Italy and Libya's Migration Chess Games :

Between (Inter-)National Narratives and Policies

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Abstract

This research examines how political discourses, frequently characterized by increased securitization ideologies and shaped by popular media, have played a role in the development of Libya's and Italy's migration policies and inter-state agreements. Specifically since the emergence of the European migration *crisis* in 2015, discourse has produced a negative (influence on) societal perception on migration, both in Italy and Libya. Despite large amounts of research on migration narratives and polities, few analyze the exlusionary effects of political and media discourse on migration. This research aims to fill this game through frameworks of Necropolitics and Existentialism, presenting Italian and Libyan application of power through migration policies and media narratives as a (inter-)national Chess Game. The states are players who control the chess game and the chess pieces: the migrants.

List of Abbreviations

DA	Discourse Analysis
DNHP	Do No Harm Principle
EU	European Union
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
SAR	Search and Rescue
TPO	Theory of Positive Obligations

Key Terms

Border [Externalization], *Crisis*, Discourse [Analysis], Existentialism, Italian and Libyan Migration Policies, Memorandum of Understanding, Necropolitics, Securitization, Speech Act.

Key Definitions

Border Externalization: A political strategy in which measures, policies, and actions move past state's national borders and into external nation's borders, frequently to block non-nationals "who lack the requisite legal entry permission and are thought likely to apply for asylum" from entering.[1]

Do No Harm Principle: The principle founded to ensure acts of intervention consider the "broader context" and any possible challenges, responsibilities, or results which can appear.[2]

Existentialism: A philosophical movement which highlights an individual's ability to be their own "self-determining agent", who consequently responsibility of giving meaning to choices often seen as "purposeless or irrational" by society.[3]

Issue-Linkage Strategy: A state tactic frequently utilized to discuss various issues along-side the central one, with the intention of simultaneously addressing obtaining political or economic benefits for secondary issues.[4]

Migrant: An "umbrella term" to refer to someone who moves from their area of residence to a different location, whether that be temporary or permanent, and within or outside their country of origin.[5]

Necropolitics: The domination of "life to the power of death". States have utmost sovereignty as they can place a group of persons into a state of death.[6]

Securitization: A process through which, as a result of discourse and policies, migration is presented as a security issue.[7]

Speech Act: A statement, thought, or remark characterized by the objective of the speaker and the effects this has on the listener(s).[8]

Theory of Positive Obligations: A theory by which states should be held "directly responsible" for obstructing any human rights through state-facilitated measures.[9]

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[1] "Externalization," *Forced Migration Review*, *Refugee Studies Centre,* accessed May 27, 2023, https://www.fmreview.org/issue68#:~:text=Externalisation%20is%20a%20strategy%20whereby,likely%20to%20apply%20for%20asylum.

[2] Eline Wærp, "Humanitarian Borderwork?: An Analysis of Frontex's Discourses and Practices," Malmö University 2019, 22. https://doi.org/10.24834/9789178770.

[3] "Existentialism," Dictionary.com, 2023, accessed May 18, 2023, https://www.dictionary.com/browse/existentialism.

[4] Segio Currarini and Carmen. Marchiori, "Issue Linkage," *Games and Economic Behavior* 135 (2022): 16. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geb.2022.05.009.

[5] "IOM Definition of 'Migrant,'" *International Organization for Migration* (IOM), accessed April 2023, https://www.iom.int/about-migration.

[6] Antonio Pele, "Achille Mbembe: Necropolitics," *Critical Legal Thinking*, March 02, 2020, https://criticallegalthinking.com/2020/03/02/achille-mbembe-necropolitics/.

[7] Elisabeth Farny, "Implications of the Securitisation of Migration," *E-International Relations*, January 29, 2016, https://www.e-ir.info/2016/01/29/implications-of-the-securitisation-of-migration/#:~:text=23%2D24).,it%20is%20presented%20as%20such.

[8] Richard Nordquist, "Speech Acts in Linguistics," *ThoughtCo.*, July 03, 2019, https://www.thoughtco.com/speech-act-linguistics-1692119.

[9] Anna Liguori, *Migration Law and the Externalization of Border Controls,* (1st ed. Milton: Routledge, 2019), 31, https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429439100.

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INTRODUCTION: THE MIGRATION CHESS GAME

The existence of migrants is determined by a "role-playing game," in which states are the players and migrants the chess pieces.[10] The migration Chess Game, controlled by discourse and Speech Acts, generates a public understanding of the good and bad: both through the distinction of migrants and citizens, and of *legal* and *illegal* migrants. In fact, although agreements between Italy and Libya claim to work towards eliminating human trafficking and traffickers, "it's easy not to see when the world takes a bad turn," as politicians and media justify growing Securitization discourse and actions through narratives and Speech Acts.[11]

Securitization, as defined by Stritzel, is the creation of a constructed "Speech Act", which can arguably be manipulated by means of politically- and publicly-accepted perceptions, creating an "existential threat," and thus invoking actions of emergency and exception to combat the *danger*.[12] The international debate on migration from northern Africa to Europe has been dominated by Securitization discourse, through narratives of *crisis*, anxiety, insecurity, and exclusion, particularly since 2015 migration *crisis*. Viola and Musolff present the marking of the 2015 *crisis* as the emergence of negative media framing of and coverage on migration and migrants.[13] This paper, argues that through the normalization of a migration *crisis* emergency, discursive power abuse is implemented to create an *illegitimate* influence on society and narratives: the states control the chess pieces, board, and end-results of the game.[14] This begs the following twofold question; **Firstly, what roles do Italian and Libyan media and governmental discourses play on migration policies? Secondly, what influence do Italian and Libyan political and social discourse have on public perceptions of migrants and inter-state migration agreements?** Additionally, although not discussed throughout literature, Necropolitics and Existentialism will be combined to create a framework analysis of migrant's physical and psychological deaths, limbo, and exclusions, as

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[10] Translation from Fabrizio Gatti's *Bilal: Viaggiare, Lavorare, Morire da Clandestini*, (*Rizzoli, RCS Libri S.p.A, Milano,* 2007): 346; 466; 471.

[11] Translation from Fabrizio Gatti's *Bilal,* 346; 466; 471.

[12] Holger Stritzel, "Towards a Theory of Securitization: Copenhagen and Beyond," European Journal of International Relations, SAGE Publications and ECPR-European Consortium for Political Research, Vol. 13(3) (2007): 358. https://doi.org/10.1177/135406610708012

[13] Lorella Viola and Andreas Musolff, *Migration and Media*, Vol. 81, (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2019), 94, https://doi.org/10.1075/dapsac.81.

[14] Van Dijk, "Discourse and Manipulation," 360.

securitization and anti-migrant discourse(s) have been furthering exclusionary narratives, policies, and perceptions.

Italy's government views Libya and the Mediterranean as a *priority* for the country, and subsequently highlights the priority as being directly connected to Italy's national security.[15] Specific attention will be placed upon migration management and policies implemented in and between Italy and Libya, from Gaddafi's rise to power in 1969, until the most recent ratification date of Italy and Libya's Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).[16] The MoU is a collection of agreements between Italy and Libya, the first of which was signed in 2002, and gradually furthered, with an increased focus on securitization and strengthening of border policies.[17] As the number of migrant crossings grew in the Central Mediterranean Route since 2016 after the Balkan Route was shut, a new MoU agreement between Libya and Italy was signed in 2017; a primary focus of this research, which will be analyzed throughout Chapter 3.0.[18] This paper therefore presents the 2017 MoU, alongside Italian and Libyan articles and statements from 2023 (see Chapter 4.0), as the most recent structuring of Italy and Libya's migration chess game, with a specific focus on Speech Acts. Through an analysis of migration narratives in Italy and Libya, this paper examines whether narratives play a role in the furthering or debunking of the *myth* of the migrant *Other* and of public exclusionary perception of migrants.

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[15] "President Meloni's press statement with Prime Minister al-Dabaiba," *Italian Government, Presidency of the Council of Ministers,* January 28, 2023,
https://www.governo.it/en/articolo/president-meloni-s-press-statement-prime-minister-al-dabaiba/21645.

[16] Martino Reviglio, "Externalizing Migration Management Through Soft Law: The Case of the Memorandum of Understanding Between Libya and Italy," *Global Jurist 20*, no. 1 (2019): 4, https://doi.org/10.1515/gj-2019-0018.

[17] Reviglio, "Externalizing Migration Management Through Soft Law," 4.

[18] Liguori, *Migration Law and the Externalization of Border Controls,* 8.

1.0 CONTEXTUALIZATION: CHESS PIECES AND PLAYERS

A discourse analysis (DA) of existing Italian and Libyan migration policies and agreements is required to present and debunk the wide-spread migrant *myth*. Anthropological *myths* represent public beliefs and justify practices, such as with migration, whether the beliefs be true or not.[19] This paper takes into consideration the processes by Italian, Libyan, and overall EU actors, which push anti-migrant narratives and discourse towards being socially-accepted to obtain votes and popularity.[20] In other words, an analysis on the states' ability to structure and dominate the migration chess game will take place. Italy and Libya's migration discourse and border securitization policies can be applied alongside three theories; Securitization, which generates "existential threat", to consequently justify the production of "exceptional measures",[21] Necropolitics, and Existentialism. Necropolitics considers "utmost sovereignty" as deriving from controlling the state of life or death of persons,[22] and Existentialism views agency as the the most control one can have of their life.[23]

Mbembe and Corcoran's application of the state's capability of defining and strengthening the *Other* and the dominant *Us* ideology presents the consequent creation of a politics of death, which pushes migrants into a constant state of stuckedness.[24] While Necropolitics is used as a framework to analyze the death of migrants within society through *Othering*, it does not sufficiently take into account the effects of migration policies and public perception on the socially-perceived migrant identity. Hence, Existentialism provides additional tools to understand the effects of border externalization and securitization discourse on migrants' physical and social stuckedness. Specifically, as Existentialism considers individuals as having autonomy, this research presents the existential state of stuckedness in which migrants find themselves, both physically and psychologically: the chess players control the pieces and their autonomy, as well as the board and end-game.[25]

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[19] "Myth," *Sociology Guide*, 20223, https://www.sociologyguide.com/anthropology/myth.php.

[20] Ruben Andersson, *Illegality, Inc.: Clandestine Migration and the Business of Bordering Europe,* (1st ed. University of California Press, 2014), 275. http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/j.ctt6wqc7v.

[21] Stritzel, "Towards a Theory of Securitization," 358.

[22] Antonio Pele, "Achille Mbembe: Necropolitics," Critical Legal Thinking."

[23] "Existentialism," *Dictionary.com*.

[24] Achille Mbembe and Steve Corcoran, *Necropolitics*, (Duke University Press, 2019), 71; 132; 142.

[25] "Existentialism," *Dictionary.com*.

1.1 Producing Anxiety, Fear, and (In-)Security Discourse

Language and discourse are omnipresent in governmental policies, media, and daily conversations, often granting insight into socio-cultural factors. Discourse is the way we perceive the world, as well as the way the world shapes us, consequently influencing the perspective in which certain terms, identities, and theories are understood, both individually and socially.[26] Michel Foucault, a 20th Century philosopher, coined *discourse* as a term to describe a knowledge- and meaning-producing "historically contingent social system".[27] Foucauldian DA suggests that power is "always present in the use of discourse", an argument discussed widely throughout existing literature.[28] Power at the state level, as Joseph Nye argues, is the capability of actors to make other states, actors, or individuals do things they "otherwise would not",[29] either through force, influence, or both: hard power, soft power, and smart power.[30] Power and discourse are thus interlinked, both playing a large role in the creation and influence of societal and political perceptions.

Following the migration *crisis* of 2015, public opinion on migration in European and North African countries has been motivated by dominant exclusionary ideologies, arguably pushing migrants into physical absurdity and metaphysical limbo, or in other words, Existential stuckedness.[31] Discourse presents migration as a threat to nations, borders, and security, which can negatively influence two aspects, according to Paoletti: firstly, the ideologies around which foreign policies are created, and secondly, the nature of power relations between states.[32] In fact, regarding both Libya and Italy, the two consequential aspects can be analyzed. This paper, therefore, places focus on Libya's migration chess history, both with African states, and consequently, with Italy. A Necropolitical and Existentialist framework analysis aims to understand the influence of language and discourse on the normalization of perceptions on the migrant *Other,* with a specific focus on

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[26] Bian Paltridge, *Discourse Analysis: An Introduction* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2022), 8.

[27] Rachel Adams, "Michel Foucault: Discourse," *Critical Legal Thinking*, November 17, 2017, https://criticallegalthinking.com/2017/11/17/michel-foucault-discourse/

[28] Paltridge, *Discourse Analysis*, 6.

[29] Michael Barnett and Raymond Duvall, "Power in International Politics," *International Organization* 59, no. 1 (2005): 40. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818305050010.

[30] Joseph S. Nye, "Soft Power: The Evolution of a Concept," *Journal of Political Power* 14, no. 1 (2021). https://doi.org/10.1080/2158379X.2021.18

[31] Paltridge, Discourse Analysis, 9.

[32] Emanuela Paoletti, *The Migration of Power and North-South Inequalities: The Case of Italy and Libya* (Basingstoke etc.): Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 204-205, 211.

Italian-Libyan migration policies and Italy's border externalization into Libya and securitization policies.[33]

1.1.1 Controlling Chess Pieces Through Anxiety Discourse

To understand the emergence of anti-migrant discourse in Italy and Libya in recent years, a focus on the role of power, or more specifically Productive Power, is required. Barnett and Duvall introduce the Productive Power Theory as one's ability to influence knowledge, discourse, and social meaning, consequently constructing and transforming social identities.[34] Stritzel applies the definition of Productive Power upon securitization, arguing Speech Acts can be manipulated to create new understandings and signifiers of social identities and relations.[35] The authors argue that, rather than being the actor in power who utilizes Speech Acts to produce authority, it is intrinsically the Speech Act which creates the authority, and thus, the power.[36] Productive Power commonly emerges and plays a role within discourse and the creation of social identities and perceptions, and can thus be relevantly applied onto migration studies. Accordingly, this research attempts to determine the manner through which discourse and power are utilized, and to understand whether they create and pursue migrant *myths*, or debunk them.[37]

Political gain has been growing around the anti-migrant discourse, as "crackdowns" towards migrants has become an "easy vote-winner for the hard right", with however little to no focus on the deaths that occur due to the crackdowns.[38] In fact, through discourse and power, states set the scene for Europe's migration chess game, further removing any remaining autonomy and agency from the chess pieces, thus the migrants. Social Constructivist DA views the actors as wanting to gain legitimacy from their citizens and the international community, an aspect which arguably displays the relation between power, legitimacy, and discourse. Additionally, Liguori draws upon the understanding that many European countries, with the aim of generating an effective "strategy" to

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[33] Governo Italiano, "Memorandum d'intesa sulla cooperazione nel campo dello sviluppo, del contrasto all'immigrazione illegale, al traffico di esseri umani, al contrabbando e sul rafforzamento della sicurezza delle frontiere tra lo Stato della Libia e la Repubblica Italiana," Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri, February 2 2017, https://www.governo.it/sites/governo.it/files/Libia.pdf.

[34] Barnett and Duvall, "Power in International Politics," 55-56.

[35] Stritzel, "Towards a Theory of Securitization," 361.

[36] Stritzel, "Towards a Theory of Securitization," 361-362.

[37] Richard J. Arneson and John Edward Bowle, "Political Philosophy," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, March 16 2023, https://www.britannica.com/topic/political-philosophy. Accessed April 2023.

[38] Andersson, *Illegality, Inc.*, 10.

resolve the migrant *crisis*, have pushed back and externalized their borders into third countries.[39] This method of border management, which focuses on regulating border crossings to ensure security, is argued by Liguori as a display of the emergence of Europe's policy crisis rather than *migration crisis*. In fact, border externalization is at the "forefront of the EU's agenda", and disregards human rights violations of migrants, which derive from externalization policies and practices.[40] According to Liguori, through the Theory of Positive Obligations (TPO), a state "cannot shift their responsibility" through the practice of border externalization: a strategy which is nonetheless practiced by many EU member-states, such as Italy's extension of its borders into Libyan territory.[41] The European migration chess game is thus directed towards protecting the chess board and players – the state (actors) and nationals –, through control of the pieces – the migrants –.

Existing academic literature and government sources were studied for this research, by means of determining the relevance of analyzing socially-accepted narratives and identities of migrants, through a focus on Italy and Libya. The academic literature utilized for this research draws upon terms including but not limited to migration, power, Discourse Analysis, Speech Acts, Libyan migration history, Necropolitics, Existentialism, and Libya-Italy migration agreements. Relevantly, Paoletti debates the social risks and consequences of power relations on migration discourse, thus providing inexplicit explanations of actors as the sole chess players to control the pieces and overall game.[42] Therefore, despite approaching the various debates of migration through a myriad of theories and perspectives, a consensus within existing literature emphasizes the correlation between discourse and power, discourse and identity, and consequently, discourse and socio-political ideologies and policies.

[39] Liguori, *Migration Law and the Externalization of Border Controls,* 51.
[40] Liguori, *Migration Law and the Externalization of Border Controls*, 88.
[41] Liguori, *Migration Law and the Externalization of Border Controls*, 13.
[42] Paoletti, *The Migration of Power and North-South Inequalities*, 211.

1.2 Migration Throughout History: Chess Trends

Fig. 1. Libyan National and Inter-State Migration Discourse and Policy Trends: 1969 - 2017.[43]
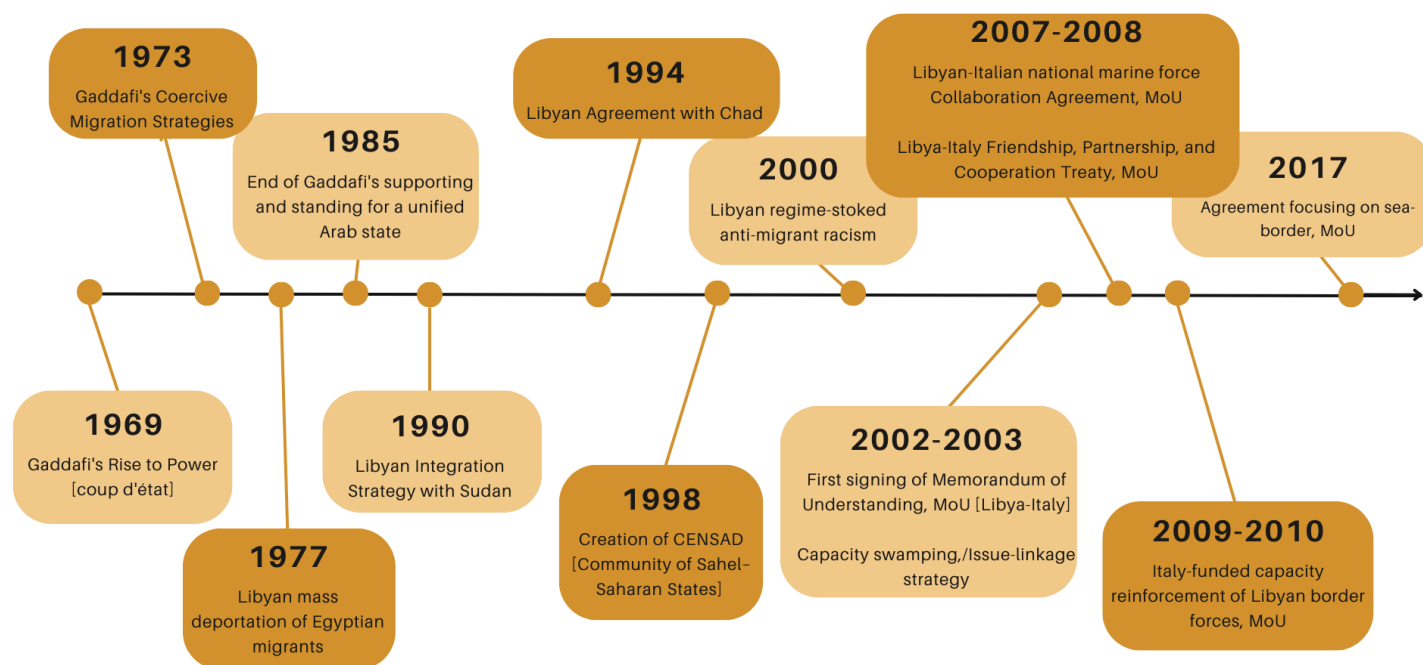
1.2.1 The Libyan Game: from 1969 to 2017

Libya's history of migration management has shown a remarkable sequence of discursive and policy shifts ever since Gaddafi's rise to power in 1969, until 2000, afterwhich trends followed Europe's growing securitization strategy. Libya's policies differed greatly, from cooperative policies with Arab and African states to create a Pan-Arab and Pan-African identity until 1999, to coercive policies with European and African states for political-economic gains since 2000.[44] Arguably, Libya's chess game therefore diverged from focusing on the efficacy and safety of the pieces, to the security and authority of the board and players. Gaddafi's goal to generate and maintain a Pan-Arab ideology was pushed through various agreements, according to Tsourapas: the ruler utilized both cooperative policies and soft law to promote a continental view of a "United African State".[45] Gaddafi's cooperative and soft law policies include but are not limited to the Libya-Tunisia agreement of 1971, the charter for the Federation of Arab Republics of 1972, the integration charter with Sudan of 1990, the agreement with Chad of 1994, and the creation of the Community of

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[43] Drawing upon findings from Tsourapas, "Migration Diplomacy in the Global South."
[44] Tsourapas, "Migration Diplomacy in the Global South," 2377.
[45] Tsourapas, "Migration Diplomacy in the Global South," 2372.

Sahel-Saharan States (CENSAD) of 1998,[46] all of which were aimed towards forming unity and better diplomatic relations between Arab and African states.[47] Tsourapas, in addition to emphasizing Gaddafi's tactical policies towards inter-state migration management with other Arab and African states, insists on the crucial role of Libya-Italy agreements during Gaddafi's regime: Libya benefitted as Italy persuaded EU member-states to remove tariffs and embargo taxes which had long-been imposed on Libya. Alternatively, Reviglio goes beyond Gaddafi's period, focusing on the development of the MoU Between Libya and Italy from 2002 until 2017. Although Tsourapas and Reviglio's arguments are imperative to the analysis of Libya's and Italy's migration policies, migration discourse, and consequently societal migration perceptions, they require a combined analysis.

1.2.2 Libyan and Italian Chess Moves: Migration Fears from 1990s Onwards

Historical phenomena display trends of state manipulation of migration perception through tactical Speech Acts. Notably, since 2000, Gaddafi "deliberately" fueled anti-migrant racism in Libya,[48] specifically through labor-insecurity discourse.[49] Tsourapas argues Gaddafi's anti-migrant discourse has furthered the exclusion of migration and pushed xenophobia into Libyan national and inter-state policies.[50] Therefore, it can be argued that Gaddafi's tactics began with cooperative management, and diverged into a chess game composed of coercion (see *Fig. 1*, page 7). Similarly to Libya's migration tactics since 2000, Fazzi discusses Italy's government transition towards a xenophobic, exclusionary, and populist ideology.[51] Particularly, the rise of xenophobia-directed political agenda of the political group *Lega (Nord)* since the 1990s, has consequently created a public feeling of national "insecurity".[52] Arguably, since the 1990s in Italy and 2000 in Libya, the countries' migration strategies have been building upon primarily securitization discourse. Fazzi presents Italy's trend towards border securitization, through which events or phenomena are framed in politics as a security threat, "whether through enunciation or practice," as securitization of migration and

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[46] Tsourapas, "Migration Diplomacy in the Global South," 2372, 2376.

[47] Reviglio, "Externalizing Migration Management through Soft Law," 2.

[48] Tsourapas, "Migration Diplomacy in the Global South," 2376.

[49] Human Rights Watch, "Libya: Stemming the Flow: Abuses Against Migrants, Asylum Seekers and Refugees," September 13 2006, https://www.refworld.org/docid/4517c8f94.html.

[50] Tsourapas, "Migration Diplomacy in the Global South," 2376.

[51] Luca Fazzi, "Social Work, Exclusionary Populism and Xenophobia in Italy," *International Social Work* 58, no. 4, (2015): 595. https://doi.org/10.1177/0020872813503855.

[52] Fazzi, "Social Work, Exclusionary Populism and Xenophobia in Italy," 596.

border policies can appear through discourse and narratives, as well as through actions.[53] Relevantly, Paltridge and Dennison and Geddes present an analysis of the rise of anti-migrant discussions during Britain's vote to leave the EU, partly due to British "political dynamics in migration".[54] Due to increasing anti-migrant sentiment, the widespread feeling of insecurity in public and political discourse has been growing in Libya and various European states, including Italy (see *Fig. 2*). The emergence of the term *crisis* in reference to migration within Western politics and media since 2015 can be argued to present the continuously-growing state focus around borders, (in-)security, and policies (see Chapter 2.2.1).[55] Therefore, this research argues Libya's and Italy's use of securitization and emergency discourse as a tactic to control the chess board and pieces.

Fig. 2. Italian and Libyan Migration Discourse and Policy Trends: 1990 - 2023.[56]

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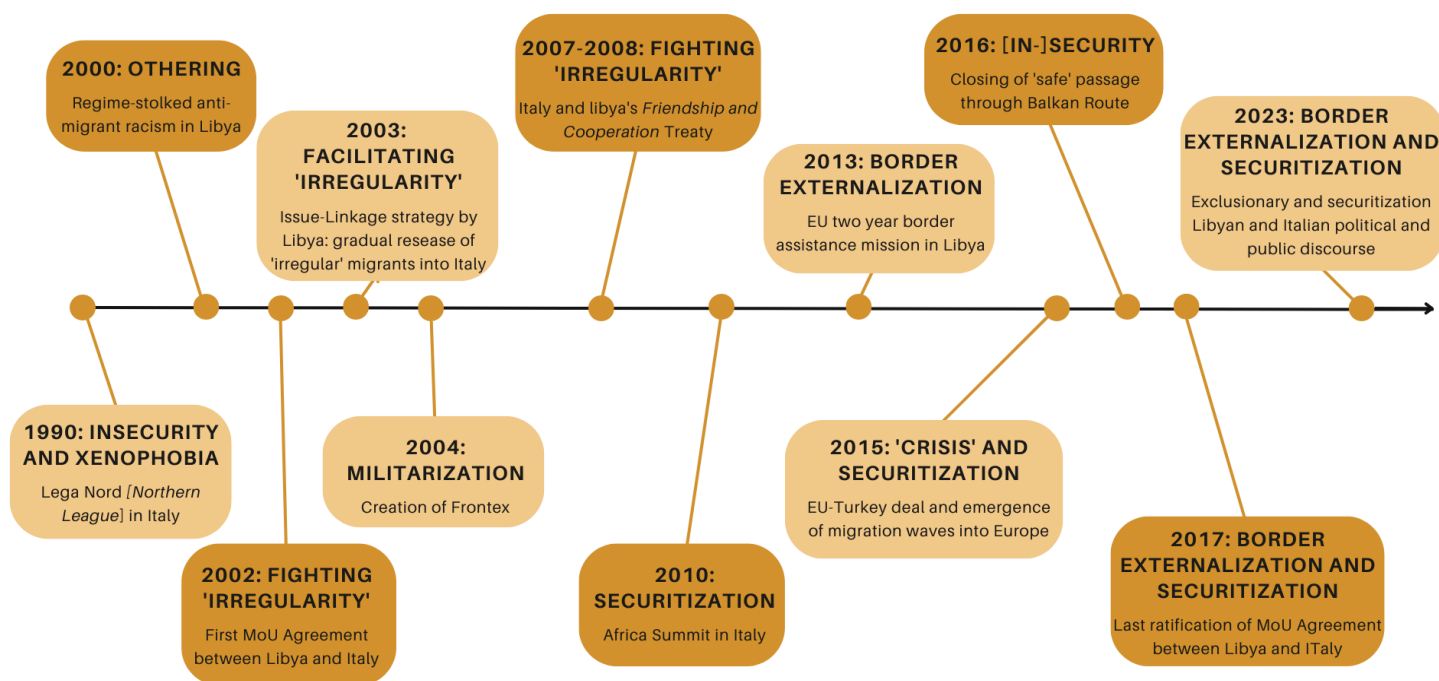
[53] Andersson, *Illegality, Inc.*, 77.

[54] James Dennison and Andrew Geddes, "*Brexit and the Perils of 'Europeanised' Migration*," Journal of European Public Policy 25, no. 8, (2018): 1137. https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2018.1467953.

[55] Maciej Stępka, *Identifying Security Logics in the EU Policy Discourse: The Migration Crisis and the EU* (Cham: Springer Nature, 2022), 98.

[56] Drawing upon findings from Tsourapas, "Migration Diplomacy in the Global South," Liguori, *Migration Law and the Externalization of Border Controls*, and Cuttitta, "Delocalization, Humanitarianism, and Human Rights."

2.0 METHODOLOGY: SOCIAL [NON-]BELONGING

As previously discussed, discourse and power are intertwined, and can frequently influence social perceptions and understandings of identities and (national) belonging. Therefore, the following chapter will introduce the methodology utilized and applied onto Italian and Libyan frequent use of discourse and Speech Acts in reference to migration and migrants.

2.1 Social Constructivist and Foucauldian Discourse

As DA contains various approaches, it is crucial to pinpoint the relevance of the methods Paltrige introduces, and apply them onto migration studies: namely: Textually-Oriented, Foucualdian, and Socially-Constructed DA.[57] Textually-Oriented DA refers to the study of discourse through a focus on societal and theoretical elements as means of interpretation.[58] As migration policies and narratives require an analysis of discourse aimed towards determining more societal factors and changes, rather than an analytical and theoretical analysis, the grammatical details around which this theory functions may be ill-suited. Alternatively, Foucauldian DA provides a more critical study: discourse, and the meanings it creates and through which it is created, are seen as determining normalized and socially-accepted views of reality.[59] Unlike other forms of DA, Foucauldian "rejects the notion of absolute truth", as it considers all truths created or influenced by discourse as socially-constructed.[60] Moreover, Foucauldian DA places a large focus on the ever-changing nature of language and society. Lastly, Social Constructivism draws upon the Foucauldian view while simultaneously giving importance to the roles and effects of discourse and power in the construction of *normal* and socially-accepted perspectives.[61]

Through a combination of Social Constructivist and Foucauldian DA, this research therefore aims to present a study of migration discourse, with consideration of Italy's and Libya's socially-constructed and cultural contexts.[62] As discourse and perceptions on migration have been altering over time, Foucaldian DA provides understanding of continuously-changing and socially-accepted meanings and 'truths'. Secondly, the Social Constructivist approach provides

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[57] Paltridge, *Discourse Analysis*, 6-7.
[58] Paltridge, *Discourse Analysis*, 6-7.
[59] Paltridge, *Discourse Analysis*, 6.
[60] Paltridge, *Discourse Analysis*, 6.
[61] Paltridge, *Discourse Analysis*, 6.
[62] Paltridge, *Discourse Analysis*, 1.

additional insight into determining the roles and effects of power in furthering the socially-constructed identity of migrants. The research and analysis of this paper aim to present and apply findings and sources from Libya, a northern African *departure* and *transit* country, and Italy, a southern European *transit* and *destination* country, as politicians, policies, media, and societies from both states influence and are influenced by discourse on migration. Moreover, this research employs Necropower and Existentialism as a framework to explore the role of migration discourse in sustaining or debunking political *myths*.[63] In sum, the framework analysis aims to provide insight into the state's tactics towards the chess board and pieces, by correlating the reduced agency of migrants with increased securitization discourse and policies.

2.2 Fear-Producing Speech Acts: Pinning the Good and Bad Chess Pieces

Frequently, discourse is intentionally influenced or furthered for political gains. Paoletti and Stępka both state the same common driver of inter-state relations, such as that of the Libyan-Italian and Libya-EU relations: interest-motivated behavior. An individual's or entity's ability to influence public discourse holds a high correlation with agency, and is often a tactic incorporated by politicians to dominate "policy decisions" and to control and validate the "suppression of speech".[64] In fact, influential political, economic, and social actors utilize language and discourse to alter the public's manner of thinking and "seeing people", consequently reshaping the socially-accepted identities, morals, perceptions, and policies.[65]

According to Barnett and Duvall, a state's Productive Power and its effects on public opinion on migration can vary widely due to unequal power relations and a state's ability to influence others: chess players contain different levels of power and authority over the board, the pieces, and the game overall.[66] In fact, until 2008, Gaddafi gained higher jurisdiction on already existing inter-state migration-related discussion and agreements, through the influence of discourse towards language of (in)security, inclusion, and exclusion.[67] Relevantly, studies by Tsourapas[68] and Rothstein indicate that through power, states in the Global South, such as Libya, often successfully manipulate other states

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[63] Arneson and Bowle, "Political Philosophy."

[64] Paltridge, *Discourse Analysis,* 9-10.

[65] Paltridge, *Discourse Analysis,* 9-10.

[66] Barnett and Duvall, "Power in International Politics," 211.

[67] Cuttitta, "Delocalization, Humanitarianism, and Human Rights," 197-198.

[68] Tsourapas, "Migration Diplomacy in the Global South."

to obtain their final objective.[69] Therefore, Italy and Libya's migration management arguably revolves around the end-goal of the game and control of the chess pieces.

2.2.1 Defining the Chess Pieces: Normalizing the *Crisis* and Shaping the *Illegal*

Europe's 2015 migration *crisis* was first introduced by Jean Claude Juncker, the 2014-2019 president of the European Commission, to highlight the life-threatening humanitarian crisis situation for migrants (see *Fig. 2*, page 9).[70] Stępka demonstrates the evolution of the perception of this *crisis* over time: political and media discourse altered the humanitarian *crisis* into a *security* issue for Europe, and a culpability concern for politically-unstable countries, such as Libya and Syria; thereby conveniently relegating migrants and third-countries into scapegoats.[71] Relevantly, Gaddafi's fueling of anti-migrant national perceptions can be likewise seen as the emergence of migrants as scapegoats in times of economic instability, through which the players in power further dehumanize the pieces. Additionally, Viola and Musolff provide insight into the close correlation between media, discourse, and the crisis of migrant identities in Europe. Through the "abuse" of social power, social and political narratives and perceptions of migrants are linked to "economic burden and security concerns," and are frequently used interchangeably with criminalizing terms including but not limited to *illegal*, *irregular*, alien, *Other*, and clandestine, as presented in the Introduction (see page 1).[72]

Voulgarelli-Christidou similarly presents the common populist and xenophobic argument that the EU needs to fight for the survival of "European values and nations", which are presented as endangered due to migration.[73] Similalry, Stępka suggests that the insecurity ideology, generated and furthered through discourse, has led to an increase of border securitization and externalization Speech Acts.[74] More specifically, Stępka presents Italy's border externalization tactic – pushing border control and policy responsibilities of migration management onto Libya – to accuse the

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[69] Robert L. Rothstein, *The Weak in the World of the Strong: The Developing Countries in the International System*, (New York Chichester, West Sussex: Columbia University Press, 1977).
[70] Stępka, *Identifying Security Logics in the EU Policy Discourse*, 96.
[71] Stępka, *Identifying Security Logics in the EU Policy Discourse*, 98.
[72] Viola and Musolff, *Migration and Media*, 96.
[73] Christina Voulgarelli-Christidou, "Dangers of an Urban Crisis Within the European Union: Fueling Xenophobia and Undermining Democracy," *Perspectives on Global Development and Technology* 15, no. 1-2 (2016): 238. https://doi.org/10.1163/15691497-12341385.
[74] Stępka, *Identifying Security Logics in the EU Policy Discourse*, 99.

country's "structural security problem" of inciting growth of illegal and irregular structures, including economy and migration.[75]

2.3 Europe's Rooks and Libya's Knights

Discourse manipulation through abuse of power and narrative domination is often achieved through the association of migration with growing insecurity and anxiety by European leaders, as argued by Van Dijk, Andersson, and Paoletti. Andersson highlights the increasing linkage of northern and Sub-Saharan African countries, such as Libya, which are labelled as "frontier zones", to fears and perceptions pushed for political gain of European powers.[76] Due to already-existing fears in Italy and Europe overall, of the *Other* and socio-political instability, the Libyan regime in the 2010s gained notable control over migration negotiations with Italy and the EU.[77] In fact, as discourse alters national perceptions and narratives, the socially-constructed understanding of migration as a "societal threat" can have a myriad of extensive consequences; namely for migrant's human rights and agency, and for relations and policies between states.[78] Furthermore, analyzing Productive Power alongside the manipulation and abuse of power and discourse, due to the latters' frequent influences on narratives and social perceptions, is argued here as being imperative to better understand and analyze the constructions and transformations of social identities. However, existing literature on migration and migrant identity provide little philosophical insight – specifically Necropolitical and Existential – therefore Chapter 3 will delve deeper into the framework analysis.

2.3.2 Emergence of *Fortress Europe's* 'Border Guard'

In recent years, especially since 2015, EU member-states, as well as their policies and migration management, have been presented as a *Fortress*, and Libya as its *Border Guard*.[79] Moreover, Italy is often referred to as the *Fortress's door*. Through terms such as *Fortress*, *Guard*, and *door*, one can argue that securitization and militarization discourses are covertly increased.[80] The

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[75] Stępka, *Identifying Security Logics in the EU Policy Discourse*, 99.

[76] Andersson, *Illegality, Inc.,* 275.

[77] Paoletti, *The Migration of Power and North-South Inequalities,* 197-198.

[78] Paoletti, *The Migration of Power and North-South Inequalities,* 211.

[79] Eric Mielants and Melissa F. Weiner, "Fortress Europe in the Field: Academics, Immigrants, and Methodological Considerations for Educational Studies," *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 28, no. 4 (2015): 438. https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2014.916010

[80] Sabina Perrino, *Narrating migration: Intimacies of exclusion in northern Italy*, (Routledge, 2019).

academic literature analyzed in this research presents a clear correlation between border protection due to fears and ideologies, and the role of said ideologies in political gain and power. In fact, the word *Guard* creates a sense of urgency for the need for protection and securitization of borders, through the controlling of crossings and arrivals. Pertinently, Andersson presents the frequent manipulation of discourse by political powers: the Western perception of Sub-Saharan Africa as a *frontier zone* is often utilized by European powers and politicians to obtain votes and popularity.[81]

Foucauldian DA studies the historical contexts within the relation between "language and thought, and the power of language" in producing and manipulating socially-perceived "normal" perceptions of ideas and identities.[82] Together with the Social Constructivist DA, Foucauldian DA can further academic research on policies and public perception on migration. Andersson, through a discourse-oriented analysis, explores Italy and Libya's securitization of border politics, through which the *crisis* of migration is presented as a "security threat".[83] Migration discourse in Europe since 2015 onward has metamorphosed increasingly towards a fear- and anxiety-inducing narrative, due to the use of words such as: *crisis*, security threat, *illegal* migrant, *Fortress Europe,* and *Border Guard.* Arguably, through the labelling of Europe's borders and Libya's border policies aimed towards safeguarding EU borders, migration discourse has been building upon the understanding of a need for protection of Europeans from migrants deriving primarily from African or Arab countries. This tactic can be connected back to Gaddafi's intentionally-stoked anti-migrant racism in Libya since the 2000s, thus presenting a similarity between Libya's and Europe's migration discourse and tactics. In sum, the chess players have been approaching the board in similar manners for approximately two decades, working together to obtain their desired end-game: control of the nation's people and borders.

Mbembe and Corcoran, similarly to Andersson, highlight the growing trend of "paranoia" as the growing primary language of power and the public.[84] Discourse on migration has been pushing public opinion and political discourse towards that of securitization and xenophobia, consequently generating more border policies, and further externalizing the border through inter-state agreements. Moreover, many authors of existing studies in the broader literature – such as Liguori, Cuttitta,

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[81] Andersson, *Illegality, Inc.*, 275.
[82] Paltridge, *Discourse Analysis*, 8.
[83] Andersson, *Illegality, Inc.,* 77.
[84] Mbembe and Corcoran, *Necropolitics*, 105.

Andersson, and Voulgarelli-Christidou – have examined the inhumane consequences of border externalization, anti-migration discourse, and the pursuit for political power. Mbembe and Corcoran indirectly summarize this, stating that "security now matters more than freedom".[85] However, it is important to note that securitization can be implement in different ways. In fact, Italy practices border securitization in politics and funding, discourse, and border externalization, whereas Libya implements it in policies and action.

2.3.3 Belonging in *Fortress Europe*: Tactics and Responsibilities of Chess Players

Although one may be able to enter the *Fortress*'s borders, the difficulties of autonomy and belonging continue, primarily due to exclusion- and fear-oriented discourse. Relevantly, Mbembe and Corcoran argue the central aim of identifying who is naturally part of a state and who enters the country, why, and how: the goal is to push out anyone who is considered a threat, and who is seen as part of the *Other* which does not belong to the national *Us*.[86] In addition to generating a wide divide between people, the fear of the *Other* arguably emerges with additional connotations to that of exclusion and loss of agency of migrants.

Italy has externalized its borders into Libyan waters, which, as suggested by Liguori, renders Italy complicit with any crimes of human rights violations Libya has been and/or is accused of.[87] As presented by Liguori[88] and Reviglio, Italy must be held "directly responsible" for Libya's inhumane actions towards migrants, as all agreements signed between the two countries took place despite Libya not having signed the 1951 Refugee Convention, showing "indifference to human rights".[89] Moreover, the inhumane actions of the Libyan government and maritime patrols can argued to having resulted from Italy's border externalization: it is thus a dialectical relationship between the two countries and their border forces. The chess players thus utilize their power to further border externalization and disregard responsibilities, augmenting their control of the chess board and pieces. In fact, regarding Italy's obligations to human rights, Cuttitta emphasizes the international

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[85] Mbembe and Corcoran, *Necropolitics*, 103-104.
[86] Mbembe and Corcoran, *Necropolitics*, 43.
[87] Liguori, *Migration Law and the Externalization of Border Controls*, 33.
[88] Liguori, *Migration Law and the Externalization of Border Controls*, 12, 31.
[89] Reviglio, "Externalizing Migration Management through Soft Law," 6.

community's criticism on the strong border and regularization agreements between Italy and Libya: many believe it is leading to an increase in human rights violations.[90]

2.3.4 Frontex: Militarizing the Chess Board

Frontex, Europe's land and maritime border guard agency, was created in 2004, with the goal of guarding the EU's borders, and with a focus on external border security reinforcement (see Appendix B).[91] Frontex's official website agency mandate is maintaining "safe and well-functioning external borders",[92] and protecting human lives.[93] However, as Wærp presents, the EU's border policies and measures have resulted in a reduction of legal and safe migration routes.[94] In the wider context of this research, the reduction of secure and legal routes due to border externalization can be connected to the 2017 MoU, as it was ratified after the 2016 closure of the Balkan Route, to ensure additional border securitization.[95]

Although Frontex is tasked with surveilling the EU's borders, the agency fails to ensure humane principles, neutrality, accountability, and the Do No Harm Principle (DNHP).[96] The DNHP places emphasis on the analysis of the consequences or results of aid, and its efficacy in countering unexpected negative results.[97] Consequently, despite a safety and efficacy mandate, Frontex's focus on human safety has diverged towards one of border security and militarization, further increasing risks throughout migration routes, and thus, people and their lives.[98] Similarly to Wærp, Andersson relevantly highlights Frontex's use of "military metaphors" as a tactic to further the emergency and (in-)security discourse and justify forceful practices placed upon the migrant *Other*.[99]

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[90] Cuttitta, "Delocalization, Humanitarianism, and Human Rights," 787.

[91] Efthymios Papastavridis, "'Fortress Europe' and FRONTEX: Within or Without International Law?" *Nordic Journal of International Law = Acta Scandinavica Juris Gentium* 79, no. 1 (2010): 110, https://doi.org/10.1163/157181009X12581245929640

[92] Frontex. "Who We Are: Our Mission." Accessed April 18, 2023, https://frontex.europa.eu/about-frontex/who-we-are/tasks-mission/

[93] Wærp, "Humanitarian Borderwork?" 22.

[94] Wærp, "Humanitarian Borderwork?" 3.

[95] Reviglio, "Externalizing Migration Management Through Soft Law," 4.

[96] Wærp, "Humanitarian Borderwork?" 22.

[97] Oxfam Novib, "The Do-No-Harm Approach: How to Ensure That Our Work Ccontributes to Peace and Not Conflict," June 25, 2018, https://www.oxfamnovib.nl/kenniscentrum/resources/blog-kenniscentrum/the-do-no-harm-approach-how-to-ensure-that-our-work-contributes-to-peace-not-conflict

[98] Wærp, "Humanitarian Borderwork?" 22.

[99] Andersson, *Illegality, Inc.,* 76-77.

Moreover, the continuously-persevering uncertainty and exclusion during migrants' travel and arrival discussed by Treiber can generate a politics of physical and psychological exclusion.[100] During travels from Libya and after arrival into Italy, migrants are faced with discrimination and *Othering*, both in societal and political terms. In fact, resulting from the detainment of migrants by Italian and Libyan coast guards after frequent Search and Rescue operations in the Mediterranean, people are placed in a "never-ending" pattern of deportation and detainment: a state of stuckedness of the migrant chess pieces within the broader power-controlled game.[101] As a result, the wide-spread EU and Frontex focus, – that of securitization and border control – can be defined as *Fortress* Europe's "Military-Humanitarian moment", as coined by Fassin.[102] This term refers to the combination of military and humanitarian actions, such as through the Frontex agency's actions and mission. Similarly, due to the continuously increasing border securitization and militarization, the European Council on Refugees and Exiles reported allegations against Frontex's actions: the agency has been failing to engage with "international and European asylum and human rights law", such as the 1951 Refugee Convention.[103] Frontex can therefore be argued to practice inhumane borderwork, as it "fails to meet the standards" for humanitarian actions,[104] similarly to Libya. Moreover, following the TPO, as EU states finance Frontex, accountability for inhumane actions by Frontex should be placed upon the agency as well as the financing powers: those who manipulate the chess board to attain their end-goal(s).

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[100] Magnus Treiber, "Grasping Kiflu's Fear – Informality and Existentialism in Migration from North-East Africa," (Modern Africa: Politics, History and Society 1, no. 2, 2014): 3.
[101] Wærp, "Humanitarian Borderwork?" 22.
[102] Wærp, "Humanitarian Borderwork?" 12.
[103] "Editorial: Fronting up to Frontex," *European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE),* April 2, 2021, https://ecre.org/editorial-fronting-up-to-frontex/
[104] Wærp, "Humanitarian Borderwork?" 22.

3.0 FRAMEWORK ANALYSIS: *MYTHS* OF THE CHESS PIECES

Chapter 3 presents the relevance of Existentialism and Necropolitics as a framework for migration studies, by means of understanding the ways in which the myth of the migrant *Other* is created and limited by discourse. Moreover, this chapter will discuss Italy and Libya's migration management history, and apply Foucauldian and Social Constructivist DA to the 2017 MoU, with the aim of understanding the relation between Italian and Libyan inter-state agreements and discourse, including Necropolitical and exclusionary narratives.

3.1 Necropolitics and the *Myth* of the Migrant *Other*

Since the emergence of the 2015 migration *crisis* and growing presence of securitization discourse in Libya, Italy, and the EU overall, migrants are increasingly being placed in a state of stuckedness. Mbembe and Corcoran build upon the theory of Necropolitics, or Necropower: an "inversion between life and death" aimed to eradicate any "distinction between means and ends".[105] They argue that dictating whether a person(s) can die or live is the utmost power and sovereignty one can have.[106] The authors discuss the 'social' death, a death created by the powerful separating the *Us* from the migrant *Other,* forcing the *Other* to prove they are like the rest.[107] A link can be made between *Othering*, Necropolitics, and Existentialism, the latter which first introduced by philosopher and playwright Jean-Paul Sartre as the philosophical understanding of one's existence being "dependent" on other people.[108] Therefore, it can be argued that through securitization discourse and *Othering*, Libya and Italy have created a system of dependence for migrants: the chess pieces must rely on the players to obtain any agency that is taken away as soon as one is given a labelled of the *Other*, whether as a *legal* or *illegal* migrant. Consequently, migration discourse and policies create a state of stuckedness in which migrants are left through growing exclusionary and (in-)security sentiments. In fact, Mbembe and Corcoran emphasize the necropolitically-incentivized *myth* of the migrant *Other*.[109] To further academic discussion on the *myth* of the migrant *Other*, it is relevant to

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[105] Mbembe and Corcoran, *Necropolitics*, 38.
[106] Mbembe and Corcoran, *Necropolitics*, 66.
[107] Mbembe and Corcoran, *Necropolitics*, 132.
[108] Jack Reynolds, "Sartre: Hell Is Other People," Chapter in *Understanding Existentialism*, (Understanding Movements in Modern Thought. Acumen Publishing, 2005), 98-99. doi:10.1017/UPO9781844653690.004
[109] Mbembe and Corcoran, *Necropolitics*, 138.

view the migration policies and public perception as leaving migrants in a state of social, political, physical, and personal existential stuckedness. Graver's analysis of Waiting for Godot, a play about existentialism and unknowingness, presents the commentary on the protagonists being reinstated by "suffering of being": an aspect which can be directly connected to the *myth* of the *Other*.[110]

Italy-Libya agreements and treaties legitimize Italy's funding and training of Libyan authorities' (actions) in bringing migrants (back) into "hell" Libya,[111] leaving them in a "threshold between worlds," both physically and psychologically.[112] This stuckedness between transitory and arrival countries, as Mbembe and Corcoran present throughout their book, pushes migrants between life and death. Therefore, the chess players, through power and Speech Acts, utilize Necropolitics to create the multi-faceted Existential stuckedness of the pieces. Migrants are left in a state of physical limbo through uncertainty and detention centers, as well as mental stuckedness due to absence of agency, and socio-political stuckedness as a result of social exclusion and inability to participate and vote in politics of their countries of origin and arrival. In sum, through Necropolitical power, Libya, Italy, and EU states overall create a multi-dimensional state of Existential stuckedness for migrants. Relevantly, Treiber suggests forced migration as pushing individuals in an existential "gap between being and longing".[113] Additionally, Mbembe and Corcoran insist on the effects of migration policies and border securitization on migrants as generating individuals without agency over freedom, time, and social relations, pushing them further into the "alienated individual".[114] This process of alienation relates to processes of *Othering* and criminalization of migrants, which is studied throughout Chapter 3.

3.1.1 Existential Stuckedness: Between Social Life and Death

The state of Existential stuckedness between social, political, and physical life and death of migrants is arguably created and furthered through Speech Acts and narratives of (in-)security, danger, and anxiety. In fact, Shcenk discusses the roles of securitization discourse in generating an identity of the migrant *Other* between life and death, as securitization discourse is utilized to

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[110] Lawrence Graver, "Samuel Beckett, "Approaching the play: *Waiting for Godot*," (Second edition., 2004): 51.
[111] Liguori, *Migration Law and the Externalization of Border Controls*, 12.
[112] Andersson, *Illegality, Inc.*, 137.
[113] Treiber, "Grasping Kiflu's Fear," 12-13.
[114] Mbembe and Corcoran, *Necropolitics*, 142.

legitimize alterations in policies and narratives.[115] However, as a result of the afore-mentioned discourse, those in power exclude migrants from social and political life.[116]

Terms used to further distinguish certain migrants, such as *illegal* or *irregular*, although they theoretically refer to whether border crossings were done with correct documentations and approvals, present a loss of migrants' agency and control over their lives.[117] Thus, compared to *legal* or *regular* migrants, persons deemed as *illegal* are stripped of any remaining agency, and *Othered* further from their law-abiding counterparts.[118] Therefore, this paper argues that *Othering* of migrants occurs in two-fold ways: first through the exclusion of all migrants from social and political life, and second through the exclusion of *clandestine* or *illegal* migrants from *legal* migrants.[119] In addition to being excluded from social identity and belonging, *Othering* of migrants pushes persons further into restrictive categories, consequently integrating said categories within policies.[120] As a result, migrants often are placed onto different "legal, political, and social statuses", consequently creating and normalizing a half-way state between migrants' social, political, and autonomous lifes and deaths.[121]

3.2 Libya-Italy Chess Game: Single or Multi-Faceted?

In 1911, Italy began the colonization process of Libya, which lasted until 1951, when the country's independence was announced.[122] In the initial years of independence, Libya was ruled by a King, until Muammar Qaddafi took over through the 1969 coup-d'état, afterwhich Libya was declared a republic.[123] Under Gaddafi's rule, Libya implemented migration strategies directed towards EU member-states so as to ensure the removal of economic sanctions which had been implemented against the country since 1968.[124] In fact, in 2003, Gaddafi began to progressively release "irregular migration" into Italy, which resulted in Italy creating a "campaign" aimed towards

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[115] Schenk, Caress, "The Migrant Other: Exclusion without Nationalism?" Nationalities Papers 49, no. 3 (2021): 399. doi:10.1017/nps.2020.82.
[116] Schenk, "The Migrant Other," 400.
[117] Schenk, "The Migrant Other," 402.
[118] Schenk, "The Migrant Other," 402.
[119] Schenk, "The Migrant Other," 402.
[120] Schenk, "The Migrant Other," 403.
[121] Schenk, "The Migrant Other," 403.
[122] Britannica, "History of Libya," *Britannica*, accessed May 20, 2023, https://www.britannica.com/place/Libya/History.
[123] Britannica, "History of Libya."
[124] Tsourapas, "Migration Diplomacy in the Global South," 2376-2377.

the lifting of the EU's "arms embargo" against Libya.[125] Libya's relation with Italy under Gaddafi's rule can arguably be defined as capacity-swamping, a term coined by Greenhill referring to a state's intentional coercion of another entity or state "into submission".[126] In sum, Libya's chess game was directed towards primarily economic benefits of the country through tactical migration management and policies.

More recently, however, Libya and Italy's rulers between 2007 and 2008 – Gaddafi and Berlusconi – signed a multi-faceted agreement: the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation. The agreement highlighted the states' historical past, as Berlusconi publicly apologized for its "colonial brutalities", as well as including a myriad of economic and political benefits.[127] Through the treaty, Libya formally began to work alongside Italy to fight "irregular migration" as Europe's *Border Guard*, and Italy agreed to direct $5 billion throughout twenty years to aid with Libya's infrastructure development.[128] Since 2008, Italy has, similarly to Libya, been implementing an issue-linkage strategy: Italy by means of furthering the implementation of securitization discourse and border externalization strategies, and Libya for economic and power gain.[129] In sum, all of the bilateral agreements between Libya and Italy since 2007/2008 can be argued to have established the path for migration management; the chess players gained control of the pieces and board through agreements, policies, and Speech Acts.[130]

3.2.1 Existing Literature and Italy-Libya Relevant Theories

An analysis of existing literature on Libya's migration management history is crucial in determining how discourse altered Libya's and Italy's migration management and societal perceptions on migration. Various theories have been proposed to analyze Libya's, and more specifically Gaddafi's, migration management and policies. Tsourapas, through a coherent theoretical framework, focuses on coercive and cooperative strategies, arguing that "states in the Global South", such as Libya, push for change in connection to at times unrelated issues:

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[125] Tsourapas, "Migration Diplomacy in the Global South," 2377.

[126] Tsourapas, "Migration Diplomacy in the Global South," 2377.

[127] Tsourapas, "Migration Diplomacy in the Global South," 2377.

[128] Tsourapas, "Migration Diplomacy in the Global South," 2377.

[129] Tsourapas, "Migration Diplomacy in the Global South," 2377.

[130] Alessandra Ferrini, "Italy, Libya and the EU," in *The Entangled Legacies of Empire*, (Manchester, England: Manchester University Press, 2023), accessed May 20, 2023, https://doi.org/10.7765/9781526163455.00029.

issue-linkage strategy.[131] However, Tsourapas refers to Libya as an "extreme case," because unlike most countries in the Global South, Gaddafi implemented both coercive and cooperative strategies, at times interchangeably, rather than solely one strategy.[132]

The combination of agreements which make up the MoU are inaccessible online; for this reason, this research will draw upon solely from the MoU signed in 2017. The MoU signees consist of the government of the Italian Republic and the Libyan government of National Unity, which will henceforth be referred to as the parties. Moreover, this paper presents a brief discourse analysis of recent press statements and governmental speeches by Meloni, Italy's current prime minister since October 2022, as well as by Charles Michel, the European Council President, and two Libyan news sources: T*he Libya Update: Latest Libyan News* and the governmental *Libyan News Agency* (LANA).

3.3 The 2017 MoU: Structuring the Chess Game

The Italian government's copy of the 2017 MoU arguably begins through a polarized positioning of migration management, policies, and narratives. The primary focus of the parties within the MoU is to "address the challenges that negatively impact peace, security and stability in the two countries, and in the Mediterranean in general."[133] Before the agreement's articles are introduced, the importance for "control and security" of borders is highlighted, consequently displaying the central focus of Italy and Libya regarding migration as being power and border authority, rather than protecting human lives.[134] The terms *challenge* and *negatively impact* applied alongside *peace*, *security*, and *stability* present the two parties' application of securitization discourse and Speech Acts, which, as discussed by Stritzel, produces power and authority.[135] Through such, the 2017 MoU displays the parties' focus on border policies and (in-)security to justify any further border externalization or militarization.[136]

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[131] Tsourapas, "Migration Diplomacy in the Global South," 2370-2372.

[132] Tsourapas, "Migration Diplomacy in the Global South," 2371.

[133] "Memorandum d'intesa sulla cooperazione nel campo dello sviluppo, del contrasto all'immigrazione illegale, al traffico di esseri umani, al contrabbando e sul rafforzamento della sicurezza delle frontiere tra lo Stato della Libia e la Repubblica Italiana," *Italian Government,* February 2 2017, 1, https://www.governo.it/sites/governo.it/files/Libia.pdf

[134] "Memorandum d'intesa," 2.

[135] Stritzel, "Towards a Theory of Securitization," 360.

[136] Stępka, *Identifying Security Logics in the EU Policy Discourse*, 99.

Both parties provide themselves the possibility to accuse *illegal* or *irregular* persons or systems for the urgent need to place focus on national security.[137] In fact, within the same page, the agreement states the need for the parties' combined efforts towards combatting the issues caused by "growing fluxes of clandestine migrants".[138] The separation of *clandestine migrants* from *legal* migrants, which emerges throughout the MoU, presents the agreement's use of "unacceptable language", as argued by Liguori, which generates additional exclusion of certain migrants from the already-existing national exclusion of migrants.[139] Furthermore, a language of urgency is utilized through the phrase "cooperate to identify urgent solutions to the issue of *illegal* migrants crossing Libya to travel to Europe by sea".[140] Calling for the need for *urgent* solutions to stop *illegal* migrants rather than to find safe migration routes furthers the emerged normalization of a state of emergency which appeared in Europe in 2015. In sum, a Social-Constructivist and Foucauldian DA of the 2017 MoU presents the ever-growing exclusionary and securitization policies in the countries.

3.3.1 Chess Player Tactics Through the MoU: Responsibility or Unaccountability?

Preceding the confirmation of cooperation in the 2017 agreement, both parties place focus on the obligations they hold to "customary international law and agreements" which bring them, together with Italy's membership to the EU.[141] However, this agreement lacks to consider Italy's commitment to the 1951 Refugee Convention, a covenant which Libya is not a part of.[142] Liguori argues that, through the TPO, Italy should be held responsible for complicity to any violation of migrant or refugee by Libya.[143] The TPO considers a state – in this case Italy – directly responsible for any actions of mistreatment of persons – thus migrants – conducted by the other state or party in an agreement – therefore Libya –.[144] Therefore, by providing "finances, [...] infrastructure, and transport" to Libya,[145] Italy can and should be held accountable for any inhumane use of resources or

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[137] Stępka, *Identifying Security Logics in the EU Policy Discourse*, 99.

[138] "Memorandum d'intesa," 1.

[139] Liguori, *Migration Law and the Externalization of Border Controls*, 10.

[140] "Memorandum d'intesa," 1-2.

[141] "Memorandum d'intesa," 2.

[142] "Submission by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees For the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights' Compilation Report Universal Periodic Review: 3rd Cycle, 36th Session, LIBYA," *RefWorld, UNHCR,* October 2019, https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/5e1749392.pdf.

[143] Liguori, Migration Law and the Externalization of Border Controls, 34.

[144] Liguori, Migration Law and the Externalization of Border Controls, 31.

[145] "Memorandum d'intesa," 2.

finance by the Libyan government.[146] Furthermore, as the chess players have strong political (discourse) influence, power, and sovereignty, the board and pieces are controlled by them: in Italy through border externalization and push-backs, and in Libya through human rights violations within the country's (maritime) borders. In fact, within the 2017 MoU, the agreement explicitly states the intentional use of available Italian and EU finances towards the development of border patrols and reception centers controlled by Libya.[147] Through such, one can argue the EU, similarly to Italy, should be held responsible for inhumane actions conducted by Libya. Moreover, the MoU subsequently discusses the importance of a "Euro-African cooperation" directed towards eliminating the source(s) of "clandestine immigration", with the aim of aiding and supporting countries from which migrants originate.[148] The MoU states the afore-mentioned cooperation as crucial to ensure the amelioration of service sectors in countries of origin, with the intended outcome of reducing poverty and unemployment.[149] Contestably, a focus is therefore placed solely on the security of Italian and Libyan nationals, rather than also including the safety of migrants. Moreover, through Speech Acts such as *clandestine*, the MoU furthers the exclusion of already-excluded migrants from Libya, Italian, and overall EU society. Doctors Without Borders, alongside other NGOs including but not limited to Amnesty International, highlight the inhumane aspects of the 2017 MoU, as it arguably furthers the "fueling of spiral of violence, torture, abuse and arbitrary detention" which occur in Libya.[150]

Additionally, findings show the increased death rates and push-backs into Libya that took place between 2017 and 2022 due to the MoU: a result which presents the clear ineffectiveness of the cooperation supposedly directed towards protecting lives and eradicating poverty and unemployment in countries of origin.[151] In fact, according to Lorenzo Figoni, a policy advisor of ActionAid – an NGO aimed towards decreasing poverty and furthering human rights – there is a lack of transparency in regards to Italian [and indirectly EU] funding of Libya's border patrols and their training, as well

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[146] Liguori, Migration Law and the Externalization of Border Controls, 34.

[147] "Memorandum d'intesa," 3.

[148] "Memorandum d'intesa," 3.

[149] "Memorandum d'intesa," 3.

[150] "Accordi Libia-Italia: la campagna #nonsonodaccordo contro il rinnovo," *Medecins Sans Frontieres*, October 22, 2022, https://www.medicisenzafrontiere.it/news-e-storie/news/accordi-libia-italia-rinnovo/.

[151] "Memorandum Italia-Libia: ActionAid, 'riportare i diritti dei migranti al centro delle politiche migratorie,'" *AgenSir*, February 2, 2023, https://www.agensir.it/quotidiano/2023/2/2/memorandum-italia-libia-actionaid-riportare-i-diritti-dei-migranti-al-centro-delle-politiche-migratorie/.

as "inadequate accountability" in relation to human rights.[152] In sum, the 2017 MoU places immense focus on the use of funds directed towards Libya from Italy, part of which derive from EU funds, with the explicit outcome of eradicating *clandestine* migration, poverty, and unemployment in and from the countries of origin. However, particularly due to the lack of publicly available transparency of finance-usage, this research highlights evidence of the ever-growing unaccountability of Libya, Italy, and the EU as a whole.

3.3.2 Necropolitical Discourse Analysis of the MoU: Death of the Pieces by the Players

Within 2017 MoU, findings present the frequent use of terms such as *negatively impact,* applied alongside *peace, stability*, *security*, and *national unit*y, and most importantly, *clandestine* and *illegal* migrant: Speech Acts which can be utilized to obtain power and manipulate public perceptions and discourse(s) of migrants.[153] Firstly, *peace*, *stability*, and *security* enhance the already-existing securitization discourse in Libya's and Italy's politics, which, according to Stritzel, generates power and authority.[154] Securitization Speech Acts create a sense of urgency for safety and protection, which arguably justifies the increased focus on border patrol and training in Libya by the Italian coast guard. Secondly, the naturalization of using terms along the lines of *clandestine* and *illegal*, as argued in Chapter 3.1(.1), generates an additional exclusionary perception of already-excluded migrants.

Through a Foucauldian and Social Constructivist view, one can argue that the Speech Acts and discourse oriented around securitization and criminalization produce a publicly-accepted perception of reality, and in turn, these perceptions further the normalization of the state of exception and the increase of exclusionary narratives. Within the MoU, the *myth* of the migrant *Other* as a security risk for Italy's and Libya's economies, politics, and societies is enhanced, rendering the debunking of the *myth* increasingly more difficult. As Social Constructivist DA does not consider the role of power in generating meanings, Foucauldian DA is highly relevant to analyze the MoU: the voices of the powerful – the states – suppress those of the powerless – the migrants, and in certain cases, civil society supporting migrants –.

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[152] "Memorandum Italia-Libia: ActionAid, 'riportare i diritti dei migranti al centro delle politiche migratorie.'"
[153] "Memorandum d'intesa."
[154] Stritzel, "Towards a Theory of Securitization," 360.

This analysis places focus on securitization discourse: an aspect furthered by state powers particularly since 2015 by means of criminalizing the *Other* and creating a stronger exclusionary homogenous national identity. In fact, through words such as *peace*, *stability*, and *security*, the Italian and Libyan government place emphasis on the importance of protecting a nation from the supposedly dangerous *illegal* migrants. This explicitly sets the scene for the Italy-Libya chess game: the pieces are socially, individually, politically, and economically controlled by the players. Through such, Foucauldian DA can be applied to argue that increased focus on securitization discourse can, and in the case of the MoU does, normalize the decreased focus on humanity and increased focus on border militarization. Moreover, aside from presenting the power at play within the MoU, Foucauldian and Social Constructivist DA can be utilized to present the exclusionary public perceptions of migrants built around fear and anxiety discourse. Through such, it is evident that power plays a central role in controlling the overall board.

Next, maintaining the frequent use of words such as *illegal* or *clandestine* by means of referring to migrants further augments the sovereignty and power of the state, and diminishes the remaining autonomy and agency of the migrant. The MoU can therefore be argued to present a powerful status of the players who continue to manipulate and control the pieces, board, and (inter-)national migration chess game overall. With the explicit division of migrants from the *Us*, as well as migrants from one another, the MoU furthers the social Existential stuckedness of migrants. In sum, the MoU utilizes exclusionary discourse, resulting in the emergence and propagation of a state between social, political, and individual life and death of migrants. As a result, Libyan and Italy public and political discourses continue building around the perception of insecurity and anxiety due to *illegal* migrants, therefore facilitating the continue securitization discourse and policies of the nations, as well as diminishing migrants' remaining autonomy.

4.0 CASE STUDY JUSTIFICATION: SPEECH ANALYSIS

Drawing from the DA of the 2017 MoU, the following chapter will expand the analysis, with a focus on more recent Speech Acts by governmental actors and media sources from both countries. The outcome of such analysis is to determine the trends of political and public migration discourse in Libya and Italy, as a way to subsequently apply Necropolitics and Existential stuckedness to the study.

4.1 The Italian Game: Political Statements of 2023

Through linguistic manipulation, power is often-time abused and dominated through various means: namely mass media, policies, and narratives.[155] In fact, Van Dijk highlights the frequent use of anti-migrant discourse fabricated by the government and/or media through discourse, and habitually creating a negative narrative of migrants as they are presented as the cause of national economic decline and unemployment.[156] This research portion therefore draws upon the Italian Government's Presidency of the Council of Ministersweb articles, videos, and video transcripts. Five recent statements and communications by Giorgia Meloni, the prime minister of Italy since October 2022, and one statement by the European Council of March 23 to 24, 2023, will be utilized for the purpose of DA. Lastly, although the government's webpage publications and video transcripts are available in Italian, the original language of Meloni's statements, the analysis of the discourse and migration narratives utilized provide examples through the official government's English transcriptions.

4.1.1 Looking Into the Mediterranean's [In-]Security

Giorgia Meloni begins her statement with Al-Dabaiba, Libya's interim prime minister, referring to Libya as its "number one client", through which she emphasizes the urgent need for *crisis* management and protection.[157] It is important to note the use of the word *client*, as it presents Italy's economic benefits from cooperation with Libya. The January 2023 statement by Meloni generates a fear- and (in)security-oriented discourse, furthering the perception of the *crisis* and the

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[155] Teun A. Van Dijk, "Discourse and Manipulation," *Discourse & Society* 17, no. 3 (2006): 361. https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926506060250.
[156] Van Dijk, "Discourse and Manipulation," 361.
[157] "President Meloni's press statement with Prime Minister al-Dabaiba."

Other, as stated by Stępka and Voulgarelli-Christidou. Moreover, when arguing for inter-state cooperation between Libya and Italy, Meloni highlights the correlation between fighting "irregular entries" and smuggling.[158] However, Meloni's statement lacks consideration into the reality of border externalization and militarization: irregular entries increase, as well as smuggling and deaths, through the ever-growing unsafe routes due to closures of safer ones. Although the prime minister does mention the need to assure people are treated humanely, utilizing the terms *illegal* or *irregular* further polarizes the *Myth* of the Migrant *Other*. Manipulative policies, and simultaneously, discourses, generate an exclusionary national ideology, with the interest of the "dominant group", resulting in the emergence and persistence of social exclusion, and thus, socio-political and individual existentialism.

Furthermore, Meloni recalls the 2008 Friendship Treaty signed by Gaddafi and Berlusconi, maintaining the "strategic" importance of Libya as an economic partner.[159] It is important to note the role of (neo-)colonial power relations in the negotiation process, as discussed by Ronzitti.[160] Specifically, Italy's reliance on Libya for natural resources, namely oil, and border control for migration regulation. Ronzitti highlights the normalization of unequal relations between Italy and Libya since the treaty onwards, as many of Libya's demands and concerns for colonial damages were left unpaid.[161] Despite this, Meloni indirectly refers to Italy's colonial history with Libya as a "centuries of shared history" which unite the two countries.[162] In sum, Meloni presents Italy's relation with Libya as one of mutual benefit directed primarily towards economic stability and the control of *irregular* migration, in regards to both countries.

4.1.2 Europe's Polarization Power

During Meloni's part of the Press Statement with Michel, Italy's prime minister presents migration as a "European problem" which Italy has been discussing in recent years.[163] Similarly to her statement with Al-Dabaiba, Meloni's use of insecurity and anxiety-inducing discourse since the

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[158] "President Meloni's press statement with Prime Minister al-Dabaiba."
[159] "President Meloni's press statement with Prime Minister al-Dabaiba."
[160] Natalino Ronzitti, "The Treaty on Friendship, Partnership and Cooperation between Italy and Libya: New Prospects for Cooperation in the Mediterranean?" *Bulletin of Italian Politics*, Vol. 1, 2009.
[161] Ronzitti, "The Treaty on Friendship, Partnership and Cooperation between Italy and Libya," 127.
[162] "President Meloni's press statement with Prime Minister al-Dabaiba."
[163] Italian Government, "President Meloni's Press Statement with President of the European Council Charles Michel," *Presidency of the Council of Ministers*, January 30, 2023,
https://www.governo.it/en/articolo/president-meloni-s-press-statement-president-european-council-charles-michel/21653

beginning of the speech sets a path for the entirety of the statement. Additionally, Meloni highlights Europe's plan for generating a "defence" against migration: border externalization.[164] Apropos, the argument for external borders is furthered through the narrative of social and national (in-)security. Moreover, she refers to the audience as "civilized", arguably indirectly generating a sentiment of exclusion: the civilized *Us* and the uncivilized *Other*.[165] Meloni maintains the feeling of instability and fear throughout when talking directly to the audience about "this difficult time" Italy is experiencing.[166] Through such, Meloni renders migrants the scapegoats for Italy's instability. Narratives and discourse generated by persons or actors in power, such as the media and presidents or prime ministers, creates the polarization of ideologies and the need for scapegoats. Consequently, polarized, and in Italy's case, negative social and political perceptions on migration, form an "illegitimate" discursive power.[167]

4.1.3 Normalizing a State of Exception

On February 26, 2023, a shipwreck occurred off Calabria's coast, by Cutro. As a response, Charles Michel addressed Italy, stating the importance of implementing a European strategy to migration, such as externalization, return and readmission inter-state agreements, and "opportunities for legal migration".[168] Externalization of borders, however, rather than fighting crime and ensuring safe passages, "perpetuate [...] the 'problem' they are meant to combat".[169] In fact, border politicization, and 'humanitarian borderwork' or interventions, for example, what Frontex claims to work toward, and the 2002-2017 MoU, generate a normality within the exception produced by *crises*, as argued by Schmitt and Agamben.[170] Furthermore, as highlighted by Andersson, illegality is produced and maintained through discourse, and contains "new ways" to be people through terms such as *illegal*.[171]

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[164] "President Meloni's Press Statement with President of the European Council Charles Michel."
[165] "President Meloni's Press Statement with President of the European Council Charles Michel."
[166] "President Meloni's Press Statement with President of the European Council Charles Michel."
[167] "President Meloni's Press Statement with President of the European Council Charles Michel."
[168] "President Meloni's Press Statement with President of the European Council Charles Michel."
[169] Andersson, *Illegality, Inc.,* 130.
[170] Wærp, "Humanitarian Borderwork?"
[171] Andersson, *Illegality, Inc.,* 16.

4.1.4 Alert for Italy's Inherent Danger

In line with other of Meloni's statements, the security risk of the European continent is highlighted, furthering the normalization of the term *crisis* regarding migration.[172] Furthermore, although Meloni mentions a structural crisis, she presents migration as *the crisis*, rather than Europe's crisis of policies, as discussed by Liguori.[173] Undoubtedly, migration routes created and controlled by smugglers result in "inherent danger".[174] However, Meloni's argument lacks consideration of the effects of border securitization and externalization on migration routes' safety. Rather than finding "external solutions" to the continentally-perceived *crisis*, the inadequacy of EU's management and policies pushes migration routes further into insecurity and danger, and externalizes the EU's responsibility for inhumane management or actions.[175] Liguori, accordingly, discusses the EU's "unrealistic expectations" of the effectiveness and results of border control.[176]

Meloni's statement to the Italian senate, preceding the European Council Meeting of March 23-24, promotes the enforcement of Frontex and its resources, with a brief mention of the border control's mandate: safety and efficiency of external borders. However, Frontex's mandate language and practices generally do not align. The Frontex-monitored EU external borders extend over 80,000 kilometers, and are efforts are increasingly placed towards identifying and recording "flows of persons" crossing the Fortress Europe's borders.[177] Nonetheless, as the predominant language and discourse of Frontex is risk-oriented, Meloni's statement, as well as Frontex's language, can be argued to create and maintain a state of anxiety and unease, consequently furthering the *myth* of the migrant *Other*, which emerged contestably from the 2015 European migration *crisis*.[178]

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[172] Italian Government, "President Meloni's address to the Senate ahead of the European Council meeting on 23-24 March," *Presidency of the Council of Ministers,* March 21, 2023, https://www.governo.it/en/articolo/president-meloni-s-address-senate-ahead-european-council-meeting-23-24-march/22158

[173] Liguori, *Migration Law and the Externalization of Border Controls*, 51.

[174] "President Meloni's address to the Senate ahead of the European Council meeting on 23-24 March."

[175] Liguori, *Migration Law and the Externalization of Border Controls*, 51-52.

[176] Liguori, *Migration Law and the Externalization of Border Controls*, 51-52.

[177] Papastavridis, "'Fortress Europe' and FRONTEX," 76.

[178] Andrew W. Neal, "Securitization and Risk at the EU Border: The Origins of FRONTEX," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 47, no. 2 (2009): 24-25. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-5965.2009.00807.x.

4.2 Libya's Linguistic Manipulation: The Chess Game of 2023

Recent publications by *The Libya Update: Latest Libyan News* and the governmental *Libyan News Agency* (LANA) related to migration provide examples relevant for determining the general public and governmental narratives on migration, similarly to the analysis of Italian governmental statements and press releases. Moreover, as migration narratives are often-times altered by politicians for political gain, it is important to consider the upcoming election in Libya, scheduled to occur sometime in 2023, as a possible reason for political polarization of public migration discourse.[179] In fact, a recent publication by the Libyan National Security Council presents the state's focus on "national security", consequently aiming to halt any projects, including within the field of migration, which may affect Libya's security.[180] A trend has been furthering national focuses towards security, as presented by the LANA publication, which displays a strong similarity between Italian, EU, and Libyan migration policies and narratives.

4.2.1 Libya's Crisis of *Irregular* Migrants

The effects of EU policies have been exacerbating the violation of human rights in Libya, rendering humane actions and responsibilities increasingly difficult for Europe's *border Guard*.[181] However, similarly to Meloni's multiple statements, the migration phenomenon into Europe which emerged in 2015, is continuously referred to as the European *Migration crisis*, maintaining the common European narrative of migration.[182] Through the use of the term *crisis*, the Libyan news source presents evidence of a homogeneous view on migration both in Libya and EU member-states: states wish to maintain a homogenous exclusionary national identity, an aspect which migration threatens. Moreover, Libya's ministry addresses the need for increased cooperation between Italy and Libya, as well as the EU, to ensure effective "protection" of borders.[183] Comparably to Italy's

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[179] Tsourapas, "Migration Diplomacy in the Global South," 2377.

[180] Libyan News Agency (LANA), "The Libyan National Security Council announces its rejection of any projects affecting national security, especially immigration issues," April 20, 2023, https://lana.gov.ly/post.php?lang=en&id=276389.

[181] The Libya Update, "Libya cannot solve the migration crisis on behalf of Europe, Libyan parliamentarian states," *Latest Libyan News*, April 9, 2023, https://libyaupdate.com/libya-cannot-solve-the-migration-crisis-on-behalf-of-europe-libyan-parliamentarian-states/.

[182] The Libya Update, "Libya cannot solve the migration crisis on behalf of Europe."

[183] The Libya Update, "Libyan and Italian interior ministers launch work of joint task force on immigration," *Latest Libyan News*, February 21, 2023, https://libyaupdate.com/libyan-and-italian-interior-ministers-launch-work-of-joint-task-force-on-immigration/.

increased border securitization, the Libyan ministry's statement presents the furthering of efforts and "joint task force" between Italy and Libya, rendering the narrative of secure borders more urgent than that of secure migration routes. Lastly, the Libyan news sources analyzed present the frequent discourse on migration alongside legality: Libya, as well as Italy, present a polarized view of the phenomenon of migration, through the use of words such as *illegal* or *irregular*.[184]

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[184] The Libya Update,"Libya cannot solve the migration crisis on behalf of Europe" and "Libyan and Italian interior ministers launch work of joint task force on immigration."

CONCLUSION: DIVERGING FROM LIFE-DEATH LIMBO

This research was driven by the two-fold question: Firstly, what roles do Italian and Libyan media and governmental discourses play on migration policies? Secondly, what influence do Italian and Libyan political and social discourse have on public perceptions of migrants and inter-state migration agreements? This thesis worked towards investigating the ever-growing anxiety sentiment surrounding migration, specifically in Italy, Libya, and the EU, particularly since the coinage of the term *crisis* in 2015. Findings present the continued reference to the migration *crisis* by European powers to normalize and further the use of securitization discourse in both political and public narratives. Furthermore, the ever-growing securitization and crisis-oriented discourse has facilitated Italy's, Libya's, and the EU's policies of border externalization and security-focused inter-state agreements.

In sum, political and public discourses have pushed national perceptions of migrants towards exclusionary and fear-inducing ones: the chess players are effectively controlling the board and the pieces. This has resulted in various aspects, all of which increase the myth of the migrant *Other*, and diminish migrant autonomy and diverge them towards a state of existential life-death stuckedness. Firstly, the states create a justification for militarization and securitization actions, such as pushbacks, the creation and continuation of Frontex and its methods, and the continuously-increasing border externalization. Secondly, actors in power draw on the socially-accepted exclusionary perception of migrants to gain votes and further political and media anti-migrant discourse, an aspect which simultaneously increases the normalization of xenophobia and furthers the *myth* of the migrant *Other*. Lastly, due to the growing anti-migrant sentiment in Libya and Italy, migrants, whom already have little control over what occurs during their travels and arrivals, are pushed further into a state of existential stuckedness between social, political, and individual life and death. Specifically, through the 2017 ratification of the MoU, Italy and Libya further normalized the *myth* of the migrant *Other*, and redefined the states' focus; Rather than prioritizing and placing efforts towards the safety and security of migrants during and after their travels, the MoU highlights the urgency of protecting the state and the nationals from the *Other*. Although this paper attempted to present an extensive analysis of Libyan and Italian migration management policies, discourse, and perception, two central challenges were found. Firstly, access to

governmental policies and agreements is limited, rendering DA of primary-resources difficult. Secondly, this research was conducted without knowledge of the Arabic language, therefore speech analysis of Libyan newspaper articles or governmental statements were conducted with possibly inaccurate translations by Google Translate.

Allowing Autonomy of the Chess Pieces: Furthering the Research

Additional research should be conducted to further migration discourse studies, with a specific focus on the 2022 ratification of the MoU. Through such, growing migration management and discourse trends can provide further insight into the current state of the Migration Chess Game. Moreover, this paper recommends further attention be placed upon existing data of finances and funds directed towards Libya from Italy and the EU. As this research has presented, Italy's and Libya's agreements and migration strategies are gradually becoming more securitized and militarized: therefore, there is a need for a specific focus aimed towards understanding the exact sum of and manner in which funds are allocated. Lastly, an analysis of the common use of migrant and danger discourses used interchangeably, such as through *crisis*, *illegal*, and *(in-)security*, should be conducted to further understand the influence of discourse on socially-accepted perceptions and identities, and to apply the finds upon current (inter-)national policies and Speech Acts.

As a result, future research can be aimed towards analyzing the relation between Speech Acts and actions of the two countries, and applied alongside newly published articles, statements, and social media. Relevantly, it is suggested to also place focus on Libyan and Italian politician's (social-)media posts, such as *Tweets* by Meloni (see Appendix A). A study of social media migration discourse could provide crucial insight into the normalization of anxiety- and fear-producing Speech Acts. Lastly, this paper suggests a further study into the interchangeability of terms such as *illegal* and *insecurity* along-side migration. Through the afore-mentioned recommendations, the analysis of Italian and Libyan migration discourse and policies can be furthered and applied onto de-securitized policies and narratives. Ideally, this can help providing more analysis of discourse, perceptions, power, and Necropolitics.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A. Giorgia Meloni: Italian Control of the Migration Chess Board

Fig. 3. Tweet by Meloni.[185]

Translation of *Tweet* by Giorgia Meloni.

"On the subject of security and the fight against illegal immigration, Italians have expressed themselves at the polls, consequently choosing our program and our vision. In recent years, we have witnessed inadequate management of the phenomenon, which has produced great and evident inconvenience: collapsing hotspots, increased landings, law enforcement at their last legs. And all this has led to a growing climate of general insecurity. Our goal is to defend legality, security, and the dignity of each person. This is why we want to put a stop to illegal immigration, avoid new deaths at sea, and fight human traffickers. The citizens have asked us to defend the Italian borders and the government will not betray its word."

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[185] Giorgia Meloni (@GiorgiaMeloni), "*I cittadini ci hanno chiesto di difendere i confini italiani e questo Governo non tradirà la parola data*," *Twitter*, November 8, 2022. https://twitter.com/GiorgiaMeloni/status/1590059910225879040.

Appendix B. Frontex Mission and Tasks

Fig. 4. Frontex Mission.[186]