation are contested ways of collecting data in social science, partly because they are both being accused of lacking objectivity (Rodgers 2004). However, these methods help to learn about practices that are either difficult to express in an interview or are being kept secret. In addition, they enable us to learn about specific norms and rules one has to respect during conversations (Spittler 2001).

Because I did an internship and lived in the settlement, “hanging out” was often part of my daily life in the settlement. On my way home, I would meet people and have informal conversations or sometimes do an ad-hoc interview. Living in the camp, working with different organisations, and interacting with the inhabitants on a daily basis helped me to observe their daily life and contextualise their narratives.

In Europe, “hanging out” in the field meant more hanging out with my participants or conversing with them via the Internet and social media. People were familiar with my research topic and therefore shared stories of friends, pictures, or news reports about the journeys with me, accompanying them with comments such as “This haw people are mistreated” (Ermias in Facebook, 16/01/2016).

Because my contacts were spread out in Germany and Switzerland, our time was limited to rather short visits or trips. This was mostly, but not always, in combination with an interlocution. I visited, for example, a Somali who had lived for a while in the Nakivale refugee settlement in his German reception centre and spent two days with him and his friends.

For the most part, I did not follow a strict systematically approach when it came to this set of methods. I still, however, consider the informal conversation, the participation, and the “hanging out” crucial to this project. They helped me to create relationships and establish contacts; they taught me about what is important to people, as well as significant rules and norms of interaction; and they helped me to gain a better understanding of what is a completely unfamiliar environment to me.

3.3.2 INTERLOCUTIONS

I chose to do in-depth interviews to better interact with the research participants, which gives the researcher the possibility to work with the people instead of writing about them (cf. Thompson 2000, p.190) and allows “interviewees to construct their own accounts of their
experience.” (Sánchez-Ayala 2012: 118). I used three main strategies: the focus group (FG), the semi-structured interview (SSI), and the problem-centred interview (PCI).

The **focus group (FG)** is a collective interview process that allows the researcher to collect different views and questions about a topic. I hoped, as Slim et.al (2006) describes it, that the narrators would inspire each other’s memories by bringing up different aspects of the problem or debating about different opinions and the accuracy of facts and events.

The **semi-structured interview (SSI)** was predominantly conducted with activists and community leaders in order to get an overview of the relevant issues and problematics. I usually started interviews with an opening question (see below), which helped the interlocutors to speak freely from the beginning. Then, I continued with questions loosely based on a predeveloped interview guide.

The **problem-centred interview (PCI)** was developed by Andreas Witzel (2000) as a method to collect “biographical data with regard to a certain problem” (Flick 2009, p.162) and was based on the theoretical principals of Grounded Theory. It aims to capture, as unbiased as possible, individual actions, subjective perceptions, and coping mechanisms of complex social realities (cf. Witzel 2000, p.3). Central to this project was the combination of an open narrative at the beginning and a set of more focused and problem-oriented questions at the end.

With the help of Küsters (2009) guidebook on narrative interview techniques, I developed an opening question that was in the direction of the topic, yet was kept as open as possible (Küsters 2009; Witzel 2000). After I explained my research topic and goals, I would open the interlocutions (both the problem-centred and the semi-structured) with the following question:

> I already told you that I consider you the expert. So, in the beginning I would like to ask you to tell me about your experience and what you know. You can take as much time as you need and I will not interrupt you, I will just take some notes in case I have questions later.

In the problem-centred interview, I tried in the following to prolong the narrative part with stimulating ad-hoc questions, as well as “general probing”, which provided further information and details of the presented issues (Flick 2009, p.163). In general, the narrative parts were usually quite fragmented, as I often worked with translators and/or people who were reluctant to discuss sensitive topics.
Witzel (2000) calls the second part of the problem-centred interview *comprehension-generating communication strategies*\(^\text{12}\). Flick (2009, p.163) refers to this part as “specific probing”, which deepens “the understanding on the part of the interviewer”. “Specific probing” consists of a certain set of questions (some developed before ad-hoc):

- Questions of comprehension directed at a better understanding of certain topics (e.g., asking people for a definition of the word Tahrib or Risk)
- Mirroring what has been said (e.g., summarising or giving feedback)
- Confronting the interviewee with contradictions in his or her statements

The narrative part enabled the participants to go through their own story, letting them decide which topics were important and how to present them. The second part helped me to get a better understanding of the narrative and the way the participant evaluated their experience.

For this report, I documented, in total, 18 interlocutions (four focus groups, six semi-structured, and eight problem centre interviews) with 32 people, six female and 26 male, as well as about 15 Somali women\(^\text{13}\) in a focus group. An overview of the participants, translators, and the interviews can be found in the Appendix (see 8.1)

While the above described strategies seem on paper to be clearly cut, in reality the lines between the different phases and forms are sometimes blurred. This was because both the semi-structured interviews and the problem-centred interviews often happened rather unexpectedly in a group setting of 3-5 people, including me and a translator. Working with a translator always interrupts the flow of speech. Moreover, all translation implies an interpretation and invention of the narrative (Portelli 2006). Yet, limiting my respondents to only English or German speakers would have left out the larger part of the affected population.

### 3.4 DATA ANALYSIS METHODS

Data interpretation lies at the core of the empirical procedure in Grounded Theory research. There are several approaches towards the way we analyse data (see e.g. Corbin & Strauss 2014; or Glaser 1992). Most of these ways “are inspired rather than informed by social theory” (Gläser & Laudel 2013, p.15).

I used the data analysis program MAXQUDA. I began, following Corbin and Strauss (2014), with “open coding”, meaning I developed my codes while reading the text, relaying in vivo

\(^{12}\) Verständnisgenerierende Kommunikationsstrategien. Translated by the author.

\(^{13}\) The number cannot be given exactly because the 15 Somali women showed up rather unexpectedly to this focus group and during the conversation more came and some left. While not all of them contributed to the conversation, they all were affected by the phenomenon in different ways. They either had lost children to it, their children were still on the way, or they had made it or were interested in going to Tahrib.
codes, which are words or sentences taken directly from the text (Gläser & Laudel 2013). Yet, to organise the codes looking at (im-)mobilities, I used the above mentioned five mobilities of the interconnected mobilities lens developed by Schapendonk (Schapendonk 2012)\(^\text{14}\). Instead of excluding theoretical concepts and knowledge, I integrated them partially into the coding system and combined them with newly developed codes from the text. This did not only facilitate the organisation of the many influences shaping the journey, it also made theoretical knowledge explicit in the coding process, underling that there is no analysis and in fact no research without prior assumptions (Gläser & Laudel 2013, p.15).

During my first step, I had a long list of codes that I combined or organised in the second step into groups and subgroups. As Musante and DeWalt (2010) suggest, I looked at commonalities, patterns, and contradictions to build categories. I then added them as memos to the codes, summarising the content of the assigned segments.

### 3.5 REFLECTIONS

This section begins with a discussion of the ethical challenges while doing research on undocumented travellers, who matter throughout the entire research process, to collect data over the writing process until the publishing of the study. Then, I will discuss my positionality in the study in order to highlight the complex ways this research was given its specific form through the interaction between the researcher and research participants.

#### 3.5.1 ETHICAL REFLECTIONS

In the humanities and social science, various ethical guidelines have been devolved, which slightly differ according to the discipline. They all ensure, however:

> that the interests of subjects in research are safeguarded, to value integrity, impartiality, and respect for persons and findings and to prevent harming the subjects in all respects (Düvell et al. 2008, p.5).

\(^{14}\) The corporeal mobility of third persons, the physical mobility of objects, imaginative travel of migrants, virtual travel of migrants, and the mobility of information through communications.
Generally, it is important to note that ethical considerations differ and always have to be redefined in the specific context of the research, as practices can harm “the subject even if the researcher seeks to respect the ethical code” (Düvell et al. 2008, p.7).

In the case of doing research on refugees or undocumented migrants, there are several ethical challenges. Here, I will only mention the most relevant challenges to my project: doing interrogative or intrusive research, the question about informed consent, and working with a mostly traumatised population.

To begin, interrogating people about their lives brings into question the legitimacy of “intruding the life and privacy of other individuals”. It brings into question the justification of making “unknown life stories or private narrations accessible to the public for the purposes of research findings” (Düvell et al. 2008, p.6). It surely always makes the careful handling of the data, sufficient anonymisation, and reflections on the purpose of a study necessary (Düvell et al. 2008).

It is indispensable to ensure “informed consent” before doing an interview, meaning a person agrees “freely to participate in an activity in which (s)he adequately understands both what is required of him/her and the ‘cost’ or risk to him/her” (Mulumba 2007, p.67). This was always done before the interview began by explaining my research and its goals, emphasising that it was “just a master thesis” and would not have a direct effect on the current living situation of my respondents. However, it is not clear if my description always “had sufficient meaning” (Mulumba 2007, p.67) for all my respondents because of language barriers and the lack of a higher education.

Avoiding “potential physical or psychological harm, discomfort, stress or reputational risk to human participants” (ESRC 2015, p.27) of a research project should always be a priority. The research with irregularised migrants very likely involves traumatised people.

I mean we are all traumatized, we have all our stories. (Yonas, SSI_08, 30/09/2015)

The danger of disturbing or re-traumatising them had to be considered at all points. During the interlocutions, I tried to detect topics that were specifically sensitive to a person and was careful when addressing them during the interview. Working with traumatised people makes it highly difficult to find informants. In this case, the difficulty was not to locate or even meet

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15 I never asked directly about traumatising issues such as rape or torture. If they came up during a conversation, I would listen but try not to scrutinise the subject.
participants, but rather that they often told me that they weren’t ready to talk about their experiences.

3.5.2 POSITIONALITY

To analyse our own perception of the realities, it is essential to detect in which way one—as a researcher and an individual—influences the fields.

The first step before conducting fieldwork, and also before engaging on any writing, is to consider our own positionality: the way in which the values and subjectivity of the researcher are part of the construction of knowledge. (Sánchez-Ayala 2012: 117)

It was significant while doing research in Uganda as a white, European woman. People had, for example, high expectations that you might be able to better their situation. They might emphasise their difficulties, as they often connect Europeans with donors. Although we underlined at each interview that we are not providing resettlement or any other form of support, our participants might still have projected the images of the ‘Europeans’ on us. Mulumba (Mulumba 2007) observes, while conducting a qualitative research with Sudanese refugees in North Uganda, that “refugees always hoped that research of this nature would produce results for the improvement of their situation“ (Mulumba 2007, p.70).

Considering this made me reflect more intensely on the diverse sentiments I was confronted with during my own research. Sometimes, people would simply request to tell their stories, to let the world know about “Eritrea’s silent war”. Yet, others were more critical, inquiring sceptically about my intentions and about concert results, referring to other researchers who have passed through their communities:

Will this interview only be an interview for asking questions (…) or can we see any results later? (…) Guys like you come in and out and we don't see any respond. (Focus Group _05, 14/09/2015: FG _05)

A girl in Germany asked me ironically if the best—meaning the worst—story would win. This brings us to the question of why we decide to do research on marginalised travellers. We seek to expose the wrong doing of a system, their mistreatment, their specific vulnerability, and, as

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16 People connect Europeans and white people coming to the camp often with resettlement and are therefore most likely careful about what they say. Even underlining that we are students did not always convince people. In an informal conversation with a restaurant owner, I learned about a story of Australian resettlement officers who claimed to be students and conducted interviews in the community. In general, this is certainly connected to the myths around the resettlement process and its lacking transparency in Nakivale Refugee Settlement (Jones 2013).
Andersson (2014) admits, we do it out of an “abiding fascination with the figure of the clandestine migrant” (Andersson, 2014, p. 10). Andersson (2014) later directed his research at this fascination and the way clandestine migration “constitutes a field of intervention and knowledge gathering”. A field in which I found myself. A field in which careers, a thesis, and increasingly more money is made.

The anthropologists Nicholas De Genova (2002) and Michel Agier (2011) reflect on the way we are part of the production of categories of, in the first case, undocumented migrants and, in the second case, encamped refugees and the system that “establishes, defines, controls and fixes the space of life of the categories” (Agier 2011, p.68). De Genova (2002, p.422) argues that researching ‘illegalised migrants’ and constructing them as “objects of study “ is a form of “epistemic violence”.

By constituting undocumented migrants (the people) as an epistemological and ethnographic “object” of study, social scientists, however unwittingly, become agents in an aspect of the everyday production of those migrants’ “illegality”. (Genova 2002, p.423)

Hence, the critical reflections of the respondents of this study further hint at an underlying logic of the power relation between the researcher and the research ‘subject’. To begin with, to conduct this research I travelled from Uganda to Germany, which was often aspired but always denied to my respondents in Uganda. This highlights the opposite positions we occupy in the global mobilities regime. Moreover, coming from a stable background surrounds me with a certain reality that allows me to show commitment to and interest in issues so far from it. This creates a hierarchical relation between me and the participants of this study. These relational hierarchies were noticed by my respondents and powerfully brought to my attention by Anwar, an elder from the Somalian Community in Nakivale Refugee Settlement:

And now, you have developed a heart of going into other communities and helping others to solve maybe problems or to understand people’s problems. I mean if you had problems in your home you wouldn’t have had (…) the compassion to look into other problems. Now, that you seem to have the compassion, and the generosity, and the kindness, and maybe the knowledge seeking of wanting to know about the plight of others. What do you think of me, who is older than you, who is a human being like you, who needs all those things and who is missing them? Leave alone attending to others, but can’t even attend to myself. Leave alone showing compassion and empathy to others, but can’t even show compassion and empathy to myself. Don’t you think it is painfully? (Anwar, 06/09/2015:SSI_02)

On a more theoretical level this means that the role we inscribe on the participants is one of a person who needs to be spoken for, who needs our commitment, who needs to be analysed and
theorised in his or her position in the system we seek to criticise. We tend to deprive them of their ability to demand their rights and criticise their position, in short we deny them their agency. By simply researching marginalised travellers, we construct them as victims. This occurs through the analogy of researching people and the positionality of the white female researcher coming from the Global North and looking at issues located preliminary in the Global South.

The analogy here is between the ideological victimization of a Freud and the positionality of the postcolonial intellectual as investigating subject. (Spivak 1994, p.92)

Gayatri C. Spivak (1994) notes in her reflections the question “can the subaltern speak?” and that “(o)ur efforts to give the subaltern a voice in history will be doubly open to the dangers”, of reproducing and recreating “the masculine-imperialist ideological formation” of the “monolithic ‘third-world women’”, which is in the present case the ‘third-world illegal migrant’.

Unfortunately, there is no simple solution to the dilemma of giving the “historically muted subject of the subaltern” a space and a speech and simulations avoiding an active role in the structures oppressing and creating them. To this day, I am haunted by the discussed dilemma, questioning this study’s purpose and my right to conduct research on these issues. I tried to cope with this through several angles.

I chose a methodological approach and methods, which placed the participant’s opinions and experience at the centre of the research and allowed them to control their narratives. They further requested intense reflections on my position in the fields and enabled me to question preconceived knowledge and ideas. By presenting the data, the people’s stories lead through the analysis highlighting that this research was a creative and co-operative process.

In conclusion, we should remember our responsibilities as researchers while investigating social realities and translating them into knowledge, as this production process is underpinned by power structures. May Ien Ang (1995) remarks that the results of academic productions enter a new discursive field, where they might play a political role or even shape the worlds of our respondents:

(T)he implicatedness and responsibility of the researcher/ writer as a producer of descriptions which, as soon as they enter the uneven, power-laden field of social discourse, play their political roles as particular ways of seeing and organizing an ever elusive reality. (Ang 1995, p.64)
4 CONTEXTUALISATION

This chapter provides a short and therefore rather superficial overview of the situations in the countries of origin in the Horn of Africa. It further contextualises the Nakivale Refugee Settlement, which is used as an example of why people leave refugee camps and communities all over East Africa. Finally, we will have a short look at the different routes out of the Horn of Africa with an emphasis on the examined North-East-African and central Mediterranean route.

In general, it is very difficult to get reliable and adequate statistical data.

Reliable statistics are only available once individuals have reached the Mediterranean. (North Africa Mixed Migration Task Force 2015, p.7)

Statistical recording is not only poor when it comes to the numbers on how many people travel these routes, but also of how many people leave the countries of origin in the Horn of Africa yearly. Some do register with the UNHCR, but many also live in diaspora communities and are not included in UNHCRs data. Moreover, there is no data on how many people have died ‘en-route’, as even the families do not always have confirmation of whether their relatives died. In recent years, more reliable data of how many people arrive via the Mediterranean has been gathered. Because of the increasing border controls, documentation is more compressive, comparing to the Sahara Desert. Yet, how many have actually perished at sea remains unclear.

**Figure_01: Percentages of Nationalities Arriving to Italy January 2015 – March 2016**

This graph includes the top nationalities of Mediterranean sea arrivals and the top 5 other nationalities of sea arrivals to Italy.
4.1 COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN IN THE HORN OF AFRICA: PLACES OF DEPARTURE

During colonialism in the Horn of Africa, new colonial territories were created, artificial boundaries were drawn, and new political identities were constructed that lead to the existence of ethnical hierarchies (cf. Asres 2008, p.1). Since the end of the official colonial rule (which doesn’t mean that the influence of foreign powers ended), the region has struggled to establish and reinvent new forms of political communities. Yet, often failing, the Horn of Africa has long been affected by poverty, political suppression, internal conflicts, inter-state war, external intervention, and, in the case of Somalia, the complete collapse of the state (Asres 2008).

Furthermore, the above described political instability, which has characterised the region for three decades, was partly inflicted by the cold war, where Western powers forged alliances with dictatorial regimes in the Horn of Africa. After the Cold War ended, the Horn of Africa became the battlefield of the global war on terrorism (cf. Abdi 2007, p.75).

4.1.1 ERITREA

After being involved in a long civil war and two wars against Somalia on the side of Ethiopia, Eritrea established its independence from Ethiopia in 1993. The outbreak of a war against Ethiopia followed in 1998. In 2001, the now ruling People’s Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ) seized power (Campbell 2009).

Individuals suspected of opposing the PFDJ were detained, private media was shut down, the constitution set aside, elections postponed, and an indefinite/extended military service was introduced for everyone between the ages of 18-50. Eritrea became a one-party state, using roadblocks and undertaking random searches (giffa) to round up youth for conscription and to arrest deserters. (RMMS & DRC 2014, p.17)

The combination of the repressive regime and the extremely difficult economic situation has made Eritrea one of the poorest countries in the world. As a result, Eritreans have been leaving their country since the 2000s in large numbers. If caught, when leaving the country and deserting the National Service, Eritreans face severe consequences that range from detainment to torture (Human Rights Watch World Report 2015a).

The exact number of people leaving the country every year is not known. RMMS and DRC (2014, p.19), however, estimated that about 60,000 leave Eritrea annually. Many of them stay
in the region; yet, Eritreans are the largest national group, between Somalis and Ethiopians, arriving in Italy via the Mediterranean between January 2015 and March 2016 (39,777) (UNHCR 2016a).

4.1.2 SOMALIA AND SOMALILAND

Somalia is, after Afghanistan and Syria, the third largest source country of refugees worldwide (RMMS & DRC 2014, p.29). In 1991, the Somalian government, led by Said Barre, who ruled the country since 1969, lost power and Somaliland declared its independence. This led to chaos and an eruption of violence. In 1991 and 1992, approximately three million people (almost half of Somalia’s population) left the country and sought refuge in neighbouring countries such as, Kenya, Ethiopia, Yemen, Tanzania, and Djibouti (cf. UNHCR 2008).

In 2006, former warlords supported by Ethiopia established the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in Baidoa. After that, a violent conflict broke between the TFG and the Islamic Courts Union (ICU), which ended eventually with the support of the Ethiopian National Defence Force (ENDF) at the end of 2006. The defeat of ICU, however, lead to further violence. On one hand, former ICU loyalists, mainly al Shabaab, tried to undermine the TFG. On the other hand, a power vacuum arose that turned Somalia into “a proxy battlefield of sorts”, where competing combatants, including Eritrea, the USA, Islamist militias, foreign jihadist, and Somali warlords “sought to achieve a diverse set of aims in the resulting chaos“ (Civins 2010, p.124).

The global war on terror, in combination with the renewed escalation of violence, had devastating consequences for the civilian population of Somalia. Thousands were displaced (UNHCR 2016b). In 2016, UNHCR estimated that about 4.9 m Somalis were displaced (including 1.1 m IDPs) (UNHCR SOMALIA 2016). Somalis are the third largest group, after Eritrea and Nigeria, arriving via the Mediterranean in Italy from January 2015 to March 2016 13.937 Eritreans arrived in Italy (UNHCR 2016a).

4.1.3 ETHIOPIA

In Ethiopia, different ethnically and regionally formed groups have been fighting for separation or more autonomy against the ruling Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front
(EPRDF) (Asres 2008). The regime has been criticised as repressing, arresting, and silencing its opposition (Human Rights Watch World Report 2015b).

The country is among the poorest and least developed countries in the world and suffers from “climate change, drought, population density, soil degradation, inflation and, reportedly, high taxation” (RMMS & DRC 2014, p.25). Larger numbers are leaving every year for neighbouring countries, especially to the Gulf States.

An ILO (2011) report from 2011 estimates, with reference to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, that about 75,000-100,000 Ethiopians make their way annually to Libya (Play Therapy Africa Ltd & ILO 2011).

4.2 NAKIVALE REFUGEE SETTLEMENT

Founded in the 1960s, the Nakivale Refugee Settlement is Uganda’s oldest and largest settlement. It is located in the southwest of the country and covers an area of 185 km². Currently, it hosts 92,787 refugees from various countries of the East-African Region, namely from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Burundi, Rwanda, Somalia, Eritrea, and Ethiopia (cf. Refugee Desk Officer Mbarara 2015). The management of the settlement is in the hands of the Office of the Prime Minister of Uganda (OPM) and the UNHCR. Organisations present in the settlement are the American Refugee Committee, Windle Trust Uganda, Nzamizi, Medical Teams International, Samaritan’s Purse, Finnish Refugee Council, Tutapona, the Uganda Red Cross Society and, recently, the IOM (cf. UNHCR Uganda n.d.).

4.3 ROUTES FROM THE HORN OF AFRICA

There are four main routes out of the Horn of Africa. Firstly, there is the route towards southern Africa, which is mainly travelled by Ethiopians, usually by way of crossing the border towards Kenya and then to Tanzania. Secondly, there is the route towards the Gulf States, which is mainly used by Ethiopians and Somalis who cross the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden from Djibouti, Puntland, or Somaliland to Yemen (Sahan Foundation & IGAD 2016, pp.10–11). Thirdly, a northern route exists through Egypt and then to Israel (this route has significantly fewer travellers now because of the extreme violence and the torture camps in Sinai). Finally, is the route via Sudan and Libya (Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime 2014, p.11). This last route can, however, be accessed from different directions, e.g., Somalia.
Kenya → Uganda → South Sudan → Sudan → Libya or Somalia/Eritrea → Ethiopia → Sudan → Libya. The most important migration hubs in the wider region are Addis Abeba and Khartoum (Sahan Foundation & IGAD 2016).

Figure_02: Map of Africa
Have you been to Maasai Mara, the national park in Kenya? It’s the wildebeest. Do you know the wildebeest? They migrate from Kenya to Tanzania. The animals called wildebeest, they are in the wonders of the world, the seven wonders of the world. So they migrate between Kenya and Tanzania and then they have to cross a big river and in that big river there are a lot of crocodiles. So, when they cross, you know, that it’s like half of them will be gone. So, it’s like that. Like now four of us we are trying to cross, we know that maybe two or one of us will not make it. (Amiir, 25/03/16: PCI_17)
5 PRESENTATION OF DATA

The term Tahrib originates from Arabic and means trafficking. In Somali, however, the word gained a different meaning, describing the high-risk journey towards the Global North.

Tahrib is an Arabic word. But when you ask Somalis, Tahrib has another use. You say the word Tahrib, you mean something difficult because it is very difficult. When you imagine the journey from Somalia to Europe it’s like, it’s very risky, very risky. (Amiir, 25/03/16: PCI_17)

In the Nakivale Refugee Settlement, Eritreans and Ethiopians were familiar with the term and used it along with expressions in their own languages17. Thus, the starting point of this research was the definition of the word Tahrib, given by my respondents in Uganda and later confirmed by those in Europe.

In my opinion, Tahrib is moving from one place to another place, while you are crossing a lot of dangerous and risky places, in order to get the better situation you are looking for [...](FG_06, 17/09/2015: FG_06)

So, Tahrib includes three dimensions: the first is mobility, or moving from one place to another; the second is the risk and danger you are encountering while moving; and the third is the ‘better situation’ or ‘better life’ toward which these trajectories are directed. Emerging from this definition, the research focuses on the mobility, which is understood as interconnected to other mobilities, social relations as well as immobilities, the risks, and the intended destination: the ‘better situation’. Finally, it asks how people assess and relate to these risks.

This chapter is organized into two parts. It begins with an overview of the journey, focusing on the encountered risks and the mobile and immobile influences. Next, follows the analysis of the notion of the ‘better life’ and the way the affected population assesses risks and explains risk taking.

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17 Expressions mentioned were Chadada in Amharic, meaning “shortcut” and describing “illegal travel” (Yonas, 30/09/15: SSI_08) and in Tigrinya Chededa meaning “kind of shortcut” (Meron, 10/10/15: PCI_11) or “like there is a material, so you cut it in two” (Almaz, 30/09/2015: SSI_08).
5.1 PART ONE – BECOMING MOBILE

This first part concentrates on the first three sub-questions posed in the introduction: What risks can be identified and what mobilities and immobilities shape the journeys north from the Horn of Africa?

To approach these topics, the narratives of three respondents\(^{18}\) will guide us through the journeys as they unfold. The narrations will be complemented by descriptions of other respondents; data coming from secondary sources, such as former studies and reports; and theoretical inputs.

There are three main reasons for choosing this specific form of presentation. Firstly, it can produce an overview of the course of the journeys and the very diverse experiences of marginalized travellers ‘en route’. Secondly, it enables us to examine the interconnected mobilities and immobilities in their working and present their interaction with the various risks the narrators have encountered on their trajectories. Thirdly, by letting the narrations guide through the journey, I try to underline the essential role of the participants in this research, thereby reducing the omnipresence of the researcher and highlighting that the respondents and the researcher are both part of the creation and the “story-telling process” (Portelli 2006).

Each chapter looks at one part of the journey, starting with the experiences of Nuura, Sumaya, and Kisey. The first starts from the places of origin up to Khartoum, where an excursion to the Nakivale Refugee Settlement will be done to take a closer look at refugees’ reasons and aspirations for engaging in these high-risk journeys. The second focuses on the events in the desert, and the journey from Khartoum to Bengasi. The third examines the situation in Libya while refugees are waiting for the boats to cross the Mediterranean. The fourth looks at movement in Europe. In a first conclusion, the findings will be summarized in categories.

\(^{18}\) I selected these three narrations out of the five I collected in Europe because of their completeness and their differences, in order to portray not only their similarities but also their diversity.
## 5.1.1 HEADING INTO THE ‘UNKNOWN’ – TOWARDS KHARTOUM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nuura</th>
<th>Sumaya</th>
<th>Kisey</th>
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<tr>
<td>Nuura is 22 years old, her journey starts in a town in the South of Somalia(^{19}). Financed by her relatives, she sets off towards Europe. Her first destination is Ethiopia, where she stays in a refugee camp for about 10 days. At the camp, she meets a Mukhalas (broker) who offers to organise her trip to the desert. In a Matatu (mini-bus), Nuura drives with a group of fellow travellers to the border of Sudan, where they stop in a town close to the border. They walk the whole night, crossing the border. There, they are picked up by a Toyota, a model with a cabin and an open deck, driving at night and resting during the days. Sumaya leaves Somalia in January 2013 to go towards Kenya, deserting her problems with her family, particularly her father. “I just wanted to leave Somalia.” <em>(Sumaya, 15/03/2016: PCI_16)</em> Her first stop is in Garissa, a county in the northeast of Kenya, bordering Somalia(^{20}), where she is imprisoned by the police. One month later, Kenyan Somalis pay a fee to free her. After two months in Nairobi she continues to Kampala, staying with the Somali community in Kisenyi(^{21}). After two weeks, Sumaya pays $100 to a Somali trucker, who takes her to South Sudan. In Yambio, a city located in the southwest of the country, Sumaya works about nine months as household help. When the civil war in South Sudan(^{22}) breaks out she is forced to flee to Aweil, a city close to the border of Sudan. In Aweil, rebels rob her group of everything, including the car. They hold them captive and threaten to rape the women if they don’t hand over their belongings. At some point, the fighting reaches the town and Sumaya’s group flees to Khartoum. Here she meets a man who offers to arrange the journey to Benghazi for $1,500 and she agrees. Kisey is 20 years old, and begins his journey in 2011 from his hometown 30km from Somalia’s capital, Mogadishu, to escape the recruitment of Al-Shabaab(^{23}). &quot;When I came to Ethiopia, first I just wanted to run away from the Al-Shabaab because they were trying to recruit me.&quot; <em>(Kisey, 25/03/16: PCI_17)</em> He travels to Ethiopia, where he works and sleeps in the same restaurant for a year. He continues to Sudan, working in Khartoum for seven months as a cleaner. There, he first picks up the idea of going to Europe when he hears of the people travelling north. “When I was in Ethiopia, my life was very hard. I was always looking for a better life. That’s how I came to Sudan. And then, after Sudan, I heard about these people who are going to Europe.” <em>(Kisey, 25/03/16: PCI_17)</em></td>
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\(^{19}\) The hometowns and current places of residence of my respondents are not mentioned by name or described in detail to protect their identity.

\(^{20}\) This province is hosting the world largest refugee camp, Daadap, inhabited by 327,320 registered Somali refugees (UNHCR 2016b).

\(^{21}\) Kisenyi is a ‘slum’ in Kampala and referred to as the ‘Mogadishu of Uganda’ with a large Somali population (approximately 18,000) (The East African 2014). The Interview I conducted in Kampala with the representatives of the Somali Community Association of Uganda, took place at their headquarters in Kisenyi.

\(^{22}\) In December 2013, a civil war erupted in South Sudan as President Salva Kiir blamed his ex-vice president, Riek Machar, of trying to overthrow him. Rebel groups took control over some parts of the country. Thousands were killed and even more had to flee (BBC 2016).

\(^{23}\) Al-Shabaab is the youth wing of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU), who took much of southern and central Somalia, including Mogadishu in 2006 when former warlords supported by Ethiopia established the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in Baidoa. The group is referred to and classified as a jihadist ‘militia or a terrorist group’(Jaji 2013) and is responsible for several terrorist attacks in and outside of Somalia.
5.1.1.1 THE FIRST STEPS

This first part of the four journeys already shows the diversity in time, routing, experience, velocity, and friction of the movements. It also can exemplify how the direction can change ‘en-route’ and travellers have to cope with hazards from the beginning of their journey, not only when reaching the desert or the sea.

Because of the lack of travel documents, Sumaya’s journey was first put on hold by the Kenyan police\textsuperscript{24} imprisoning her. Here, not only the mobility of state agents but also the absence of travel documents (mobility of objects) caused Sumaya’s forced immobility and stay in prison. With the help of residents (Kenyan Somalis) and the mobility of their money, Sumaya could continue her movement to Kampala and then to South Sudan.

The truck driver taking Sumaya to South Sudan can be categorized as a person benefiting from marginalized travellers (mobility of third persons). However, this category should be handled with care, as benefiting does not necessarily mean exploiting. There is a strong tendency, especially from the media and policy makers, to paint the image of the ‘evil smuggler’— as a homogenous group of people exploiting and cheating migrants. Nevertheless, there are many different actors facilitating this marginalized movement: some employed by a larger network, some abusing travellers, and some benefiting from them. Belloni (2016), who researches on forced migration from Eritrea, notes that:

The word ‘smuggler’ in the Eritrean context includes a wide variety of professionals with very different responsibilities: there are guides who accompany migrants across the borders on walk; drivers who take them by car; middlemen who put guides and drivers in contact with customers. (Belloni 2016)

Nuura’s journey, for example, was organized by a so-called Mukhalas, who was described as a middleman, broker, and smuggler at the same time. Her journey mainly depended on facilitators benefiting from her movement and the financial support of her relatives.

Looking closer at the mobility of money during these journeys, we can identify different ways of acquiring the financial means. 1. The support of friends or family members, left behind or in the diaspora. In this case, the money is taken along and/or transferred\textsuperscript{25} to the facilitator/
blackmailer. 2. Getting help from co-travellers whom they meet on the way or with whom they begin their journey. 3. Many work in countries they pass through. Therefore, while some have secured their financial means before engaging in the journey, others try to organize them stepwise and ‘en-route’.

Sumaya and Kisey both became immobile to find employment. However, neither of them, at that point, had the intention to move to Europe. Kisey, who was being exploited by his employers in Ethiopia and was looking for a ‘better situation’, moved from Addis Ababa to Khartoum, working there again. Sumaya was forced to leave South Sudan by the outbreak of the civil war26, which was accompanied by dangers such as being robbed, being held captive, and the threat of rape towards the women.

Only in Khartoum did they make the decision to travel to Europe, which was sparked by the mobility of information required ‘en-route’: in the case of Sumaya, by a resident offering her the trip to Bengasi for $1,500, and in Kisey’s case, by the stories of co-travellers.

Khartoum is an important transit point of the route towards the Libyan coast. Like Sumaya and Kisey, many organize from here their trip through the desert. Many also try to find employment in Khartoum and stay on for several months, if not years (cf. RMMS & DRC 2014; Hamood 2006).

Before Khartoum, refugee camps and migrant communities in East-African host countries have taken an especially important role as migration hubs, where movements are paused, middleman are contacted, and journeys are organised. Nuura stopped in an Ethiopian refugee camp for about two weeks. Here, she found the Mukhalas who offered her the trip to the desert. Sumaya lives in Kenya and Uganda with the Somali community. This phenomenon was described by several of my respondents in Uganda.

And some people come to Uganda in order to facilitate their trip to Libya; they are also a part of this Tahrib, because when you are in Somalia it is a long way to go. (Said, 07/09/2015: SSI_03)

In Uganda, this facilitation happens mostly in Kampala. The Nakivale Refugees Settlement, located off the main routes in the southwest of the country, was used for longer stays. This was the case with Warsan, a Somali I met in Germany who had been living for a year in Nakivale before going on Tahrib. He told me that he “didn’t like” the life at the camp and that the place

26 The outbreak of a conflict or a civil war is a reoccurring danger to many migrants and refugees in the countries of residents. Examples are the migrants passing through and residing in Libya during the conflict uprising in the aftermath of the Arabic Spring.
was “horrible” so he decided to move on (cf. Field Notes 09/02/2016). Warsan, Sumaya, and Kisey’s stories demonstrate that marginalised travellers do not always leave their countries of origin with the intention of moving to Europe. Many search for safety and opportunities in East-African countries, but get distressed by the situation in the country and a protection system denying them their basic rights and a perspective to establish a livelihood.

If I explain the reason why they are fleeing, the refugees. There are many things causing that. The one is, some East-African countries, such as Somalia, they didn't see a central government for the last 25 years. Ah, the second, the Somalis when they flee from their countries and they settle in Kenya, again, the brutality of Kenyan police, harassing, torturing (…) and the fact that UNHCR serves the refugees very very very poorly. (FG_14, 30/10/2015: FG_14)

Therefore, looking only at Somalia, Eritrea, or Ethiopia as countries where Tahrib is set in motion would overlook the fact that people in East Africa are leaving refugee communities and camps they have been living in for years, grown up in, or even were born into.

Somalis, where ever they are, those who are in Sudan, those who are in Ethiopia, those who are in Somalia, those who are in Uganda, Kenya, all of them try to go there. (Said, 07/0915: SSI_03)

In fact, looking only at Eritrea and Ethiopia oppressing its people or at the unstable situation in Somalia as causes for this specific movement towards Europe—Tahrib—would ignore a problem routed in a protection system and policies, failing to ensure the access to basic rights for refugees and failing to offer them alternative ways of moving socially, economically, and geographically. To be clear, the causes of the movement of thousands of refugees and IDPs inside and outside the Horn of Africa is certainly to be found in the countries of origin (see Chapter 4.1); yet, the decision to engage into these high-risk journeys is not only guided by the need to escape terrorist groups, the military service, or an oppressive regime.

The idea of crossing the Mediterranean to Europe often arose from disappointment at the conditions in neighbouring countries. (North Africa Mixed Migration Task Force 2015, p.5)

Looking at the case of the Nakivale Refugee Settlement can help to show, on the one hand, why people are leaving supposedly ‘safe’ refugee camps and host countries and, on the other hand, why people fleeing their countries in the Horn of Africa, such as Yaasir, Kisey, or Sumaya do not seek shelter in those countries but instead are taking high risks in order to move to the European Union.
5.1.1.2 EXCURSION: DESERTING THE NAKIVALE REFUGEE SETTLEMENT

Taking the example of the Nakivale Refugee Settlement shows us that there are many intersecting and determining factors. These are, on one side, more situated in the humanitarian system of the camps themselves, and are further tied to the global refugee regime and the lack of access to mobility for certain groups of people.

On the one side, we have the everyday life in the Nakivale Refugee Settlement, where the inhabitants have to cope with issues such as scarcity and bad quality of food and water, poor hygienic conditions, lack of security, and a malfunctioning health system. Additionally, they have to cope with an unsatisfactory educational system and few prospects of employment.

You go to high school that’s the end for refugees, no further studies. So, these are things that motivate people to leave the country. (FG_05, 14/09/2015: FG_05)

The topics described above are being connected to the humanitarian system and the humanitarian organisations operating in the settlement as the main service provider. In all narratives, there were massive critiques of their work, complaints about corruption and discrimination and, above all, the general poor treatment of refugees by the staff.

And even then, you go to the offices they take you as rubbish. Me, I asked myself, aren't we humans? Why are they treating us like that? (Ermias, 11/10/15: PCI_13)

Therefore, there is a general distrust of the humanitarian system in the settlement and, as the organisations cannot provide the needed services, people see themselves confirmed in the fact that possibilities in Uganda are extremely limited for refugees.

On the other side, people only have limited opportunities to leave their first country of refuge legally to seek improvement of their status quo in other countries. These legal opportunities are almost non-existent to the majority of them, when it comes to the movement into countries located in the Global North. In the case of Nakivale, the main offered regular option is the resettlement process facilitated by UNHCR. Affected are, thereby, not only those who have been rejected. My informants felt overlooked and discriminated against (because of their nationality or religion) and criticised the lack of transparency and the long duration of the

27 Which are, in the case for the Nakivale Refugee Settlement the UNHCR, the American Refugee Committee, Windle Trust Uganda, Nzamizi, Medical Teams International, Samaritan’s Purse, Finnish Refugee Council, Tutapona, Uganda Red Cross Society and, recently, the IOM.
resettlement processes. Crossing the desert and the Mediterranean Sea was described as their only access to mobility.

And people have stayed here for 8, 9 years, people feel Tahrib as *miriin*. He says, *miriin* means in my language a better solution (...)(Anwar, 06/09/2015: SSI_02)

Jones (2013) has observed this lack of communication and transparency of the UNHCR in the Nakivale Refugee Settlement. Depriving people of “the most basic information about their fate” creates a feeling of “hopelessness, abandonment and marginalisation” (Jones 2013, p.82). Browne (2006) examines, by looking at Kenya as a host country, how the international resettlement system functions. He explains how the selected refugees were not the most vulnerable, as proclaimed, but were often those who would be most likeably to integrate, find a job, or fill a certain gap in the labour market (cf. Browne 2006, p.11).

The critiques of my informants were directed at exactly this selection system, which was neither transparent nor clear in its working and duration to the affected population. An improvement of the situation in the camps and settlements and a faster-working and more transparent resettlement system were seen as main alternatives to Tahrib, which was described as the only (or the fastest) way to change your status quo. This affects not only the inhabitants of Nakivale Refugee Settlement, but also those still leaving their countries of origin.

Yea, no one could go [to Tahrib], because they will tell their friends or relatives, if you go to the camp, UN will care about you and will know your human rights. But if UN cannot, they tell their friends that if you go to UN you will just waste your time. (Ermias, 11/10/15: PCI_13)

Hence, Tahrib should be understood as being routed in the countries of origin and in the global distribution of mobilities, where certain groups are being denied the access to some routes and forms of mobility. As one of my respondents so aptly put it:

If you want to stop people from going to the gates of Europe, it’s Europe who has to open the gates of the camps. (FG_05, 14/09/2015: FG_05)
5.1.2 ‘HE WHO DOESN'T MISS’ – CROSSING THE SAHARA DESERT

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nuura</th>
<th>Sumaya</th>
<th>Kisey</th>
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<td>After 15 days, they reach the Magafe, the Somali name for a group of smugglers based in the Sahara desert, where she stays about one month. $2,000. This marks the first time she is asked for money on the journey. Nuura, so she tells me, had the money on her in cash. The next time she needs to pay someone, her relatives transfer the money to her. Travelling again in a Toyota, they continue to Benghazi and then take a truck to Tripolis.</td>
<td>Hiding during the day and travelling by night on open trucks, wearing glasses and gloves against the wind and sand, they reach the Magafe after three days. “Everything was the opposite of what they told us.” (Sumaya, 15/03/2016: PCI_16) The smugglers in the desert demand money from Sumaya’s travel group. They explain that they have already paid the man in Khartoum, yet the smugglers insist on a payment and hold them captive for about three months. The only time they get a piece of bread and a bottle of water is in the evenings. Sumaya tells me how one girl in their group dies in the desert because she has asthma and couldn’t breathe. Finally, they are able to phone the man in Khartoum who organised their journey and he is willing to pay $1,000 of $1,500 to the Magafe, so they can continue to Benghazi.</td>
<td>So Kisey decides to continue to Libya. Crossing the Sahara Desert, he is kidnapped by a group who demands money from him. As he cannot pay the fee, he stays with the group for a year until they sell him to a Libyan, who uses him as an unpaid domestic worker. “(...) another Libyan came to them and he said that since I cannot pay the money I should work for him as a slave.” (Kisey, 25/03/16: PCI_17) After working for him for a month, Kisey takes the chance to run away and joins a group of Somalis heading towards the coast.</td>
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5.1.2.1 MAGAFE

The Sahara is one of the main sites of violence during this journey and depicted as a place where people are stopped or held captive until they “meet what seems to be specific and organized demands for money or sexual services” (Gerard & Pickering 2013, p.347). There are different groups endangering the migrants trying to cross to Europe, and the situation has worsened since the Gaddafi regime in Libya collapsed (RMMS & DRC 2014). A central figure in the desert is, as the Somali respondents say in their language, the Magafe:

Magafe – he who doesn't miss. (FG_05, 14/09/2015: FG_05)

Magafe means “the one you cannot avoid; the one who never misses”. The network in which this group is operating is not limited to the desert. My respondents have reported of Mukhalas,

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28 In Uganda, the word was also known to some of my Eritrean and Ethiopian respondents. However, this might be because of the proximity of the communities in the refugee camp.
who work together with the Magafe and are not only situated in Juba or Khartoum but also in Kampala, Nairobi, Addis Ababa, and in refugee camps in East Africa. Informants in Kampala told me about the brokers in their city, and how people travel through a network that reaches into the desert:

They start here. There are brokers. You can go up to Sudan without a single paying. Without a single dollar, you go. These are brokers; they take you here. They give you food. They give accommodation. They give transportation. Another group in South Sudan, Juba. Another group in Khartoum. Another group then in the desert. When they reach the desert. There is someone the Somalis call Magafe. Nobody passes; that means, nobody crosses that guy. When you reach there, they will not give you a single shelter, a single food, a single bread. Seven days. When you have become a skeleton, they remove your shirt. They take picture, which they send to your parents. You have to send 3,000 USD, that includes all the brokers. (FG_14, 30/10/2015_FG_14)

These are highly organized networks sometimes reaching from a refugee camp in Ethiopia up to the coast of Libya. Amiir, a Somali I spoke to in Germany, had the same experience as Nuura: they arrived in Ethiopia, where they got in touch with a Mukhalas who arranged their travel. None of them had to pay the driver, guides, or brokers facilitating their trip to Sudan. Arriving in the desert, they finally had to pay a large sum (Nuura $2,000 and Amiir $3,000) to be able to move on. Thus, when reaching the Magafe, the movement came to a hold and could only be continued when the demands of the group were met. Nuura, who had the money with her, stayed for one month, Sumaya for three months, and Kisey for one year. Sumaya, who was tricked by her broker, could leave only after he transferred the money. Kisey, who had no money with him or relatives who could support him, was sold into slavery. Kisey’s lack of money and social relations made him specifically vulnerable to this network keeping him forcefully immobile.

So, it’s in the desert, even if you don’t want, you have to meet him. Because Sahara Desert is the biggest in the world, so you can’t survive there. So, even if you try to avoid him, when you are in need you have to either die or you have to go with him. (Amiir, 25/03/16: PCI_17)

Here, we can see how the specific geographical conditions of the Sahara Desert expose travellers to an extreme form of dependence to the Magafe and other groups operating in the area. This means once you are in the desert, deserting your guides would very likely lead to your death. This gives the smugglers the power to exercise extreme violence in order to get their demands fulfilled.

You can’t even know, Maria. It’s like, sometimes three people or four people are controlling a car of 100 people. Because you can’t do anything, whatever they do to you, if you kill them you
can’t go. You are in a desert. Some of us they run away and they die in the desert. (Amiir, 25/03/16: PCI_17)

Kisey’s experience shows that money is not the only currency of trade in the desert. Gerard and Pickering (2013, p.344) have interviewed Somali women in Malta about their “experiences of violence” during their migration process. They understand the situation in the desert as characterised by a power relation that is created out of the fact that “those perpetrating the violence also facilitate transport and navigation, the price of passage may be rape” (2013, p.346). Women are especially vulnerable to this power relation:

You are with women and these people they drink and they smoke marijuana they are on drugs. Then, they come they take the women. Every night, they choose a woman, they go and rape her. (Amiir, 25/03/16: PCI_17)

Sexual exploitation, which includes sexual transactions, harassment, sex trafficking, or rape, is a major issue during the whole journey. In twelve of my 18 interviews, informants have referred to the fact that women get raped while heading north²⁹. Sumaya was, for example, threatened with rape in South Sudan. Hamood (2006, p.32) documents the same fact for Libyan detention centres and prisons, where Hamood’s respondents were threatened with rape.

5.1.2.2 CAPTIVITY IN THE DESERT

As mentioned above, the Magafe is not the only mobile actor in the desert. Some travellers get caught multiple times during their crossing. The narratives indicate, further, that there are diverse, gainful strategies used in a field with many different cooperating and competing actors. My respondents identified such gainful strategies as: providing transport and navigation in exchange for money or sexual transfers; demanding ransoms from families, often torturing the relative they hold captive and/or threatening to sell his or her organs to enforce their demands; organ trafficking³⁰; and human trafficking.

²⁹ Sexual exploitation is not limited to women. That men are victims of sexual exploitation was, however, only mentioned by one of my (female) respondents: “Many people go through very hard times, where they get sexually abused. And man like women. So these are the things they don't talk about.” (Veronica, 29/04/16: SSI_18)

³⁰ Respondents told me about vans in the desert, fully equipped with medical supplies, including the medical staff needed to execute the removal of organs professionally. First reports on organ harvesting go back to the 1980s. Since then, trafficking organs has increased in scale, scope, and the level of sophistication of organisation. Since the 2000s, it raised the attention of policy makers and trafficking-combating organisations, as reports from the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling Section 2015) and the Directorate-General for External Policies Policy Department of the European Parliament (Bos 2015) indicate. The study commissioned by the European Parliament (Bos 2015) states that the increased combat against illegal transplantations in Europe caused a shift of the trafficking networks to countries and regions “where widespread corruption and political instability create a good breeding ground for trafficking” (Bos 2015, p.63), among them North Africa. As “new target populations” in this area, they identify specifically “illegal immigrants, inhabitants of refugee camps and those who are badly hit by the economic crisis” (Bos 2015, pp.63–64).
In Libya in the desert, the Rashida they are selling people. They are starting, I don't know, something like a factory. Selling kidneys, selling organs, or parts from your body. (...) they capture you and they check your health. If you are healthy, they take your parts, the kidney and everything, and they sell it to abroad. So, so many Eritreans. They kill you and they tie you in a bag, and they through you in the road. (Almaz, 30/09/2015: SSI_08)

Most of these strategies expose the travellers to a variety of extreme risks with consequences ranging from trauma or severe physical damage to death. Yaasir, a 22-year-old Somali now living in Germany, was captured by a group demanding ransom from his family. He was confronted with extreme physical violence as well as psychological stress, witnessing how travel companions were stoned to death.

(...) there were many, some of them they could not pay the money so they used to stone them to death. They used to kill them with stones if they couldn't pay. Some of them they died of hunger and dust. (Yaasir, 25/03/16: PCI_17)

Yaasir’s parents had to sell their house in order to pay the ransom. The stagnation of his journey was induced by the combination of the specific geographical environment and the mobility of people profiting from migrants. His movement was then set in motion again by the mobility of money, sent by his parents in Somalia. Yaasir’s case also points at the effect these marginalized mobilities have on the home communities. During an interview with a group of women in Uganda, I witnessed such a ransom call to a mother whose 16-year-old son was being held captive in the desert. This same mother explained before:

[...] my child is 16 years of age. Now he went to Tahrib two months ago (...) They called me and asked me if I have $2,500 and there is no way I can get that amount of money. Every time they call me they just let me listen to the crying of my baby in order what? To get at least somebody for him to send some amount of money. (FG_05, 14/09/2015: FG_05)

All my respondents in Uganda had lost relatives, friends, or acquaintances to Tahrib. For the most part, the psychological and financial effects of Tahrib on the families, friends, and communities are being ignored by media and policy makers, who are mostly concerned with the number of bodies washed up on European beaches. Yet, all my respondents in Uganda (and some in Europe) have expressed that the communities of origin in the Global South and the diaspora in the Global North are largely involved in the financing of these journeys.

31 Since 2006, the route through Sinai to Israel was increasingly used by refugees fleeing Eritrea. Since 2010, however, this route has become extremely dangerous because of individuals and groups capturing and torturing migrants. Traffickers began also to abduct migrants ‘en-route’ and from refugee camps in Sudan to sell them to these torturers, who beat them, burn them or hang them up on chains. They then call the families and demand ransom money and often let them listen to their relatives being tortured (Human Rights Watch 2014).
5.1.2.3 DANGERS IN THE DESERT

To sum up, we will look at the different dangers and hazards that are connected to this part of the journey. There is, first, the means of transport. People often travel at night on open trucks, squeezed together with many people: “each land-cruiser carries 50 persons” (FG_05, 14/09/2015: FG_05). RMMS reports that, in recent years, because of increasing controls by Sudanese and Libyan authorities, the drivers had to evade the official roads and switch to remote roads in poor conditions.

Second, there is the physical violence—e.g., rape, beatings—exercised by the traffickers and armed groups who hold the marginalized travellers captive. Third, there are many reports on the scarcity of food and water in the desert.

Sometimes even people die of hunger so there is no food. I remember sometimes people even fight among each other, because of water. There is not even a bottle of water; it’s almost a quarter and they add paraffin, they add paraffin. So that you need more water again. And you have to explain them. Sometimes even people fight each other because of food (Amiir, 25/03/16: PCI_17)

Finally, the psychological effects of having to witness scenes such as the death of a friend or the stoning of people and the complete loss of control over your situation pose a significant threat to a person’s psychological well-being.

The described dangers and threats to human lives occur in different combinations, forms, and intensities during this part of the journey. They are not unique to the crossing of the desert, yet their intensity, variety, and accumulation has only been described in the context of the crossing of the desert.
5.1.3 WAITING FOR PASSAGE – THE ‘FINAL JUMP’

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nuura</th>
<th>Sumaya</th>
<th>Kisey</th>
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<tr>
<td>In Tripolis, Nuura reaches one of the collecting points for migrants. One night, the smugglers take them to the shore. While driving out, the boat breaks down and they are discovered by two police officers. They shoot a man and imprison the rest of the group. After about a month, a Mouharreb (Arabic word for smuggler) buys her out of prison. She is now obliged to pay him $1,000, which includes another spot on a boat.</td>
<td>In Benghazi, Sumaya reaches a migration hub, learning that because of the weather, there are currently no boats crossing. They bargain with the smuggler until he agrees to charge them $800 instead of $1,000. Sumaya has some savings left with a friend in Kampala, who sends it to her. On the way to the port, one of their cars has an accident and four men die. The police arrive on site and imprison everyone present. While others are able to pay a fee to get out of prison, Sumaya, having no money left, stays for the next five months in prison until she is able to escape.</td>
<td>After telling the group of Somalis his story, they help him to finance the crossing of the Mediterranean. The boat Kisey enters is in a very bad condition and after three or four hours the engine breaks and drops into the water and their boat is blown back to the Libyan coast. They are spotted by the coast guard and try to run away. While many are arrested, Kisey manages to escape. Some time later he tries to cross again, this time reaching Italy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They are picked up once more during the night, they drive out but get arrested and Nuura finds herself in prison again: “It was a déjà vu.” (Nuura, 15/03/2016: PCI_16) She now has to pay $1,500 to the Mouharreb to buy her out. The third time she gets on a boat, she arrives in Europe, after being rescued by a private boat.</td>
<td>In Tripolis, in a part of town called Al Krimea, she rents a mattress at a construction site, where she lives for five months. They have to hide and run many times from the police. “That was a horrible time.” (Sumaya, 15/03/2016: PCI_16) One day, the police get a tip that ‘illegal’ people are living in the building and they have to abandon the construction side. Occasionally Libyans would offer them work, often for very little money or food, sometimes not paying them at all. Sumaya decides to return to Somalia and reaches out to the Somali embassy in Libya, but no one can help her. She is forced to remain in Tripolis. One day, Sumaya meets a Somali at a migration hub who offers her a space for free on the boat he will sail to Europe. (Drivers are usually allowed to take people along for free, as has been confirmed by Amiir, Yaasir and Kisey). In the night, they pump up the rubber dinghy and fix it on the sides with wooden planks to increase its stability. In Sumaya’s boat are about 130 people and there is no space to move. They leave with two boats—Sumaya’s soon leaks, and the other one starts to sink. On Sumaya’s boat, a fight breaks out over calling for help and risking to be caught by the Libyan coast guard. After about four days, the Italian coast guard rescues them. Sumaya believes no one from the second boat survived.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>32 Al Krimea, beside Abu Salim and Gotchall, is one of the areas in Tripolis where many Somalis, Ethiopians, and Eritreans live (cf. RMMS &amp; DRC 2014, p.51).</td>
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5.1.3.1 BEING IMMOBILE IN LIBYA

Arriving at the Libyan coast, marginalized travellers find themselves often on what my respondents used to call collecting points. These are usually places owned by the network organizing the crossing to Europe.

At the Libyan coast, the movement of all the respondents came to a hold. Entering the European Union is made extremely difficult—and dangerous—by factors such as the workings of a restrictive migration policy and the externalisation of border control, the challenging geographical conditions, or the patrolling of the Libyan police and coast guard. Sumaya and Kisey’s first try and Nuura’s first and second try to cross the Mediterranean failed.

Nuura and Sumaya were both arrested. Having the financial support of her family, the former was able to pay the smuggler to get her out of prison and again onto a boat. Sumaya, in contrast, spent her last savings on her first attempt to cross, so she couldn’t pay the fee to be released and stayed imprisoned for five months. Reports on the situation in Libyan detention centres document the hazards to which inmates are exposed, among them racist insults, regular beatings, and even torture (Hamood 2006; Human Rights Watch 2015; IRIN 2015).

The experiences of Nuura and Sumaya in prison show the way state agents are pausing marginalized movements, but are cooperating at the same time with the travelling facilitators. Smugglers or brokers collect their new and old solvent clients, often in the prisons and detention centres. Regarding the number of smuggled person in Libya, “there is no way smuggling can go on without the authorities turning a blind eye or being involved at some level” (RMMS & DRC 2014, p.47).

After her detention, Sumaya lived illegally in Libya for about a year. Looking at the notion of migrants who become involuntarily immobile in transit Schapendonk (2011) distinguishes between two different forms of migrants’ immobility:

In terms of migrants’ immobility we may distinguish ‘stranded migrants’ – migrants who experience immobility in a certain direction (notably in the direction of Europe) – from ‘stuck migrants’ – migrants who experience immobility in almost all directions as they cannot move onwards or backwards. (Schapendonk 2011, p.160)

Nuura, who stayed about nine months in Libya, can be seen as ‘stranded migrant’, being hindered in executing the ‘final jump’ to Europe. Sumaya, lacking the financial means to afford

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33 The participants always referred to the places they were help captive as prisons; however, it is possible that they were detention centres.
the crossing of the Mediterranean Sea and being denied the support to return to Somalia, could be defined as a ‘stuck migrant’, as she was not able to move in any direction.

Naturally, the speed of this process is also connected to the mobility of money. Yet, the cases of Sumaya and Kisey show that the latter is not the only factor enabling an on-movement. In both examples the mobilities of co-travellers are essential to Sumaya’s and Kisey’s journey. Both are only able to cross the Mediterranean Sea because of the support of fellow travellers. Kisey meets, after fleeing the Libyan who enslaved him, a group of Somalis who take him along to the coast and later pay for his passage to Europe.

He says, the Somalis who also travelled, he travelled with them, and they were the ones who were helping him (...) He told them about his problems. (Kisey, 25/03/16: PCI_17)

Sumaya’s passage to Europe was secured by a fellow traveller. A common practice of the smuggling networks is to train marginalized travellers, who are unable to afford the journey, as drivers for the boats towards Europe. This way, they are able to pay for their passage and they are sometimes allowed to take other travellers along for free.

Being immobile in Libya exposes marginalized travellers to a wide range of dangers. Hamood (2006) shows how, specifically, the constant threat of the police shapes the everyday life of people in illegality in Libya. Sumaya explains how they had to hide and run away many times, and she describes the situation in Libya as “horrible”. They often lacked proper accommodation, protection, and access to health care (Sumaya lived in a construction site). Yaasir, who was working during his time in Tripoli as cleaner in a “big house”, got sick with tuberculosis (TB):

No hospital, you just live. No hospital, no care. You didn't get antibiotics. Just, you live. Sometimes, while I was in Tripoli, sometimes, I don't eat, I wake up. Sometimes they lifted me. (Yaasir, 25/03/16: PCI_17)

Additionally, they are not only exposed to violence from the police and the smugglers but also from residents. RMMS reports about this “increasingly [expressing] xenophobic attitudes towards migrants” (RMMS & DRC 2014, p.51), which goes beyond racist insults and discrimination of Sub-Sharan Africans.

You know Libyans also hate the people who are coming to Europe. They beat you up every day. They beat people up with metals. (Amiir, 25/03/16: PCI_17)
While some of the dangers are connected to being immobile, others are connected to attempts to cross the Mediterranean Sea.

First of all, they tell you the boat that we have is a big boat, so it’s in a very good condition. After they take the money, they start making the boat in front of you. You see it’s an adventure (…) once you can’t refuse because he has a gun if you refuse he shoots you. So, you have just to go there. (Amiir, 25/03/16: PCI_17)

So, the Mediterranean poses a threat even before a person finds himself or herself on the water. On the way to the coast, or while boarding the vessel, people can get caught by the Libyan state agents. And neither the coast guard nor the smugglers hesitate to use fire guns, as has been reported by several of my respondents.

5.1.3.2 ‘THE DESERT IS WORSE THAN THE SEA – THE SEA IS EITHER OR’

Crossing with mostly defective, completely overloaded boats, which have not been constructed for such journeys, leads to the death of many trying to reach European shores. Only this year (01/01/2016 to 23/06/2016), 2,440 have been reported missing or dead on the central Mediterranean route. Being for days on the open water, fearing constantly for one’s own life and sometimes witnessing how people die around you, is an extremely traumatizing event.

There is a man he lives here in U. He is a Somali. If he tells you his story, you will not believe it because the boat which he was in it had a problem. So, many people died and he tells you that … you know there is the petrol and the boat it was with air not the wooden one but the other one. So they say it got punctured it was sinking. So, many people died; so many people. And then he said all night they were dying one at the time, he said when people started smelling the petrol they started hallucinating. And then he said, I will hold people together, but when a person smells petrol for a long time he starts killing himself. He is throwing himself in the water. So, by morning, then they saw a big boat. There were a lot of people dead. (Amiir, 25/03/16: PCI_17)

Arriving finally in Italy, many are extremely exhausted, sitting for days in the same position. Some are injured and many are dehydrated. Moreover, there are repeatedly reports of dead people in the boats arriving in Italy. Yaasir doesn’t remember his arrival in Italy, being unconscious because of the exhausting five-day-long crossing and his tuberculosis.

As a rule, the movement across the sea is, in the beginning, facilitated by the smugglers, yet they rarely are found on boats arriving in Italian waters. Later, private boats and state agents (mainly Frontex and the Italian coast) are central to the successful crossing, especially when boats are in distress.

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34 (Sumaya, 15/03/2016: PCI_16)
### 5.1.4 FINDING THE ‘BETTER LIFE’ – ON EUROPEAN SOIL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nuura</th>
<th>Sumaya</th>
<th>Kisey</th>
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<tr>
<td>In Italy, someone gives Nuura a ticket as a gift, so she takes a bus to continue her journey. When she learns that she is in Germany she decides to stay and ask for Asylum.</td>
<td>In July 2015, Sumaya arrives in Sicily and is brought to a reception centre. They give her 40€ and a train ticket to Germany. Arriving at a train station, she asks people for help who direct her to the next reception centre.</td>
<td>Kisey arrives in Napoli and from Italy he takes a train, not knowing the direction in which he is heading. In Germany, he is finally caught by the police and he asks for Asylum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I didn’t care where I would go.” (Nuura, 15/03/2016: PCI_16)</td>
<td>Sumaya tells me when she left Sudan, she didn’t know about the dangers and if she had known, she would never have gone.</td>
<td>“He was just inside the train and he didn’t even know he was in Germany.” (Kisey, 25/03/16: PCI_17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuura arrives in a German reception centre in May 2015. Until now, she has spent about $8,000 on her journey.</td>
<td>“Once you are in the desert, however, she continues, there is no way back. Sumaya ends her story by stating that at least here she doesn’t need to be afraid of a civil war.</td>
<td>In September 2014, he arrives at a German reception center, three years after leaving Somalia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I ask her if she knew about the risks, Nuura tells me she was aware of the dangers, but couldn’t really grasp the extent to which they would affect her.</td>
<td>She explains she would never do the journey again and would not recommended it to anyone.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I didn’t believe it.” (Nuura, 15/03/2016: PCI_16)</td>
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### 5.1.4.1 WHERE THE JOURNEYS ENDS

The arrival at their, to this point, final destination underlines the fact that marginalized travellers often no longer have fixed geographical goals, such as Berlin or my uncle in Stockholm (see also Schapendonk 2010). They may choose according to their knowledge, mostly required through the mobility of information, about current policy trends and the general situation in host countries. Sumaya and Nuura arrived in Germany and decided then to stay. Others, namely Kisey and Amiiir, get caught by state agents and have to ask for asylum and some, like Yaasir, run out of money:

I didn’t wanted to live in Germany but only (…) my money was finished, then I must live here. (Yaasir, 25/03/16: PCI_17)

Therefore, marginalized travellers usually do not direct their path towards a clear geographical goal but towards their idea of the ‘better life’ and where they believe to find it. This means they do not necessarily leave with the intention of going to Europe. They work in different places or
stay in refugee camps, looking for opportunities and a ‘way out’. If they do not find it, they move on.

I am aware that this country [Uganda] is not rich. I will try to get a work in order to support myself, to cover my means and support my family. I will stay, but if I fail to get a work, I don't know, I will try something else. (Caadil, 28/09/15: PIC_07)

The decision of going to Europe, if not made before, often grows out of a frustration with the situation in which they find themselves. Their goal is—in the beginning, maybe—to find a better situation, and then it turns into the wish to migrate to Europe, where people believe the ‘better life’ is a guarantee.

5.1.5 SUMMARY

This part began with the question of what risks can be identified and what mobilities and immobilities shape the journeys north from the Horn of Africa. With the help of the three narrations guiding us through the different phases of the journey, we could carve out risks, mobilities, and immobilities shaping each other as well, as the journey as it unfolds and influences routing, experience, velocity, and friction of the marginalized movements.

To tackle the complexity of this phenomenon I have organised the different mobilities, immobilities, and risks in groups, which are to be understood as open, fluid, and interconnected analytical categories.

5.1.5.1 INTERCONNECTED MOBILITIES

We will begin with the mobilities, which I have grouped with the help of Schapendonk’s (2012; 2010) “interconnected mobilities lens” into five categories.

1) The corporeal mobility of third persons
   a. Relatives or friends in the diaspora or at places of departure/origin
   b. State agents35, e.g., police, coast guard, migration officers, or border guards
   c. Co-travellers
   d. Residents, meaning people currently residing in a country—these can be natives or people belonging to the diaspora or refugee communities.

35 When I refer here to state agents, the description is based on what my respondents define as such. This does not mean they are always officially employed by a state, as, in countries such as Libya or Somalia, conditions would favour a closer examination of the group.
e. People who benefit from marginalized travellers, people offering specific services to travellers in exchange for money or are part of a large network paying them to offer such services, e.g., drivers, guides, middlemen, brokers, or smugglers—people of this group can also belong to the next group; yet, it is important to note that not every smuggler or broker necessarily exploits migrants.

f. People who exploit marginalized travellers, e.g., traffickers, some smugglers, brokers, or employers

The corporeal mobility of third persons plays a major role throughout the journey. These influences might be very visible, as in the case of smugglers—or easily overlooked but still essential to the continuance of the journey, as in the case of co-travellers. Furthermore, a person can belong to more than one of the six identified groups or can shift between them. For example, a bribed state agent is also a person benefiting from the marginalized travellers or a co-traveller can be, at the same time, the driver of a boat facilitating the movement of others.

2) The physical mobility of objects
   a. Money (or the lack of it) taken along or being transferred by relatives
   b. Travel documents (or the lack of them)

Money and travel documents are both essential to the experience of movement during the whole course of the journey. While the former was one of the most dominant issues, the latter was almost never mentioned directly. However, with both, I learned during my analysis, that the lack of certain mobility can also severely influence the shape, tempo, or friction of movement. Put in a simplified way, Tahrib gets its specific form only because of the lack of official travel documents, which forces people to travel illegalised routes.

3) The mobility of information through communications
   a. Information from friends and family members in the Global North (mainly via ICT)
   b. Information from co-travellers, residents, brokers, etc. ‘en-route’

The mobility of information takes an important place within the decision-making process, particularly considering that the flow of information about the life in Europe largely influences motivations and aspirations. Information can likewise be relevant during the journey where they might, for example, shape the chosen route or direction of a person’s movement.

4) Imaginative travel of migrants and the mobility of dreams and imaginations
   a. Imaginations of Europe
b. Imaginations of the ‘better life’
c. Imaginations and dreams about future achievements

The mobility of dreams and imagination is usually crucial before people become mobile, influencing aspirations and images of the ‘better life’. Though, they might still play a role later on, when routes are changed or decisions are made on temporal or indefinite destinations.

5) Virtual travel of migrants
   a. Media, movies, YouTube, journals, radio, etc.
   b. Pictures of friends living in Europe

Virtual travel was relevant in the creation of the images of Europe, but seemed to influence the journey later in comparison to a lesser extent.

5.1.5.2 INTERCONNECTED IMMOBILITIES

Cresswell (2010) has noted that the fixation of many mobilities researchers on movement tends to overlook physical immobility, moorings, or deadlocks. Schapendonk (2011, p.156) adds that focusing merely “on the ‘moving parts’” will not be adequate “to grasp the dynamics of migrant trajectories”. Incorporating these critical notions into the analysis of these marginalized movements, I have carved out the following immobilities. As a rule, we find them in a reciprocal and causal relationship to the above described mobilities.

1) Waiting Zones, places where people stay to rest, contact brokers or smugglers, and organize further steps of their journey, e.g., refugee camps, diaspora communities, migration hubs or places owned by the smugglers to gather travellers before the ‘jump’ to the next destination (e.g., waiting for boats to Europe)

2) Employment, if people work and therefore stay in a certain area can be to bring up the financial means for the journey or with an intention to settle down.

3) Involuntary Immobility (Carling 2002), if a person is not able to begin or continue his or her movement, for example because of a restrictive migration policy, the lack of financial resources or sufficient networks, or health issues. Here, we have to differentiate again between what Schapendonk (2011, p.160) calls ‘stranded migrants’ (experience of immobility in a certain direction) and ‘stuck migrants’ (experience of immobility in almost all directions).

4) Forced Immobility, if a person is made immobile by the use of force and is being held captive by a person/group/institution/state, e.g., traffickers demanding ransom, forced labour, detention, or prison. This does not necessarily mean physical
immobility, as a person can move within the trafficking network in the era or even be sold from one country to the other (e.g., Sudan to Libya).

As already noted above, these groups shouldn’t be understood as fixed categories, but rather as co-existent and fluid, were one from of (im)mobility can transform into the other. The categories, therefore, depend on the role given by the marginalized travellers. For instance, diaspora communities can shift from a waiting zone to a place of employment and/or permanent residence or to a form of involuntary immobility.

5.1.5.3 INTERCONNECTED RISKS

Above, we have discussed that risk is to be conceptualised in terms of threats as well as possibilities (Bastide 2015; Zinn 2008b; Hermández-Carretero & Carling 2012). In this part, however, we are concentrating more on the former understanding, looking at the actual dangers and hazards people encounter during their journeys. The risks encountered here have been organized into three groups, and they can occur at the same time or can stay in a causal relationship.

‘General’ Hazards: these hazards can occur on their own; yet, they are usually found in combination with other risks or are direct consequences of them. They can be induced by a third party or by a specific condition found ‘en-route’.

a. Scarcity of food and/or water.

b. Health issues and lacking access to healthcare. If people are taken ill during the journey, or get insured by an accident or by a third party, or have been sick before, but are more exposed to their medical issues because of a lack of access to healthcare and harsh living conditions.

c. Accidents. For example, with transport vehicles on land or sea, people travel often squeezed together by night on dirt roads and in open trucks, which makes accident more likely and more deathly. People can also fall out of the cars.

d. Living through psychologically and/or physically extreme situations can induce trauma or psychological harm to a person: for example, witnessing the death of other people, losing friends or family members on the way, or finding yourself in situations where you fear for your life. This category is usually connected to one or more of the discussed risks, but can also stand for itself, as in the given example of witnessing death.

e. Physical violence from a third party. For example, torture or beatings from locals, police, rebels, or smugglers
f. **Capture.** For example, if people are being held captive by rebels, militia groups, or traffickers

2) Hazards induced by a third party:
   a. **State agents and prison,** e.g., confrontations with state authorities (border guards, police) and/or being imprisoned, detained, or arrested by state agents
   b. **Sexual exploitation,** e.g., trading in sexual services, sex trafficking, sexual abuse, or rape of women and men
   c. **Organ harvesting,** exposure to organ trafficking
   d. **Labour exploitation,** if people are being exploited by their employers and either get paid nothing or not enough, are being badly treated in their workplace, or are being sold as slaves
   e. **Outbreak of a civil war or conflicts,** or a civil war or conflict occurring in one of the countries or regions the travellers pass through or stay in other than their region of origin.
   f. **Being persecuted by one’s own regime (mostly in the case of Eritreans):** people who are not allowed to leave their country, are being arrested or put into prison when crossing the border, or are being hunted by agents of their government other than their own.

3) Hazards induced by geographical conditions. This category refers to the fact that certain geographical conditions create specific risks, but also increase and accumulate others and are therefore described as risks standing on their own.
   a. **Mediterranean Sea,** everything that occurs on sea or the shore, e.g., shipwrecks, getting lost at sea, being captured by the coast guard, or dying of exhaustion
   b. **Sahara Desert,** everything that occurs in the desert, e.g., dying of thirst, hunger, heat, or illness, being captured, tortured, beaten, shot, or sold

While the described risks do not shift in their actual form, they can determine each other and occur at the same time. For example, a person can be captured in the desert, where he does not get enough food and water or gets sick, then he is exposed to physical violence to get ransom from the parents, and if the money does not arrive he is sold to organ traffickers. This example already shows the way mobilities (money, parents at home, traffickers), immobilities (being held captive), and risks interact with each other.
5.1.5.4 CONCLUSION

There is a larger interaction between certain mobilities and immobilities, depending on the stage of the journey a person finds him or herself in. In the example of the desert, the mobility of money is firstly undeniably tied to the corporeal mobility of people benefiting and/or exploiting marginalized travellers. Secondly, it is connected to the forced immobility that enables the smuggler to demand money from a person. Thirdly, the money might then again be linked to the family at home or in the diaspora who pay either the ransom or the fee so their relative can become mobile again. We generally can see how mobilities—the smuggler and money—slow movement down and facilitate it at the same time.

If we look now at the risks involved, we see that being physically mobile and immobile is likewise dangerous in the desert. The former can lead to accidents, as they travel mostly on remote and poorly constructed roads (also because of the stronger presence of state agents). Forced immobility can expose the traveller to extreme forms of violence induced by the person holding them captive.

The connection between immobility and the exposure to certain dangers is specifically obvious in the last part of the journey. Many travellers are ‘stuck’ or ‘stranded’ in towns near the Libyan coast. Being immobile means here being exposed to violence and racism from residents, labour exploitation, and the looming threat of state agents. This forces people both to be highly mobile, in case they get discovered, or on the other hand to stay in hiding as much as possible. If a person gets detained, the end of his forced mobility usually depends on the mobility of money and/or brokers buying them out of prison. However, as in the desert, becoming mobile again—meaning here the ‘final jump’ to Europe—exposes travellers to the dangers of the Mediterranean Sea.

If we compare our three examples with the help of the above discussed categories, we can see how the shortcomings of certain mobilities prioritise other mobilities and immobilities. For example, Sumaya and Kisey were, in comparison to Nuura, both lacking money and a network supporting them. This affected the velocity of the movement and the way they experienced it. First, they had to become immobile in order to work, so being immobile replaced here the support of the family sending money. At same time, other mobilities became more important, namely the corporeal mobility of co-travellers, who, in both cases, facilitated the final jump to Italy.

Furthermore, they were less dependent on smugglers, organising many of the steps on their own. Yet, if they were dependent on a facilitator, they were more exposed to their despotism,
as there was no family buying them out of captivity or detention. Respondents Nuura and Amiir, who travelled mostly in smuggling networks, experienced an extreme limitation in their motility when it comes to capacities, competencies, or choices despite a greater physical mobility. These are new forms of human mobility already discussed in the theoretical section (Sheller 2011, p.5).

By fine-tuning the analysis with the help of the categories I can not only the diversity of the different immobile and mobile externalities and risks, but also that they share an interconnected and sometimes causal relationship. This way, we are able to grasp the phenomenon in its complexity and approach the “tension between movement and non-movement“ (Schapendonk 2010, p.305) characteristic to irregularised journeys.
5.2 PART TWO – RISK-TAKING

This part looks at risk taking and the way it is explained and evaluated by future and former marginalized travellers and their communities. In the first step, we will look at the notion of the ‘better life’, motivating the people to engage and giving the journeys a direction. Secondly, we will show that people are informed about the risks they might encounter and the way they deal with this knowledge. Third is the analysis of the different explanatory strategies used by my respondents in assessing the risks and risk taking during their decision-making processes. Thereby, I hope to answer the question of how the ‘better life’ is conceptualized and how risk taking is assessed and explained by those affected by the journey north from the Horn of Africa.

5.2.1 THE ‘BETTER LIFE’

I mean they do come with wrong images. They think it is this paradise where you can do everything you want and where you become someone and have a job and be able to provide for your family in Eritrea or your brothers and sister who are fleeing. (Zahra, 29/04/16: SSI_18)

The ‘better life’ is not necessary tied to the Global North; yet, very often, people believe that reaching the Global North guarantees that you’ll find it. The forming of this idea is certainly connected to a more general concept of the Global North, which is created by a wide range of factors including historical and colonial legacies, developing aid, tourism, and media. There is no place to analyse these images in depth, so I will focus on what seems to be the most important influences for the participants of this research: the mobilities of information, especially those coming from the ones who have reached Europe; the mobilities of dreams and imagination; and virtual traveling.

5.2.1.1 THE ONE WHO MADE IT

Tahrib is a risky journey. I never got to try that journey, but a lot of my friends have tried. Some have died while they have tried to reach. Some have reached their aim. So, those who reached in their target now live a better life. (FG_05, 14/09/2015: FG_05)

Many stated as a fact that those now living in Europe live a better life. The stories passed on by marginalized travellers who reached the Global North impact strongly the imaginations of those who remain. The exchange and flow of the stories and images is, for the most part, facilitated by ICT’s. Respondents showed me their friends on Facebook who live in Europe. They told me
how ‘good their life’ is and how they compare their lives with those who live now in Europe. Caadil, a 28-year-old Somali who explicitly stated that he wouldn’t go to Tahrib, explains how images can influence your aspirations:

You know when a friend of yours tries to go and he reaches in America or in one country in Europe. Then he will take selfie pictures of what he is eating while he is in McDonalds or in KFC that motivates you and you compare what you are eating here, maize, and what he is eating there. So, you decide to even try your chance if you survive or not, you may never know whether you will die or not. But everyone keeps hoping that he reaches the West. But friends who reached there are the ones who play a key role in motivating those who remain here in order to try their luck. (Caadil, 28/09/15: PIC_07)

These stories and images are further replenished by the media. People have increasingly more access to the Internet and, because of new communications technology information, images travel faster over longer distances. This is what Juntunen et.al. (2013) refers to when he says that people are “more aware of their relative position within the increasingly interconnected and networked global reality” and how pictures, movies, and stories, transmitted via social media and the Internet lead to the fact that people are “capable of imagining their lives elsewhere” (Juntunen et al. 2013, p.13).

Apart from these more abstract images, they hear about welfare money, employment, education, and housing in Europe. They learn how their friends or neighbours are now able to support their relatives. Especially my younger respondents expressed how they wish to contribute to the family’s income. It seems to those who remain that Tahrib, as risky as it might be, leads in the end to a sustainable livelihood for yourself and your family.

Going out to lucrative places, places that can offer chances in improvement of life or economics and livelihood (...) but also to change the lives of those they have left behind in Nakivale (...) they would also like to see their families come up, or crop up from that standard they left to a better standard (...) the elevation of poverty level to a sustainable livelihood system seems to be creeping into their hands that if I go and, by the grace of god, I make it, then I will be able to assist, create a better life not for him alone but for the people he left behind (...) (Maahir, 05/09/15: SSI_01)

The image created is one that promises the transformation from “a negative to a positive” situation, a “change of life” (Maahir, 05/09/15: SSI_01). Many of my younger respondents imagined Europe as a place where they would be given the chance to fulfil their dreams of developing their skills, education, employment, or vocational training.

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36 In the Nakivale Refugee Settlement, the inhabitants who were living longer than five years in the settlement received as their monthly food ration 6kl of maize (plus oil and beans) from the WFP. This 6kl of maize was recurrently used in my conversations as a metaphor to describe the precarious situation of many people in the settlement.
I like to be someone in this world but without education I can't (...) [in Europe] I would get a ground study; I would be someone (...). So, I can be someone to do something. (Meron, 10/10/15: PCI_11)

Therefore, the access to education and employment is not only seen as important for the improvement of the economic status but also essential to personal growth.

Even just to know that you have the possibility to do it (...) So, even if they can’t really make it, at least they know that they have the possibility to develop themselves. So, that’s the key. (Zahra, 29/04/16: SSI_18)

It is about education and employment, but above all it is about being given the right to education and the possibility to pursue your dreams. Hence, taking the risk of Tahrib seems to enable them to leave behind a situation that offers them no future and no prospects, and, therefore, denies them the chance to grow and develop during their lifetime. Thus, Tahrib is a way ‘to be someone in this world’. Still, Tahrib is also an extremely dangerous phenomenon that can have consequences leading to trauma, mutilation, or even death. Therefore, the question which must be discussed is: how do people explain their choice of going to Tahrib despite the risks, and how do they assess these risks?

5.2.2 WITH OPEN EYES

We have learned about the extreme dangers marginalized travellers endure during their journeys. What is more, there is a sizeable communication between those who have experienced these risks and those who remain in the places of origin, as the flow of information and images about the life in Europe exemplifies. Policy makers often suggest that people are uninformed about the hazards awaiting them on their journey and that campaigns should be launched to educate their citizens (as has happened in the case of Eritrea). Hermández-Carretero and Carling (2012) show that, in the case of high-risk migration from Senegal, people are usually well aware of the risks. Bastide (2015, p.234) argues for the case of Indonesian migrants that decisions to migrate are taken despite knowledge of the hazardous routes. My respondents in Uganda all had detailed information about the dangers of the journey, and were aware of the likeability of dying on the way. This was also confirmed by Zahra, an Eritrean activist from Switzerland, working amongst others with unaccompanied minors:
I mean I think everybody knows that the migration route is extremely dangerous and extremely violent, even if you are an adult. So, it is very public and it’s not a secret, even inside Eritrea, that the migration route is very dangerous. (...) The regime has already made information campaigns on TV about the different troubles that you can find when you go this route (...). And Even if you are young, an unaccompanied minor, you know exactly what you are doing when you cross the border and decide to go to Europe. (Zahra, 29/04/16: SSI_18)

Three of my five respondents from Europe who experienced the journey explicitly said they had heard about the dangers and only one, Sumaya, told me she wasn’t aware of “how it would be” (Sumaya, 15/03/2016: PCI_16). Thus, the mobility of information inspiring their dreams to live in Europe also informs them, if only superficially, of what happens during the process of moving. The communities in the places of origin are further, as we have discussed, often involved in the migration process by meeting ransom demands. Many showed me or referred to pictures on Facebook, amateur videos on YouTube, or news reports about the events in the desert or the Mediterranean. The many people reported lost or dead also serve as silent reminders of the dangers awaiting travellers on the way.

When I was that age [around 18] I was a good footballer. Most of my football teammates went out and tried to go. 90% died in the desert. It really gives me grief if I remember them. I can't even express; it’s a tragedy. Sometimes, I myself consider not to go there because of those people who lost their life there. But when you suffer a lot, you may think that even you can break your rules and you can go. (Caadil, 28/09/15: PIC_07)

Therefore, lacking enlightenment cannot serve as an explanation of why people engage into these high-risk movements. In my conversations, people used different arguments explaining their decisions and perceptions of risk. Interestingly, they did not differ much between those not yet on the way and those looking back on it.
5.2.3 THE DESTINATION IS THE REWARD

They tell you when you enter the sea you see only darkness, fear, you feel shocked by the sea. That’s what they narrate for us, but up to now we have not seen it physically. (Ermias, 11/10/2015: PCI_13)

Amiir: And believe me, if all the people who are here [Europe] you ask them about the process. They would never do it again. Never. They would never do it again. If you see someone who will say that they want to come to Europe now, it’s because they don't know about the process but once you know you can never do it again. Never. Because it is too risky and too dangerous.

Maria: So, did you know before how risky it is? Or how was it for you?

Amiir: Sometimes, you know, as humans the way we are now. Like here for example if someone tells you something else you don’t believe, because you have not been through it. You just see it like a story. (Amiir PCI_17, 25/03/16)

Ermias and Amiir point here at the difference between knowing and experiencing or, as Ermias explains, knowing it ‘physically’. When I asked Nuura why she started her journey despite knowledge of the risks, she told me that she just didn’t believe it. This means people struggle to understand the extent of the dangers and their possible consequences. Considering that the majority of the marginalised travellers are between 14 and 25, this phenomenon might be rather familiar to many of us as humans. It is acting against the warning and advice, and dismissing the experience of others as something that might happen, but not to us. In the same way, people engaging into these journeys believe themselves to be the ones who will survive; as a rule, they do not want to die.

When I survive when I die its 50/50. So, if they know that they are going to die in the desert, in the sea no one would be there. But everyone is thinking the positive way: him as a fact will get that better life. But most of them fail. (FG_04, 12/09/2015: FG_04)

Finally, the focus is not put on the Sahara or the Mediterranean but on the destination, the ‘better life’, that moment where you call and say “me I have reached” (Ermias, 11/10/15: PCI_13). It is about the power of imaginations enabling them to travel in their minds to the ‘better life’. After all, ‘the way’ might not be ‘the goal’ nor ‘the journey’ the ‘reward’.
5.2.4 ‘THIS TIME IS OUR GOLDEN TIME’

In their reflections, my informants described Tahrib as a necessity to get a chance in life and an option with two outcomes:

You either die or you pass. Also, me now, if I get the money it’s absolute. It’s a must. I will go. Because I am seeing people leaving and I also want to help my parents. (Ermias, 11/10/2015: PCI_13)

Risking your life, therefore, means, at the same time, realizing your chance of a better life, or if we think back at the concept of the better life taking your chance to develop your personality. This was especially relevant in the context of the young generation, who felt that while young and strong they would be more likely to survive. More importantly, they feared to waste their “golden times” and miss their opportunity of realizing their dreams.

But when you are young, ah youth time is too short, you have to make your dreams come true. So, in 2016 at least I go, but I don't know where I will hit. (Caadil, 28/09/15: PIC_07)

These explanation strategies remain more on the surface and seem to be applicable to many situations where people take risks. The next set of arguments, assessing the interlocutors intended or past migration projects, are more linked to the specific conditions they find themselves in as well as to a moral dimension and their religious beliefs.

5.2.5 HOW TO DIE

Above, we have discussed the case of Nakivale, where a combination of several factors creates a feeling of hopelessness. In this situation, people feel that taking the risk, even if it means dying, is still the better choice than continuing their lives in Uganda. My respondents in Europe, reflecting on their decision-making process, shared this opinion. By the time, the lack of security, freedom, and prospects were seen as equal to the horrors of the desert and the Mediterranean Sea. Hence, when comparing the dangers of the journeys with their status quo

37 (FG_06, 17/09/2015: FG_04)
in Uganda, my respondents identify the possible suffering on the routes north as equal to the anguish they were experiencing in their everyday lives.

Now, my son starts talking about these things. But me, I advise him always: I want you to live in life I don't want you to die. He said, it's the same thing, living in Nakivale is like dying. (Rahel, 01/10/15: SSI_09)

However, the difference for my respondents between staying and suffering or moving and suffering was that by becoming mobile, you take an active role in the process of changing your status quo. In short, you do something. What is more, this process has two predictable outcomes, both are indicating the end of your hardships. Either you die and “if you die at least the suffering stops” (Tsion, 10/10/15: PCI_10) or you arrive and in Europe, so they believe, you are able to change your life.

It was one quote that I read in an article a young man said 'when you live in Eritrea you are dead but the moment you cross the border you have one chance to die or one chance to live. 50% chances to die or 50% to make it to live and to live for real. I think he said that this 50% chance that you have to live is totally worth the try because at least you are not dead as you are when you are in Eritrea. (Zahra, 29/04/16: SSI_18)

Thus, Tahrib carries not only the possibility of realizing your dreams of the ‘better life’ and becoming an agent in the process of designing it; Tahrib also gives you the power to decide the way you die.

So you know, even if you die during that Tahrib you are trying to accomplish something, a better life, instead of just dying like an animal in the forest. (...) Anyway, I am going to die so … Am I courageous ... so it’s like you know you will die but let me die trying to do something, trying to be someone else. (Amiir, 25/03/16: PCI_17)

Amiir refers here to the immovable fact that every human being has to die one day. Therefore, if you accept death as a certainty, choosing to stay put will not change the fact that you will die. Tahrib, on the other hand, enables you to die as an actor, as a fighter who tried to get a better life, often not only for him/herself but also for his or her family.

Thus, it seems that Tahrib is in the first place about changing your life to ‘the better one’ and in the second about taking control over how to die. Controlling the modality for your death means not that humans have the power over the question of when to die or how. Most of my respondents were religious and had the opinion that power remained firmly in the hands of their god. These religious or fate-related arguments will be analysed in the next chapter.
5.2.6 ‘IF GOD SAYS SO’

As discussed above (see Chapter 2.3.3), religious beliefs affect the travellers’ assessment of the possible negative outcomes and the way they justify risk taking in the context of migration (Bastide 2015; Hermández-Carretero & Carling 2012). We have discussed that death is seen as an integral part of life; yet, it cannot be altered by humans, but rather lies in God’s hands. Hermández-Carretero and Carling (2012) argue that “the very notion of risk is challenged by faith in divine destiny: it is up to God what the outcome of the journey will be” (Hermández-Carretero & Carling 2012, p.415). This means that, if you decide against the risks in order to survive, you might die the next day if it is what God planned for you.

When you advise them, why do you want to go there to die? They say: if God says so, I will die even here [...] so let me try my chance. (Rahel, 01/10/15: SSI_09)

Moreover, the respondents—mainly those planning to go north—describe this high-risk movement as part of the fate that God has planned for them:

But ah it’s what God has planned. Even if you plan not to go to this kind of Tahrib, but God wanted you to go, you will go there, you will die. No one can protect you or avoid what God has planned for you. But every time we know that it was a tragedy. (Caadil, 28/09/15: PIC_07)

Bastide (2015) shows the same in the case of Indonesian migrants, who “surrender their fate” to God by engaging in this risky journeys, meaning the migration process “is perceived as a display of faith” (Bastide 2015, p.234). In comparison, some community leaders have criticised the risk taking as a form of suicide, strictly condemned by their religion. The following quotation was given by a religious leader and teacher who explained how he tries to convince prospective travellers that Tahrib breaks their religious rules:

If you die in the Mediterranean. Suicide. If you die in the ocean. You make suicide. Allah will beat you again. You have to stop! Don't go! Like the people who explode themselves, like Al-Shabaab or Al-Qaeda. They are the same; if you die in the desert or Mediterranean or you explode yourself. You are the same. If you drown or hang yourself, the same, the same. (FG_14, 30/10/2015)

Thinking back, that some see Tahrib as a possibility to change their status quo or as a way to end their suffering, these critics might not be without foundation. Yet, people have also repeatedly stated that no one wants to die and if death was a certainty that no one would engage
into these high-risk movements. This controversy mirrors the complex position Tahrib has taken in the societies affected by it. It also reflects on the highly complex nature of risk taking, which “is shaped by context-specific interaction of disparate factors” (Hermández-Carretero & Carling 2012, p.407) ranging from economic issues to the questions of agency, religion, and fate.

**5.2.7 CONCLUSION: BECOMING (MORE) AGENT AGAIN**

The ‘better life’ is not only seen as an improvement of one’s own economic status and that of your family; it is also conceptualised as a life that provides you with the opportunities and perspectives to develop yourself on a professional and personal level. The image and ideas of the ‘better life’ are shaped by the mobility of information and dreams, as well as the flow of media.

Before, we referred to a tension between mobilities and immobilities characteristic to these marginalised movements—this tension already begins before the journey starts. On the one hand, the mobilities of information and dreams make people aspire to the ‘better life’ and give them the possibility to imagine their lives elsewhere. These imaginations and aspirations meet, on the other hand, what Carling (2002) calls involuntary immobility, meaning that people are denied access to mobility by factors such as restrictive migration policies; and, in the case of Nakivale and refugee camps in general, the resettlement system; and a lack of financial resources, sufficient networks, or health issues. This involuntary immobility is expressed in a feeling of being stuck that made my respondents feel that Tahrib is the solution to escape the hopelessness and the lack of perspectives characteristic to their status quo.

It's just stuck in the brain. You stay, you stay, you stay. (Ermias, 11/10/15: PCI_13)

They see the hazards of the journey as equal to their current suffering and, as every person has to die at some point, they would rather die on the battlefield than die “like an animal in the forest”. The decision of how you die and when lies in God’s hands; however, people can still become actors in the process of designing their lives and changing the lives of their families. Tahrib is then depicted as a way to take back your agency, to again decide over the course of your life, “to be someone to do something”, “to be a normal person”, or to be “[considered] as human being” again. This means if you do not have the possibility of changing your life while staying put, you take the risk of becoming mobile. Engaging with the risks will overcome these
hardships in one or the other way, you die and the suffering ends or you live the ‘better life’. Risk taking is then recognised in terms of “dangers and in the possibilities” (Bastide 2015; Hermández-Carretero & Carling 2012) to alter your future; the outcomes are either favourable or unfavourable.
6 DISCUSSION

After having presented my findings, this chapter now tries to answer the research question posed at the beginning of this research: What mobile and immobile externalities and what risks shape the journey north from the horn of Africa towards the ‘better life’, and how do those (from the Horn of Africa) affected by these movements assess the risk connected to the journeys?

To approach the question, this project further asked four sub-questions, which were already touched upon in the presentation of the data: What risks can be identified? What mobilities and immobilities shape the journeys north from the Horn of Africa? How is the ‘better life’ conceptualised? How is risk taking assessed and explained by those affected by the journey north from the Horn of Africa?

These questions, and what the presented findings disclose about the journeys in general, will be discussed with help of the above discussed theoretical concepts (see Chapter 2).

6.1 APPROACHING TAHRIB

When discussing the concept of the “fragmented journey” (Collyer & de Haas 2012) in the theoretical part (see Chapter 2.3.2), we have already stated that journeys do not necessarily have clear spatial goals and are not “a single move from here to there” (Schapendonk 2012, p.119). They are rather phenomena evolving “stepwise, multi-local, and process-like (…) ‘en-route’ (Schapendonk 2012, p.119). While this project approached the journeys with this processual understanding, it looked at it through Schapendonk’s “interconnected mobilities lens”, thereby understanding mobilities as connected to immobilities, including by that the role of stagnation, moorings, and immobilizations into the analysis of the journeys.

Mobilities and immobilities should not, however, be seen as separate or opposed. First, following the new mobilities paradigm, this study favoured an understanding of place as woven into networks of connections, going beyond fixed “imagery of terrains” (Sheller & Urry 2006, p.209). Second, we perceived human (im)mobility as influenced by other forms of mobility and turned away from the idea that human mobility occurs only in its physical form. This reciprocal relationship creates new forms of human mobility, where a person can be simultaneously mobile and immobile (cf. Sheller 2011, p.5). To give a concrete example, I asked Amiir if there was any possibility to buy life vests before entering the boat. He tells me,
You don't have the freedom, I wish you knew, because ... the way it is you have no say. It’s like you are nothing. (Amiir, 25/03/16: PCI_17)

Meaning you can be at the same time physically extremely mobile, covering a distance of over 1000 km, and immobile in your agency, your freedom of movement as well as in your capacities, competencies, or choices.

Therefore, approaching the trajectories with an interconnected (im)mobilities lens made it possible to carve out a wide range of mobile and immobile externalities shaping the journey, as well as the decision-making process and the concept of the ‘better life’. By looking simultaneously at dangers and hazards occurring ‘en-route’, the way these mobile and immobile externalities stay in reciprocal relationship with these risks could be emphasised. The risks, mobilities, and immobilities shaping the journeys have been listed and explained in their interrelatedness in detail in the summary of the first part of the data collection (see Chapter 5.1.5). They can help us to pose several more general observations about the examined marginalised movements, their risks, and the way the affected population assesses these risks.

6.2 OBSERVATIONS ON TAHRIB

To begin with, many do not leave their countries of origin with the intention of moving to Europe. These decisions are often made ‘en-route’. The idea can be sparked by other mobilities, risks, or immobilities. Sumaya, for example, had to flee the civil war in South Sudan and then met a local offering her the trip. Kisey worked in Ethiopia and Sudan looking to improve his status quo. Only in Khartoum was he inspired by the mobility of co-travellers and decided on Europe as the destination. The latter is again not pinpointed to a concrete geographical goal, but rather to the concept of the ‘better life’ that Kisey was searching for since leaving Somalia to avoid the recruitment of Al-Shabaab.

The movement of marginalised travellers does not always follow a predetermined plan or routes with a fixed geographical goal. Rather it is splintered, can change its direction and purpose, and can pause or come to a hold for a long or indefinite period of time, thereby making a country of transit into a country of arrival and then again to a country of departure. Sumaya was holed up in Kenya by the police, paused her movement in Nairobi and Kampala, and settled then in South Sudan only to be forced to move on by the outbreak of the civil war. She was being held captive again in the desert and then found herself ‘stuck’ in Libya before she was, over three years after she left Somalia, able to make the final jump to Europe.
Nuura’s journey was, from the beginning, directed towards Europe; yet, she did not head towards a concrete geographical goal, but more to the idea of the ‘better life’. The ‘better life’ is not necessarily tied to Europe; yet, very often, people believe that reaching the Global North guarantees them to find it. The forming of this belief is connected to the mobilities of information, especially those coming from the ones who have arrived in Europe, and the mobilities of dreams, imagination, and virtual travelling.

The ‘better life’, aspired by migrants heading towards Europe, is often portrayed, by media and policy makers, as solely connected to either safety and/or the improvement of the economic status. These certainly play an important role; yet, the concept is, to a larger extent, about being given the right to education or employment and the possibility to pursue your dreams. These are seen as essential to personal growth and development, and are, therefore, especially relevant for younger people.

Furthermore, if we take into consideration that many choose to engage in this high-risk journey towards Europe only after they have left their countries of origin, we see that the aspiration for the ‘better life’ is routed in a frustration with the present situation.

No evidence was found to support the idea that large numbers of people are leaving their countries of origin with the intention of reaching Europe. The idea of crossing the Mediterranean to Europe often arose from disappointment at the conditions in neighbouring countries. (North Africa Mixed Migration Task Force 2015, p.5) This disappointment is often connected to what (Carling 2002; & 2014) calls ‘involuntary immobility’, which has been listed among the immobilities influencing Tahrib. Because of greater connectedness, people are more aware of their position in the global mobilities regime and are able to imagine their lives elsewhere (imaginative, virtual travel and mobilities of information) (Juntunen et al. 2013). This imagination is then confronted with a restrictive immigration and border policy, excluding a large part of the world’s population while enabling others to move freely in “securitized corridors, cocoons and bubbles” (Sheller 2011, p.3). This feeling of being trapped was often described by my Ugandan respondent as opposite to the ‘better life’, in the sense of chances to access education and the ability for personal development. People felt deprived of the chance to work hard to have a chance to elevate their (and their family’s) economic and social status.

These problematics were led back to the general economic and security situation of countries in the region; to a (refugee) protection system failing to ensure the access to basic rights for refugees; and a global mobilities regime failing to offer them alternative ways of moving
socially, economically, and geographically. Out of this disappointment and hopelessness grows the aspiration to move on to a ‘better life’. Hence, looking only at causes in countries of origin for these marginalised movements towards Europe would overlook a large population involved, and the question of why people still fleeing their countries of origin do not seek refuge in neighbouring countries.

Travellers engage in a journey known to be extremely violent and dangerous. On the move, marginalised travellers have to face not only one, but several interconnected dangers, threatening their lives and well-being. During the journey, risks can occur in physical mobility, such as boat or truck accidents, or getting caught by the police and in immobile phases, such as captivity, prison, and being ‘stuck’ in Libya.

Among the many risks and dangers listed above, including the Mediterranean Sea and the Sahara Desert, hazards induced by the geographical conditions take a particularly important role. Here, the geographical conditions create specific risks, but also increase and accumulate others. Because of the dependence on third persons who navigate the marginalised travellers through the unknown terrains, a specific power relation is created where perpetrator and facilitator are one (Gerard & Pickering 2013).

To abandon the micro level for a moment, above we have discussed the way European border policy has externalised the control mechanisms and placed them further away from its actual territory. By placing the border in areas, such as the Mediterranean Sea and the Sahara Desert, migration and border policy follows a logic of effectively controlling the “main gates” and “geography would do the rest” (Cornelius 2005, p.779).

This policy also seems to naturalise the border, thereby treating the casualties, not as consequences of certain political decisions and practices, but as consequences of the natural conditions in the Sahara Desert or the Mediterranean Sea. Placing the “locus of control” further away from the fringes and cooperating with African states in the control of migration flows enables them further to avoid, or rather displace, accountability (Andersson 2014).

The consequences for the marginalised travellers are that they have to navigate through increasingly dangerous and violent pastures where the externalisation of border policy has, alongside other factors, opened up a space for brutal militia groups and trafficking networks exploiting the people trying to find the ‘better life’.

Finally, considering the dangers people have to face when becoming mobile, the question was asked how those affected by the movement assess the risks of the journey.
6.3 ASSESSING THE RISKS

By looking at the way people explain and assess the risks, I concentrated on the micro-level of perception and decision making. The opinions and evaluations of prospective and former marginalised travellers were included, as well as the ones of their relatives and communities. These were approached with an understanding of risk that perceived the future as partly undetermined and, therefore, as something that can be altered by human activities (cf. Zinn 2008b, p.4). Risk is then to be recognised in terms of threats or dangers and in possibilities (Bastide 2015, p.228)

In the beginning, it became clear that prospective travellers were well informed about the dangers and risks they might encounter ‘en-route’. This is because of the flow of information between the ones who made it and the ones who remain. It is also because of the large involvement of the families, supporting the travellers, receiving the ransom calls and hearing their relatives being beaten or tortured. The often overlooked effects on the communities and families are severe.

Yet, despite that knowledge, people leave in great numbers. This is also because they perceive risk taking as taking your chance in life. They see the hazards of the journey as equal to their current suffering. Engaging with the risks will then overcome these hardships in one way or the other: you die and the suffering ends or you live the ‘better life’. As every person has to die at some point, they would rather die while trying than “living a long time this life” (FG_05, 14/09/2015). Therefore, in a way, Tahrib is not only about the way you live but also about the way you die:

Dying hungry and without any hope, without any ambition, with everything dwindled is another death. (Maahir, 05/09/15: SSI_01)

Dying while trying to achieve something justifies a person’s decisions to navigate through the high-risk zones. When and how you die still remains in God’s hands, which also means if a person has to die, she or he will die wherever she or he finds her or himself in the desert or at home. Therefore, fate remains in God’s hands; yet, people still feel they can become actors in the process of designing their lives and changing the lives of their families. Tahrib is then depicted as a way to take back your agency, and to decide over the course of your life. This means if you do not have the possibility of changing your life while staying put, you take the risk and do so while becoming mobile.
Thus, Tahrib shows the compromises or sacrifices that are considered necessary to overcome a life of hardship. Marginalised travellers become “actively engage with the risk” and perceive the journey as “a purposeful and justifiable step” (Hermández-Carretero & Carling 2012, p.407) to become again (more) active agents in their lives. The movement here has an instrumental value (Carling 2014) and functions to improve the living situation, to get more control over one’s life, and to take an active role in designing one’s life.

In a paradoxical way, marginalised travellers do actively limit their agency by putting their fate into the hands of brutal trafficking networks or corrupt border and prison guards. They engage in a journey that over and over again brings them into situations that dehumanise them. The paradox is that they do so to become, in the end, more active agents in their lives, to ‘feel like a normal person’, to be recognised as humans again, and to get the rights they are entitled to as human beings.
7 CONCLUSION

7.1 SUMMARY

In the beginning of this research stood the definition of Tahrib, which has several levels of meaning; becoming mobile and navigating thereby through risky and dangerous pastures, to be able to create a better future. Based on this dimension we developed the research question guiding us through the study: what mobile and immobile externalities and what risks do shape the journey north from the horn of Africa towards the ‘better life’ and how do those (from the Horn of Africa) affected by these movements assess the risks connected to the journeys.

With this question, the study aimed to show the complexity of these journeys and the diverse risks encountered ‘en-route’. In order to fine tune the analysis, I conceptualize, following Schapendonk (2012; 2011; 2010), these externalities as different interconnected mobilities and immobilities. The second part of the question looks at the way prospective and former travellers, as well as their communities, assess the risks. Thereby, looking on a micro level at perceptions and the decision-making process. Thereby I have put the perceptions and experience of those affected in the centre of the research.

In a first part, I have examined different theoretical concepts. Beginning with a short glance at the new mobilities paradigm (Sheller & Urry 2006), which helps to understand immobilities as an integral part of mobilities, thereby acknowledging power structures and the way movement is being managed and evaluated differently. The consequences of these different evaluations have been further examined by looking at the mechanisms controlling and managing human mobilities. Specifically, relevant for the project is here the externalisation of the European border policy. This phenomenon describes a strategy of placing the control of the border further away from the firings of the actual territory. On the whole, understanding the logic behind the border and immigration policy could help us to grasp the power relations underpinning the control and management of mobilities at the North-East-African and central Mediterranean route.

In order to ‘name’ the here examined population, I sorted in a next chapter through the many labels, categories and definitions given to those affected by Tahrib. After criticising the forced voluntary divide and questioning the legal definition of refugees I turned to the notion of ‘illegal’ mobility and the widely criticised term of the ‘illegal migrant’. In the end, I named the actors of this specific movement marginalized travellers. This term describes people on the
move, facing specific hardships. Their movement is thereby the product of their own making, as well as of certain power relations and “kinetic hierarchies in particular times and places” (Cresswell 2010, p.25).

Last I looked at the journey itself and discussed analytical tools used in the analysis of the data, namely the “interconnected mobilities lens” (Schapendonk 2012), the “fragmented journey” (Collyer & de Haas 2012) and the conceptualisation of risk.

The next part was concerned with the research process. To draw in on the phenomenon, I choose a qualitative research approach, which was loosely leaned on the principals of grounded theory. Choosing grounded theory enabled me to put the experiences and knowledge of the participants in the centre. I further integrate mobility itself in the methodological approach.

Furthermore, in a reflection, I discussed ethical challenges, since they matter throughout the research process when doing research with marginalized travellers. Last I discuss my positionality in the study, to highlight the complex ways this research was given its specific form by the interaction between researcher and research participants and to underline the power relations underpinning this relationship.

The presentation of the data began with an overview of the journey. With the help of three narrations guiding through the different phases of the journey I could carve out risks, mobilities and immobilities shaping each other as well as the journey as it unfolds. To tackle the complexity of the phenomenon, I have organised the different mobilities, immobilities, and risks in groups, which are to be understood as open, fluid and interconnected analytical categories.

The mobilities have been grouped under the 5 categories of Schapendonk’s (2012; 2010) “interconnected mobilities lens”: the corporeal mobility of third persons, the physical mobility of objects, the mobility of information through communications, the mobility of dreams and imaginations and the virtual travel of migrants. Next, I grouped the immobilities: Waiting Zones, Employment, Involuntary Immobility, Forced Immobility. The described immobilities stay, as a rule, in a reciprocal and causal relationship to the above-described mobilities.

Finally, I organized the encountered risks into three groups, thereby they can occur at the same time or/ and can stay in a causal relationship. 1. ‘General’ Hazards, these hazards can occur on their own, yet they usually are to be found in combination with other risks or are direct consequences of them. 2. Hazards induced by a third party. 3. Hazards induced by geographical conditions, this category refers to the fact that certain geographical conditions (e.g. Sahara Desert or Mediterranean Sea) create specific risks, but also increase and accumulate others.
By fine-tuning the analysis with the help of the categories I could not only emphasise the diversity of the different interconnected immobile and mobile externalities and risks, it also enabled me to show how new forms of human mobility were created. Thereby also the shortcoming of certain mobilities prioritizes other mobilities and immobilities and increases or decreases different risks.

In a next step, we turned towards perceptions and the decision-making process. We looked at the concept of the ‘better life’ these journeys are directed towards and the way those affected by Tahrib assess the risks. The ‘better life’ is seen as an improvement of once own economic status and the one of your family, to a larger extent, it is also about been given the right to education or employment and the possibility to pursue your dreams.

For this research, risks were recognised in terms of threats or dangers and in possibilities (cf. Bastide 2015, p.228). We have further to consider that people are usually well informed about the risks. Yet, despite this knowledge, people leave in great numbers. They perceive risk-taking as taking your chance in life. They see the hazards of the journey as equal to their current suffering and since every person has to die at some point, they would rather die while trying, then staying put in a situation characterised by hopelessness and lack of perspectives.

So, Tahrib shows the compromises or sacrifices, which are considered necessary to overcome a life hardship. Marginalised travellers become “actively engage with the risk” and perceive the journey as “a purposeful and justifiable step” (Hermández-Carretero & Carling 2012, p.407) to become again (more) agents in their lives. The movement has here an instrumental value (Carling 2014)and functions to improve the living situation and to take an active role in designing your life.

7.2 REFLECTION

Generally, focusing on the process of moving rather than the countries, we could show how decisions are made ‘en-route’, aspirations change, people settle down to work and then move on again. Turning away from a focus on countries of departure and arrival, opened up the possibility to fill this process of movement with experience, immobile phases, divers immobilities influencing its velocity, friction and routeing. Treating the in-between time, no longer as ‘dead-lock’.

Following this understanding, we could include the many marginalised travellers leaving diaspora communities and refugee camp in East Africa. Although this research chose a micro
level perspective we could, therefore, see how power structures, the global mobilities regime and the European border space, reaching into the Sahara Desert and beyond, are shaping individual routes.

Meaning, the effects of this policies do not begin when people enter the desert. The closure of safe flight routes, the implementation of visa policies, the refusal to make safe legal ways into the European Union accessible to larger groups created the “involuntary immobile” of thousands. In combination with an increasing connectedness of the world enabling people to imagine and dream about the ‘better life’, this creates the soil on which people make the decision to engage into this high-risk journeys.

Coming back to the mobilities, immobilities and risks shaping these trajectories, we see that they are part of and created by power structures and the working of the global mobilities regime. A regime that creates a highly selective system of those who are allowed to be mobile and whose movement is desired and facilitated, and those who are kept in place, by a stigmatisation and illegalization of their movement.

Overall, the fact that humans have to engage into a violent journey that takes away the lives of so many, in order to receive their basic human rights, should tell us something about the humanitarian system we have created to protect them. It should bring us to question the global mobilities regime. A regime that enabled me to conduct this research and is at the same time part of the forces creating the conditions I was examining here. It should, at last, make us create legal and safe ways into the Global North. It should teach us that closing, militarising and controlling borders so that some are able to pass them smoothly, will not stop the Others of trying.
## 8 APPENDIX

### 8.1 OVERVIEW RESPONDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Interview Codes</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>National Background</th>
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During the explorative phase Sevag Ohanian worked together with me on the project. This was especially helpful when conducting Focus Groups.
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### Activists, Community Leaders, Relatives

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Community leader and activists speak in some cases also as parents.
## 8.2 OVERVIEW OF TRANSLATORS

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8.3 LIST OF SOURCES

8.3.1 LIST OF FIGURES


Figure_02: Map of Africa. Online: http://www.globalcitymap.com/africa/images/africa-political-map.gif.

8.3.2 LIST OF INTERVIEWS AND FIELD NOTES


Meron. 2015. Interview with Maria Bassermann. Uganda: 10/10/2015: PCI_11.

Nuura. 2016. Interview with Maria Bassermann. Translated by Daahir. Germany: 15/03/2016: PCI_16

Rahel. 2015. Interview with Maria Bassermann. Translated by Almaz. Uganda: 01/10/2015: SSI_09.

Said. 2015. Interview with Maria Bassermann/ Sevag Ohanian. Uganda: 07/09/2015: SSI_03

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