Submitted Paper

Progress in Human Geography
2023, Vol. 0(0) 1–18

DOI: 10.1177/03091325231174311
journals.sagepub.com/home/phg


Living digitally like a migrant: Everyday smartphone practices and the (Re)mediation of hostile state-affects

Hannah Morgan
Geography, Durham University, Durham, UK

Abstract

Over the last decade, geographical research has documented how digital technologies are changing experiences of (im)mobility into and within Europe. For irregular migrants in the European context, the smartphone has become a vital digital tool for mediating everyday experiences of hostile environments that have become characteristic of mobility landscapes. Building upon novel work in Social Media and Media studies, which explores the entanglements between smartphones and mobility, this paper aims to bring forward a geographical research agenda that centres everyday smartphone practices as a central object of inquiry in work on irregular migration and broader work around everyday life: specifically in the context in which hostility has become one of the main affective experiences of mobility governance throughout Western Europe. Introducing the concept of *living (digitally) like a migrant*, this paper highlights how we can no longer conceptualise irregular 'migrant life' without consideration of the way in which life, in a biopolitical sense, is productive of and enmeshed within, everyday digital practices. This paper thus offers an agenda for geographic research concerned with forms of the everyday: demanding we can no longer conceptualise the everyday, nor experiences of irregular migration, without serious consideration of the digital – specifically of everyday smartphone practices. We must, therefore, take seriously the forms of digital agency or experience that (re)mediate encounters with state-administered hostility, whilst remaining open to the affirmative forms of living or flourishing that may emerge through everyday engagement with the digital.

Keywords

Smartphones, digital geographies, mobility, state governance, hostility

I Introduction

In this article, I chart a conceptual path towards a geographic research agenda which directly considers the increasingly central role that everyday smartphone practices have in (re)mediating experiences of increasingly hostile environments across Europe. Through the concept of living (digitally) like a migrant, I propose that geographic research must take seriously the everyday digital practices that

Corresponding author:
Hannah Morgan, Geography, Durham University, Durham DH1 3LE, UK.
Email: hannah.morgan@durham.ac.uk

animate asylum seekers' and refugees' lives: specifically in their affective, imaginary, or material encounters and (re)mediations of state-produced hostility. In doing so, I aim to emphasise that we can no longer collectively work on irregular 'migrant life' within the geographic discipline – and beyond – without a direct engagement with how life transpires through, and within, smartphone screens.

The focus on smartphones in this paper aims to draw attention to the centrality of this specific technology in current everyday living (Miller and Matviyenko, 2014; Nemer, 2018). Although exact numbers of how many refugees or asylum seekers own or use smartphones are difficult to establish, Casswell (2019) suggests that over two-thirds of refugees living in camps across Jordan were active mobile phone users, whilst Latonero et al. (2018) reports that over 94% of men and 67% of women in a migrant camp in Greece [unnamed] owned a mobile phone. Both academic and non-academic research has highlighted the unprecedented demand for smartphone infrastructure such as sim cards and data access (Gillespie et al., 2018; Latonero and Kift, 2018). Moreover, we must acknowledge that, in the context of irregular migration, the smartphone has become a highly controversial technology: one that often elicits doubt and mistrust of claims to sanctuary (see: Leurs and Ponzanesi, 2018). Questions around legitimacy usually accompany discussions of smartphones in popular media – especially when they are used directly in mediating journeys to Western states, or in helping subjects navigate increasingly complex laws or regulations (see: Zijlstra and Liempt, 2017).

In the everyday context of asylum, smartphones have thus become indispensable technological tools for living in a new place: from completing mundane tasks such as making hospital appointments, to submitting evidence for asylum claims (Dieter et al., 2019). Yet, smartphones are also mobilised for an ever-expanding range of everyday tasks including managing social networks (Alencar et al., 2019; Borkert et al., 2018; Gillespie et al., 2018; Leurs and Smets, 2018; Twigt, 2018), creative pursuits (Gillespie et al., 2018), self-tracking (Lupton, 2018; Rose et al., 2020), finding love or companionship (Koch and Miles, 2021), completing bureaucratic tasks (Dekker et al., 2018), political organising (Ekman, 2018) or simply distracting from boredom. In sum, the smartphone has become the one distinct technology through which 'everyday' life now gets lived through. In the aim of this paper, it is important to note from the outset that it is what users do with smartphones, not the technology in itself, that is of theoretical and empirical interest. The smartphone is not a pre-given technological object (Miller et al., 2021). Instead, what makes smartphones smart is how they are curated, mobilised and used for particular aims or purposes by their users. Although it is important to recognise that digital divides do exist within Western liberal democratic societies (Ash et al., 2016; Zijlstra and Liempt, 2017) – and that access to owning or using a smartphone among irregular migrants is also unequally distributed – it is crucial to acknowledge that the current context in which smartphones have become central to everyday life.

Smartphones are thus changing how the irregular migrants across Europe are navigating the everyday lived realities of increasingly hostile border regimes (Coddington, 2020; Diminescu and Loveluck, 2014; Mayblin, 2019). There is a wide range of geographic work that focuses on the digitalisation of mobility: mainly focused on bordering practices (see: Minca et al., 2021; Amoore, 2011; Vaughan-Williams, 2008) and the role of digital data in surveillance (see: Tazzioli, 2021, 2015; Erel et al., 2016; Engbersen and Broeders, 2009). Very little work, however, has focused on explicitly exploring or conceptualising the everyday context of digital technology use: specifically, the central role that smartphones play in the everyday lived realities of migrants, both in relation to state-related practices of governance (Tazzioli, 2022; Tazzioli and De Genova, 2021) and more broadly in the everyday context of living within hostile environments across European states. Centring everyday smartphone practices in this paper, I aim to draw attention to how the affective experience of living in hostile arrangements is now almost always digitally (re)mediated. With this in mind, I propose that the everyday lives of migrants can no longer be theorised without explicit consideration of the entanglements between and within everyday smartphone practices. In this context, the spatio-temporal geographies of everyday smartphone use demand attention – how subjects are using them,

for what ends (if any), and the subsequent effects of these practices. In paying attention to the smartphone and its use in the everyday context, we thus enable the opportunity to engage critically with how state affects are translated, refracted and remade in the (digital) everyday encounter.

Mobilising everyday digital practices as an area of inquiry, I aim to build upon a rich array of work that has traced the intensified effects of hostility – as a specific affective experience of mobility governance regimes – across European states. Hostility has become, as I outline in the ((*Digitally) encountering hostility*) section of this paper, one of the main affective impacts of European migration controls in the legacy of the 2015 'migrant crisis' (Allsopp et al., 2015; Coddington, 2020; Tazzioli, 2020). Primarily enacted as a form of anticipatory action (Amoore, 2013; Baldwin, 2012; Smith and Vasudevan 2017), hostility is manifested and encountered through forms of risk governance: where 'risky' migrants, asylum seekers, or refugees are slowed, situated and controlled through specific governing apparatuses (Griffiths, 2014; Weheliye, 2014). Whilst a vast range of work identifies specific impacts of hostile policies and legislation across the European context, I suggest geographic research must also consider how hostility is increasingly encountered or (re) mediated through everyday digital practices: particularly that of the smartphone. As I outline in this paper, the everyday smartphone practices of irregular migrants living in and through hostile environments can provide novel ways through which we might theorise subject formation or agency – where affective atmospheres of state governance get (re) mediated or (re)distributed through everyday interactions with digital technologies.

As I will discuss in the (*Towards everyday smartphone geographies: living (Digitally) like a migrant*) section, we as geographers must remain open-minded to what this may look like theoretically and methodologically; smartphones are simultaneously technologies that compound experiences of hostility and (re)mediate them through an ever-expanding range of mundane, routine or habitual practices: some of which may be intentional or prolonged, whilst others may be fleeting, ephemeral or unconscious. Paying attention to everyday digital practices and their subsequent (re)mediation(s) of state-administered hostility becomes a lens through which we may be able to (re)conceptualise, or (re) imagine, an affirmative form of biopolitics that exists in everyday engagement with the smartphone.

Developing the concept of living (digitally) like a migrant, I thus aim to position an approach to researching everyday contexts that takes seriously the forms of digital agency (even if fleeting or temporary) that change or mediate encounters with state-administered affects, whilst simultaneously remaining open to the affirmative forms of living or flourishing that may emerge through everyday engagement with the digital. Working with the broader demand for tackling issues of methodological nationalism (see: Tazzioli, 2020; Huysmans and Pontes-Nogueria, 2016; De Genova, 2013), I aim to trace a geographic research agenda towards a feminist approach to everyday digital practices: one which traces the complexity of digital intersectionality and subjectivity. Bringing geographical work on irregular mobility and experiences of hostility into conversation with novel smartphone practices, I therefore ask, how might hostility be encountered and (re)mediated through everyday smartphone practices?

II (Digitally) encountering hostility

Over the past decade, increasingly hostile policies have been developed across European states to manage, prevent and deter illegitimate migrants from European territory (Coddington 2020; De Genova, 2018). The thread that unites many recent European policies is the clear hostile nature of them: the intention to either deter, or if unsuccessful, create conditions of non or bare livability (Darling, 2022). No longer insidious or subtle in their intention, policies across Europe – particularly those concerning smartphones or other digital technologies – now mobilise hostility directly as a normalised form of mobility management that prioritises creating and sustaining hostile environments for those seeking sanctuary outside of 'legal' [1]or recognised routes (Mayblin, 2019). Geography has been at the forefront of documenting the shift towards the hostile effects of governance (see: Scheel, 2021; Zampagni, 2016; De Genova, 2013; Papadopoulos and Tsianos, 2013).

From externalised and internalised borders (see: Yuval-Davis et al., 2018; Scheel, 2013), to increased and intensified surveillance (see: Aradau and Blanke, 2017; Erel et al., 2016), across the European context, states are continuously developing governance frameworks that reduce their obligations towards helping or providing sanctuary to irregular migrants (Almustafa, 2021; Coddington, 2020). Forms of violence can be simultaneously visible or fast – images of lifeboats and dead bodies on the shores of South East England, France, or the Mediterranean – whilst being slow or habitual – such as the increasingly extended periods of waiting in asylum application systems (Hyndman 2012; Tazzioli, 2021) or in detention centres (Stoler, 2013; Vaughan-Williams, 2008). Both forms of violence (in their spatio-temporal intensities) can be mobilised to think about how hostility has thus become a specific affective mode of mobility governance that burns in the background of everyday existence for illegalized or irregular migrants across Europe: not entirely characteristic of migrant lives, but that which conditions the possibilities of it in the everyday context.

What must be explicitly recognised is that hostility is neither administered nor felt equally. As Coddington (2020) argues, processes of racialization must be central to charting shifts in migration policies over the past decade. Mobility regimes and the attachment of risk to certain kinds of mobilities (irregular, illegal, suspicious) are always already radicalised (see: Coddington, 2020; Davies and Isakjee, 2019; Howell and Richter-Montpetit, 2019). Hostile policies – most explicitly in the UK, but increasingly so in other European contexts – firmly situate irregular migrants and asylum seekers as 'bad circulations' (Foucault, 2007: 18) and thus forms of risky mobility that must be secured against (Amoore, 2013; Burrell and Schweyher, 2019; Tazzioli 2021). In this context, hostility serves as a specific affective effect of governance, aimed at gradually eroding the risks that racialized subjects pose to the state (in relation to the nation, population and citizens).

Such racialised effects of hostility might be found in the visually immediate experiences of irregular migration across Europe: perhaps the headlines of floods, swathes or masses of non-white bodies arriving at European borders (see: Danewid, 2017; Anderson, 2017; Seiler, 2016). Or, it may be found in the everyday, mundane and often slow forms of violence that animate the everyday lived realities of migration governance regimes. For example, if we turn to the experience of bureaucratic application processes, hostility might be found in the active confusion or disorientation of subjects (see: Tazzioli, 2020, 2021). With the aim of deterrence, subjects are slowed and suspended through forms of exhaustion (Darling, 2022). This experience of exhaustion is a specific affect of hostility administered through state-led governance: forms of anticipatory governance that seek to minimise, slow and diminish 'risky' subjects based upon nationalistic ideas of borders, territory and difference. Hostility has, therefore, become a specific form of tempo-spatial governance through which radicalised individuals are gradually slowed and situated: through enduring the lived realities of European mobility governance in everyday life.

Yet, what has yet to be carefully considered are how hostile state affects are now increasingly digitally administered and (re)mediated. What might change in our current understanding or conceptualisation of the everyday lived realities of hostility if we re-centre digital everyday experiences? As previously stated, everyday digital technologies – particularly smartphones – have become novel ways in which the hostile effects of state governance can both reach individuals and be (re)mediated and (re)negotiated through everyday practices. As a discipline, we can no longer aim to develop theoretical accounts of the everyday without an engagement with the digital entanglements (often complex, messy and contradictory) that characterise the everyday. In charting a geographic research agenda towards the relevance of smartphones for mobility studies, there are two main touchpoints of governance we might consider.

1 Administrating hostility through the smartphone

As Diminescu and Loveluck (2014) suggest, all aspects of the (irregular) migrant experience are now impacted by the almost omnipresent existence of digital technology (Alencar et al., 2019; Leurs and Smets, 2018).

In the European context, the state is almost always now digitally mediated, with the smartphone now becoming one of the most significant touchpoints of digitally encountering the state. From border control (Amoore, 2013), to application portals, to bureaucratic government communication (Tazzioli, 2020, 2021), smartphones have become central technological objects through which the state mediates the everyday lived realities of subjects.

In the background of hostile policy development, the smartphone has become mobilised with the objective to obtain truth or evidence of (il)legitimacy from subjects. Across Europe, there is a growing trend of locating the truth, or legitimacy, of the subject in lives lived online: in digital traces of social media, contacts, or applications used on the device. An array of reports now identify how the mobile forensic industry is currently booming across Western states, as a means to obtain and extract smartphone data (Pieterse, 2020). In most states across Europe, smartphones are now commonly confiscated at borders or recalled by the government for inspection. Although a vast range of research addresses the nature of surveillance (see: Skinner, 2020; Vaughan-Williams, 2008, Lyon, 2001), the dynamic(s) that the smartphone now plays in this form of everyday surveillance remains largely unexamined – particularly how this technology is changing the nature of 'truth'-seeking. For example, it is now common practice in both Germany and the UK for governments to use smartphone data to cross-check claims made by individuals seeking asylum.

Data in the form of messages, social media interaction and location history are now commonly assembled and used, in many cases, to interrogate the legitimacy of claims to sanctuary. Echoing Browne's (2010, 2015) work on digital epidermalization, lives lived through the smartphone screen are increasingly extracted as data: collated, merged and assembled to serve as evidence of the subject themselves (Amoore, 2011, 2013). Truth is now located in the digital traces of the subject: from biometric traces (Maguire, 2012; Wevers, 2018) to, more recently, traces of the subject that exist in and through smartphone data. Moreover, more than just simply extracting smartphone data, states are simultaneously embedding smartphone capacities in the wide range of processes used to govern subjects. In the specific context of asylum and refugee experiences, the smartphone is now used in the process of submitting evidence for claims and communicating with subjects about the status of their claim: from emails to apps accessed through the smartphone. Although the digitalisation of the state is often justified through discourses of efficiency, scholars such as Tazzioli (2021, 2020) have highlighted how the integration of everyday digital technologies like smartphone messaging apps have become primary means through which asylum seekers and refugees are disoriented and disempowered through state communication. Tazzioli (2021, 2020) outlines how in camps across European states, mobile apps such as Whatsapp, Telegram and Viber are used to communicate government advice or messages – particularly distributing health advice during COVID-19. Here, Tazzioli (2021) outlines how the smartphone has become a technology of obstruction: where changing rules, controls or advice administered through smartphones result in difficulty navigating the already hostile landscape of Western states.

In such instances, we can see how digital devices have now become a key part of the technological assemblage of governing irregular mobility. If part of administering hostility can be found in the experience of slowness or suspension, then smartphones, and their accompanying affordances (such as social media, web messaging, emails, video calling etc.), are thus becoming increasingly weaponised by European states as a way of administering hostile affective experiences of governance. Exposing the myth of seamless connectivity (see: Nguyen-Thu, 2021), the digital affordances offered by the smartphone are now increasingly mobilised for gradually wearing down subjects in the everyday context: accumulating and compounding experiences of hostility through the smartphone itself. In this context, the role that the smartphone plays in state administration of hostile effects must be an ongoing area of geographic focus, where the role of the smartphone in state governance is centred as an object for geographical enquiry. When considering the role that the state plays in controlling mobility, we must pay attention to how this is now digitally mediated. This raises important questions about how

we conceptualise the state in, and through, its digital encounters and mediations.

2 (Re)mediating hostility through the smartphone

Despite the increasing incorporation of smartphones into hostile governance practices, I suggest that we must also pay close attention to how these hostile practices of state governance are felt, (re)mediated and (re)circulated among smartphone users. Yes, smartphones are becoming technologies of the state: used to control, surveil or identify subjects. However, we must also remain open (conceptually, theoretically and methodologically) to the possibilities that everyday smartphone practices enable outside a direct relationship to the state. If we are to genuinely aim to expand current understanding of the everyday lived realities of irregular mobility regimes and commit to undoing forms of methodological nationalism that continue to be insidiously embedded within forms of geographic knowledge production (Cresswell, 2010; Huysmans and Pontes-Nogueira, 2016; Scheel and Tazzioli, 2021), I suggest we must turn our focus to the everyday (digital) lived realities of subjects themselves.

Whilst this means taking seriously the negative, harmful or damaging role that smartphones play in the lives of subjects, it also means looking beyond a state-centric lens of irregular migration: to begin to identify how lives lived on, off and between smartphone screens may be productive of subject formation processes that exist outside of state-centric accounts – expanding our current understanding of everyday life in its messy, grounded and contextualised forms. Contributing to work within the geographical discipline, being aware of the forms of control and power that emerge through the smartphone is critical, but we simultaneously might find insight into how lives continue to live, form, or flourish through a multitude of digital practices that are part of this everyday experience of governance effects.

Current contributions to the role of digital devices within everyday experiences of irregular mobility are important (see: Tazzioli, 2021), but can, at points, open up tensions of (re)producing subjects as non-agentic figures, (almost) completely answerable to the state through digital touchpoints. As noted, this element of digital life is crucial to understanding the everyday experience of irregular migration in Western states. However, navigating this tension, I argue that in the everyday context – beyond a theoretical framing that limits conceptualisation of the subject to their material conditions – smartphones are also mobilised in a much broader sense than only simply navigating regimes of mobility governance through actions such as uploading documents in online portals or setting up digital financial flows. My purpose here is not to dispute or negate the increasing role that smartphones play in surveillance, control and data collection. Smartphones are indeed becoming one of many technologies through which states can control and harm subjects (Tazzioli, 2020, 2021). Instead, it is to ask what might happen when we consider how smartphones are used, and what they are productive of, when we conceptualise their use in a broader sense: beyond a narrative of complete control or exposure to hostility (see: Greene, 2020; Wynter and McKittrick, 2014).

Mobilising Mckittrick's (2011) work on the formation and development of Othered subjectivities, I suggest we must look beyond the limits of state-produced categorisations of irregular migrants (Scheel and Tazzioli, 2021), towards a broader sense of the affective, imaginative and material realities that are productive of everyday (digital) lives. This is not to romanticise the experience of irregular mobility. Instead, to broaden our current conceptualisation of migrant subjectivity, opening up the question(s) of how subjectivity emerges through alternative (in this case, digital) formats outside the framing of the state. What might come to light when we expand the current scope of what smartphones can do in relation to irregular migrant life? When we look at the broader, often habitual, mundane or routine, use of smartphones, how might novel ways of theoretically tracing the realities of forms of life within the asylum system come to light when we take seriously the digital entanglements that animate the everyday?

Drawing upon work within geography that draws upon the affective, ephemeral and often habitual elements of digital everyday practices (see: Haber, 2019; Hartman,

2017; Handyside and Ringrose, 2017; Chun, 2016), I thus aim to highlight how, as geographers, we no longer contribute to the discourse of everyday lived realities of irregular migration within liberal-democratic societies without careful consideration of its digital entanglements. Of course, hostility burns in the background of those going through the asylum application process (Anderson et al., 2019; Smith and Vasudevan, 2017; Weheylie, 2014), but how might forms of administered hostility get (re) mediated by users of smartphones, or indeed, other digital devices? What happens to the deeply affective experience of waiting or suspension (Bissell and Fuller, 2010; Greene, 2020; Griffiths, 2014; Omar, 2022) when it is mediated by the ever-expanding possibilities of smartphone use? In the remainder of the paper, I outline how geography as a discipline may be able to contribute to these questions, tracing a pathway to geographic research on the digital everyday.

To be able to move beyond state-centric accounts of technology use, the first thing we must consider is how we are framing the smartphone itself. As mentioned at the beginning of this paper, the interest here lies less in what smartphones are as a technological object, but more in what they are productive of when subjects use them. Thinking with the concept of *smart from below* (Miller et al., 2021), I propose that we begin with the simple question of what subjects do with the smartphone: how they are organised, what is on them, how they are used in the everyday context. By engaging with the everyday – the habitual, repetitive, mundane or experimental – we have the opportunity to explore how users themselves are productive of [smart]phones and, therefore, how hostility (that which burns in the background) gets (re)mediated through these very practices in complex and often contradictory ways.

Smartphones are used in an ever-expanding range of practices in the everyday context: from scrolling on social media (Kutscher and Kreß, 2018), consuming popular culture (Smets, 2017), contacting family (Longhurst, 2013) or tracking personal data such as exercise or menstruation (Lupton, 2018; Trnka, 2016). Highly individualistic, smartphones have become extremely personal and often intimate, devices that animate everyday life. Although smartphones can support highly specific uses such as asylum application interfaces or third-party apps – many of which support particular kinds of practices such as accessing finance, resources or legal knowledge – I also suggest it is equally important to consider the other, more general, uses of smartphones in the everyday context. If we are interested in understanding the everyday, this means casting light on those practices that often fall into the background of everyday living: the mundane, routine or habitual. Although in this paper these practices may seem of less importance than those directly involved with mobility control, I argue that paying attention to the broader practices that animate everyday smartphone use offers important insights into how state affects are digitally (re)mediated by individuals.

This is not only important for rethinking the current scope in which we frame the 'everyday' in geographic research, but also equally important for engaging critically with the underlying assumptions that are embedded in how users mobilise specific technologies. For example, echoing long debates around the vulnerability/agency dichotomy (see: Illiadou, 2019; Danewid, 2017; Gilson, 2016), Smets (2017) argues, assuming that certain subjects do *not* use digital devices in ways that are similar to Western preconceptions (binge-watching TV shows, for example) can be equally dangerous for (re)producing irregular migrants as distinct from the citizen. Beyond characterising irregular migrants through a state-centric lens – which may get (re)produced if we only ever focus on the role of smartphones in direct relation to foms of mobility themselves – we must instead consider genuinely *everyday* digital use: from the specific to, often, the highly mundane or familiar. Without consideration of both uses, our understanding of the entanglements between the digital and lives lived off screens will only ever be partial: framed through the nationalistic binaries that continue to characterise mobility research within geography (Scheel and Tazzioli, 2021).

Looking at everyday smartphone practices, what might we find in scrolling on social media, sending photographs, or video calling friends – particularly when thinking about the context of the hostility that animates and characterises forms of life? I suggest

that when we shift our lens to focus on the imaginative, affective and material geographies that are produced through such everyday actions, we can begin to understand how hostility – as a direct and intended effect of state governance: felt in different ways – gets (re)mediated through digital practices. The administration of hostility no longer becomes an asymmetric power relation between state and subject as often imagined in the public sense, instead its intended and unforeseen impacts on the everyday realities of subjects in the asylum system become (re)mediated through everyday smartphone practices.

III Towards everyday smartphone geographies: living (Digitally) like a migrant

In the final section of this paper, I wish to outline an approach to researching the (digital) lived realities of irregular migrants in Western liberal democratic states: in the everyday, mundane and often ephemeral experiences of everyday smartphone practices. If re-centring everyday experiences within geopolitics is a genuine aim of geographic research, we must move beyond a state-centric account of irregular migration and digital practices. The digital *everyday* exists as one element of everyday experience we may turn to if we are to engage in the question of what it means to live (digitally) like a migrant in the cumulative effects of hostile governance across Western states. I introduce this concept here – living (digitally) like a migrant – as a means of emphasising an epistemological shift of what it means to live through actively produced hostility: centring the embodied, imaginative and affective ways in which hostility percolates the spatio-temporal experience of simply existing.

The concept I propose here builds upon the work of scholars such as Tazzioli (2015) and Kalir (2013) who emphasise the importance of an epistemological shift in geographical ways of seeing the world: of seeing forms of mobility. As a discipline working towards a more nuanced understanding of everyday migrant life, we must be acutely aware of the practices and theoretical positioning that may inform this kind of research. Previous work within critical geography has outlined the importance of actively undoing forms of methodological nationalism which have become prevalent within the discipline – particularly those focused on irregular forms of mobility (Huysmans and Nogueira, 2016; Scheel and Tazzioli, 2021). Emerging from this line of thinking, scholars such as Tazzioli (2015) and Kalir (2013) have suggested that we must employ the approach of 'seeing like a migrant' (Kalir, 2013: 312). If methodological nationalism is embedded in a particular mode of seeing the world – as one of naturalised border regimes, nation-states and inherent differences between modes of citizenship (Mezzadra and Neilson, 2013) – then it is a radical shift in this practice of 'seeing' that is suggested as a way of beginning to grapple with geography's long history of naturalising particular modes of organising world(s). To see like a migrant is to destabilise and de-naturalise the theoretical framing of what constitutes 'migrant life': learning from below, as opposed to naturalised legacies of colonial Othering that continue to shape mobility discourse(s) and practice(s) in the West (Davies et al., 2017; Davies and Isakjee, 2019; Häkli and Kallio, 2021).

Tazzioli's (2015) and Kalir's (2013) seeing like a migrant approach thus centres how people who become categorised as migrants constitute themselves in ways that are not (re)productive of Western fetishisation (Mayblin, 2019; Tazzioli, 2015). Moving beyond the mainstream discourse of 'irregular' migration upheld across the European context, the active conceptual and/or methodological practice of seeing like a migrant aims to move beyond framings of irregular migration that are not constrained by Western imaginaries, narratives, or theories. Instead, shifting the focus onto how those subjects who come to be named as 'migrants' live in ways that are suggestive of 'alternative political [relations]' (Tazzioli, 2015: 2) in the everyday context. This move to re-centre the everyday experiences of asylum is integral to the argument put forward in this paper. In the following paragraphs, I develop this concept in two ways. First, in a shift from 'seeing' to 'living' in both a conceptual and methodological sense and, second, in centring the digital within 'everyday' life.

First, I argue that, for geographic research to be able to conceptualise the everyday (albeit always partial), we cannot do so by simply 'seeing' like a migrant in our conceptual or methodological positioning. We must push this concept even further if we are to genuinely re-centre everyday experience: particularly through the lens of an increasingly digital context. 'Seeing' has a particular epistemological framing which ultimately works towards reproducing the migrant subject as Other: as positioning lived experience as *secondary to 'geographic' knowledge of everyday life*. The move from seeing to living signals a shift towards embracing everyday lived experience *as* already-geographic knowledge: in its messy, complex and often contradictory forms. Beyond simply 'seeing', we must move towards an understanding of what it means to *live* (materially, affectively, imaginatively…) in ever-increasing hostile environments; where the specific affective modes of hostility seek to percolate into almost all aspects of everyday life. The move from 'seeing' to 'living', may perhaps seem like mere a lexical change in the concept, but if geographic research is aiming to genuinely re-centre everyday experience in the geopolitical (see: Pain, 2015), we cannot do so without prioritising the lived and embodied experiences of the mobility regimes we aim to include in academic research. This means we must be ready to encounter forms of everyday (digital) life that do not fit neatly with preconceived notions of digital practices. From the temporality of digital, use to the wide and complex interactions between digital and non-digital spaces, geographic researchers must be willing to start, and learn from, these practices themselves. The move from seeing to living thus signals a move to prioritising everyday lived experience as geographic knowledge: in its messy, complex and often contradictory forms.

Second, beyond the shift from seeing to living, I argue that embedded within this concept must exist an appreciation of how this 'living' is now, almost always, digitally mediated. A re-centring of the everyday experience of mobility – particularly within the Western context – can no longer be achieved without a nuanced understanding of the digital forms of living that are now enmeshed within everyday experience. To conceptualise the everyday means to engage critically with forms of living that exist with, between and through the assemblage of digital interactions: of which the smartphone has become a clear central component. Without a nuanced engagement with the entanglements between irregular migrants and digital devices, we cannot work towards any sense of what it means to live or exist in hostile environments. Understanding what it means to live (digitally) like a migrant therefore creates opportunities to contribute to ongoing discussions within critical geography about affirmative forms of living (see: Koch and Miles, 2021; Negri and Esposito, 2017; McKittrick, 2013). As discussed in this section, the 'digital' is not a pre-given egalitarian space to be romanticised here. The lived realities of subjects are, in multiple and compounding ways, reproduced through online practices (Nguyen-Thu, 2021). However, there are simultaneously ways in which digital technologies are used to develop forms of living that are more closely aligned with flourishing life (and thus forms of life that are associated with citizens: valued populations) than not.

Taking both propositions into future geographic work on everyday migrant life, this signals that our research design, practices and methodological approaches must also be embedded in the overall aim of learning from below and de-naturalising legacies of Othering. Beyond 'seeing' which, methodologically *and* conceptually speaking, is steeped in historical legacies of geographic practices (see: Bejarano et al., 2019), we must be committed to developing holistic approaches to research that allow lived experience to be centred – conceptually *and* practically – in our work. This means thinking carefully about how methodological approaches can be mobilised to enhance our theoretical aims, since the two are never separate (Tazzioli, 2020). We must therefore be committed to methodological design(s) that both centre and are able to express 'everydayness'. Methodological choices are not simply a 'tool' to uncover or reveal aspects of everyday (digital) life, but to create spaces for participatory forms of knowledge production about the value of the framing of the everyday within academic work.

To achieve this, we must be enabling our [participants, co-producers, co-researchers] to shape geographic research agendas of everyday

life – without this participatory engagement, geographic research continues to produce knowledge *about* Othered populations rather than *with* and *for*. Geographic research agendas must be open to creating space for taking seriously individual expertise and knowledge of the (digital) everyday. This is particularly important when we consider the nature of everyday digital life – an array of practices that are often habitual, routine or even nonconscious (Awad and Tossell, 2021) – where language or discourse, relied upon heavily in many areas of geographic research, can limit possibilities of knowledge production and representation.

We must, therefore, think carefully how we can create the space within academic work to genuinely centre alternative political relations: and the consequences of how we end up doing so – how they are produced, circulated and represented. In the context of irregular migration and digital practices, we must be willing to incorporate participatory elements to our research design: prioritising individual experience of everyday smartphone practices. This doesn't mean abandoning 'traditional' methods, but thinking about how they can be adapted or changed to engage with the everyday lives of irregular migrants and how this shapes the questions we ask, or research agendas we develop. For example, ethnography is perhaps one of the best suited methods to capture everyday experience: but the design and implementation of which must be carefully thought through if it is the match-up with the aim of challenging knowledge production about Othered populations (see: Bejarano et al., 2019). Geographers may equally be well-positioned to embrace newer, creative methods within this wider research agenda. Either way, the focus must remain on learning from everyday experience first, and developing methodological and conceptual aims second.

In the final section of this paper, I aim to propose two ways in which we might take the concept of living (digitally) like a migrant forward into a geographical research agenda: aiming to fold the centrality of everyday smartphone practices into accounts of everyday lived experience. These two pathways, intersecting more often than not, outline how we might conceptualise the affective, imaginative and material geographies of everyday (digital) life and, furthermore, how the specific governance effect of hostility is (re)mediated through this interaction with the smartphone. Hostility and other affective mediations of the everyday must be held in tension with one another: not collapsed into the binary mode of thought that is often characteristic of geographic knowledge (Hinger, 2022; Pinelli, 2018; Pain, 2015). Both the affective experience of hostility and its (re)mediations work together in experiences of the everyday – blending into various modes of living (debilitated, suspended and affirmative) for the subject.

Moreover, what is crucial to acknowledge at the very beginning of this section is that the digital cannot be separated or disentangled from 'off-screen' life (Coleman, 2018; Karpf, 2020). Any attempt to capture the spatio-temporal experiences of smartphone use (or other digital devices), must be ready to deal with the messy, and often contradictory, reality of lives lived online. Although digital spaces may offer the opportunity for affective, imaginative or material change, we must not forget that digital spaces are not inherently egalitarian: where subjects are relieved of their precarity, disadvantages or systemic oppression (Nguyen-Thu, 2021). Instead, such prepositions are created, sustained and compounded through the digital (Browne, 2010; 2015; Nguyen-Thu, 2021; Witteborn, 2015, 2018). If we are attempting to theorise how state affects are experienced and (re)mediated through everyday digital practices, we must not automatically assume that the subjectivities of individuals are radically changed, nor homogenous among users of, and within, the digital realm. Instead, we must remain open to the complex, and often messy, entanglements between subject and screen(s).

1 (Re)enforced hostility

Mobilising the living (digitally) like a migrant approach within geographic research demands a (re)conceptualisation of what counts as geopolitical – re-centring the everyday experience of those governed by the state. Learning from the work of digital feminist scholars, we must move away from the Western-centric idea that modernity is equal to speed or forward momentum, and begin to engage with alternative experiences of digital

temporality that form everyday experience (Awad and Tossell, 2021; Nguyen-Thu, 2021). Working towards a grounded account of digital everyday experience, I suggest we might benefit from centring work that questions the intricate and complex questions of how subjectivity becomes digitally mediated. In this case, we must move beyond the narrative of an uncritical celebration of seamless connectivity or speed that we find in Western geographic accounts of digital experience (Duclos, 2017). Instead, we must work to situate the specificities of everyday digital practices (Rose et al., 2020, 2017).

Returning to the argument made in the *((Digitally) encountering hostility*) section of this paper, we must question how temporal experiences are formed through everyday smartphone practices and how this might be productive of (re)enforcing hostile effects of Western state governance. Learning from Nguyen-Thu (2021), we may find value in centring slowness in the digital as an area for meaningful research. If we take the characteristic experience of slowness as a specific affective experience of hostile governance regimes (in waiting, suspension, uncertainty…), we might find multiple ways in which being online or using smartphone devices compounds this experience; affectively, imaginatively, or practically. Turning towards how digital devices are used in the everyday context may reveal to us how this specific experience of hostility (in this case, as slowness) has the potential to be (re)mediated, or simultaneously (re)enforced, through the specific temporalities that emerge from being online.

Hence, one example we might re-examine might be the increasing digitisation of the state in relation to communication. Whether in migrant camps across Europe (Tazzioli, 2020) or in the everyday experience of relocation for asylum seekers (see: Darling, 2022a, 2022b), the smartphone has now become one of the central touchpoints for the state to reach individuals and communicate information. Whilst being chained to conditions of slowness in everyday (non-digital) life (Griffiths, 2014; Mbembe, 2019; Weheliye, 2014), owning or using a smartphone has become one of many technologies where slowness can get compounded. One clear example that illustrates this experience is the UK Home Office's current position on the role of smartphones within the asylum application process. The use of text messages and emails to communicate with individuals about asylum-related issues has now become commonplace. From outsourced organisations dealing with housing problems, to maintaining contact with immigration lawyers, the smartphone has become one of the most central technological objects in the process of claiming asylum: enabling connection, communication and knowledge – even if often sparse or infrequent. Although this contact with the state and governing institutions is not exclusive to the smartphone (many asylum seekers rely on an assemblage of digital infrastructure(s)), the temporal experiences of smartphone use are unique. Information is accessible, most often, at an individual's fingertips: almost instantaneous. In such cases, the anticipation and uncertainty that gravitate around waiting for information become characteristic of everyday experience.

Waiting for information such as text messages or email updates thus becomes a specific digitally induced spatio-temporal experience that emerges through the state's engagement with the smartphone. Waiting is not an empty process nor indication of absence. Waiting is a highly affective experience (see: Turnbull, 2016): one filled with multiple temporal experiences – from (re)living the past, being paralysed by uncertainty in the present, to attaching hope or fear into projections of the future. Waiting thus is an exercise of power (ibid).

In mobilising smartphones as part of the asylum application process – whether that be through contact with various state actors, or in direct contact with state departments – the smartphone becomes one technology within the wider assemblage of administering hostility. Here the smartphone is uniquely positioned as a technology through which the illusion of the state being closer through immediate access or contact – an experience often associated with digital interactions (Koch and Miles, 2021) – gradually realised (Tazzioli, 2015). Digital practices become part of the spatio-temporal dimensions of everyday life: refreshing emails, waiting for phone calls and updating online portals. Although not all elements of the process are digital – for example, in the UK communication about interview dates are still often sent via physical letters – the blending of (non)digital

forms of contact with the state amplifies the anxieties and suspension that were already produced through non-digital processes. The smartphone thus becomes a technology embedded in the assemblage of state-administered hostility. Now, Hostile state affects are thus encountered through the smartphone screen. As geographers, we must take seriously the role that everyday digital practices are playing in compounding uncertainty or anticipation of encountering the state. To live (digitally) as a migrant is to live in anticipation of everyday smartphone encounters with the state: through the text message, email or digital interface.

Moreover, we must remember that this specific form of hostility is administered through the *same* technological object where other forms of living (what we might call everyday life) continue. What results is an inseparable distinction between the two: where individuals are constantly exposed to the ability to check on portal statues, refresh communication chains, or check if their WhatsApp has two blue ticks. The infrastructure of the smartphone becomes part of a digital assemblage that produces and contains individuals within hostile tempo-spatial arrangements. The contrasting temporal experiences of digital subjects also play into a digitally produced affective condition: where the gap between expectations of digital connectivity (fast, rapid and seamless) stand in stark contest to that of digital contact with state actors (slow, irregular, delayed and asymmetric).

Working towards a research agenda for geographical knowledge, we must therefore be open to exploring how our current understanding of geopolitical assemblages of mobility governance are now, almost always, digitally mediated: in the very sense of the everyday geopolitical experience in how the state is encountered, often in mundane or habitual ways. To gain a deeper insight into how hostility works – both as an object of policy development and the experience of such policies – we must be open to integrating and re-situating the material, affective or imaginative spatio-temporal experiences of everyday smartphone use into our examination of surveillance or control. At the same time, we must remain open to how the experience of hostility reverberates through everyday experience of digitally mediated lives. Exposure to waiting or slowness through digital interactions with the state is not necessarily exclusively productive of negative material or affective experiences: we might find boredom, detachment or space/time made otherwise in the same practices. Nor is slowness the only spatio-temporal digital experience where hostility is administered. When we begin to trace the complexities of what it means to live (digitally) as a migrant, or more broadly to imagine the imaginative, affective or materiality of what now constitutes the 'everyday', we must be ready to accept the messy reality of everyday life.

2 (Re)mediated hostility

Taking this one step further, I argue that when we interrogate what it means to live (digitally) as a migrant, we must also pay close attention to how lives lived digitally are productive of (re)mediating hostility. More specifically, how everyday smartphone practices animate everyday spatio-temporal experiences of mobility that exist outside (at least partially, momentarily or ephemerally) of state control. The question I raise here is: in the experience of prolonged waiting, how might we re-centre the mundane, habitual or fleeting digital practices as ones which work towards (re)mediating the hostile effects of mobility governance? In the momentary checking of social media, prolonged binge-watching of TV shows, or weekly family calls, what happens to the experience of hostility (affectively, imaginatively or materially) – in its various forms – that are administered by various state actors? In shifting the lens of what we consider the smartphone to be, or what is it used for beyond a state-centric account, we might be able to find moments or experiences of (re)mediating the hostile effects of governance.

Here, I suggest we might learn from the contributions of black feminist scholars like Mckittrick (2011, 2013) who caution against (re)producing dominant narratives that confined Othered forms of life to negative forms, processes or existence. In the case of irregular migration, if we only ever conceptualise this form of living in terms of death, injury or control, what might we miss in the everyday lived realities of different governance regimes? I argue this

conceptual move is important for geographic research which aims to capture the everyday context of digital migrant life. In place of state-centric narratives, we must instead work towards developing contributions of the everyday, both in its constraining and life-affirming aspects. Indeed, extended or prolonged periods of waiting can be debilitating for irregular migrants suspended within this form of spatio-temporal control. However, how else might we re-conceptualise everyday digital practices as part of periods of waiting that are, as Tazzioli (2015: 2) prompts, 'suggestive of alternative political [relations]'? Where might we find alternative forms of living within such experiences: of connection, community or detachment? In this case, I suggest we start with those very practices to understand alternative political relations – once again, prioritising knowledge of the everyday from those who are living it.

If we stay with the affective experience of hostility through waiting, considering how smartphones are used in the everyday context can indicate how hostility gets (re)mediated. For example, we might consider Smets' (2017) work that found irregular migrants spend a large amount of time using smartphones to consume popular media such as TV shows. Smets (ibid) found that these actions – although highly mundane and banal – allowed individuals to both connect to a sense of 'home' and enable them to distract or distance themselves from material conditions of mobility governance. By immersing oneself in popular media, both practically and affectively, the temporal experience of waiting is disrupted: it blends into the background, forgotten, even if only momentarily. Similarly, we might consider the impact of digital transnational connections on individual users. When connecting with family or friends online in different places across the world (Greene, 2020), what might the act of connecting – of messaging, calling or even sending a GIF – allow subjects to navigate the often violent (even if invisible, slow or encroaching) conditions of their existence? Such practices may be productive of alternative spatio-temporal arrangements that enable individuals to continue *living (in an affirmative sense)* despite the overriding subjection to hostility: time-spaces of care, connection, distraction, mundaneness.

For geographic research, those everyday smartphone practices that often fade into the background of everyday life have profound impacts on the spatio-temporal experience of (im)mobility. Paying attention to these practices provides important insight into the experience of the everyday lived realities and how the effects of such governance get (re)mediated through digital entanglements. In a context where temporality becomes a form of control, the novel ability to alter, distract or disrupt forms of waiting through the smartphone offer exciting insight into examining the relationship between the state and Othered subjects.

In attempting to capture these affirming everyday practices with the smartphone, we must be ready to re-think the relationship between forms of state control and biopolitics: specifically the conditions under which life is made to flourish (Foucault, 2008). In hostile migrant environments across the European context, it is clear that irregular forms of migrant life are subject to necropolitical regimes (Davies and Isakjee, 2019; Mbembe, 2003, 2019) – actively produced as unvalued life (Butler, 2006) – where to conditions to flourish are practically eradicated. And, yet, when we re-centre the everyday lived realities of lives lived digitally, we can identify moments – even if only temporary, fleeting or ephemeral – of affirmative flourishing: in connection, distraction or distancing. Such moments have serious implications for thinking through the space-time arrangements that are produced: altering, changing or becoming productive of alternative modes of everyday life within the wider background of hostility. Modes of hostility are transformed and (re)mediated in everyday digital practices. For example, spaces of care and connection are often sought through a variety of mundane digital practices – in connecting to local communities through Facebook, using WhatsApp groups to keep in contact with friends of family or using specifically designed apps to access services or resources in the local area. Moreover, we must remember that such practices don't necessarily have to be radical for there to be a (re)mediation of hostile governance: the affective experience of hostility may be forgotten, unattached from, held at a distance through a range of digital interactions: from playing games with friends online to scrolling through online

dating apps. These everyday practices are still important for understanding the affective everyday experience of digital subjects.

As geographers interested in the framing of everyday life and/or irregular mobility, we must therefore remain open to developing theoretical or methodological approaches that are able to account for the messy and complex realities of what it now means to live (digitally) like a migrant. We must remain attuned to the often hidden, slow or ephemeral implications of everyday smartphone use that can enable, or sustain, alternative ways of making life live against a background of ever-increasing hostility.

IV Conclusion

This paper has argued that geographic research can no longer claim to be working on irregular 'migrant life' without clear and nuanced considerations of how everyday life is now lived digitally. Centring everyday smartphone practices as one element of this digitally assembled 'everyday', I have argued that we can no longer conceptualise the state, nor state encounters, as separate from the assemblage of digital technology that is part of, and formulate, everyday life.

Building upon geographic work that aims to tackle methodological nationalism and whiteness that exists within research around the everyday experiences of mobility (see: Tazzioli, 2020; De Genova, 2013), I have proposed living (digitally) like a migrant as a concept that future geographic work in this area might take forward: emphasising the value in digitally embodied knowledge about tempo-spatial experiences of hostile environments. Turning to the digital everyday, I have outlined how we may be able to (re)imagine or (re)conceptualise what it means to biopolitically exist, live or flourish under conditions of state-administered hostility. The focus of this paper has primarily explored this argument through the lens of Western irregular mobility governance: particularly in the context of European asylum governance, where smartphones have become mobilised as key technologies through which hostility – defined as a specific affective mode of state governance – is simultaneously administered and (re)mediated in a wide range of everyday smartphone practices. This context has been important for holding the set of arguments made throughout this paper about the specificity of European migration governance. However, it is important to signal here that the arguments made in this paper are applicable to other geographies of the digital everyday and offer a conceptual and methodological template for how we might conceptualise encounters with state governance.

Taking this forward as a discipline, we must remain open to the messy, grounded and complex nature of digital everyday lives: creating the conceptual spaces and methodological innovation for these elements of everyday life (slow, fleeting, ephemeral and momentary) to come to the surface of geographic knowledge production.

Declaration of conflicting interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author(s) disclosed receipt of the following financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article: This work was supported by the Economic and Social Research Council (ES/P000762/1).

Note

1. The discussion around 'legal' or 'recognised' routes to European countries is now a highly contentious topic, with some states such as the UK largely reducing any 'legal' routes to asylum that will be recognised as legitimate.

References

Alencar A, Kondova K and Ribbens W (2019) The smartphone as a lifeline: an exploration of refugees' use of mobile communication technologies during their flight. *Media, Culture and Society* 41(6): 828–844.

Allsopp J, Chase E and Mitchell M (2015) The tactics of time and status: young people's experiences of building futures while subject to immigration control in Britain. *Journal of Refugee Studies* 28(2): 163–182.

Almustafa M (2021) Reframing refugee crisis: A "European crisis of migration" or a "crisis of protection"?. Environment and Planning C:. *Politics and Space* 40(5): 1–19.

Amoore L (2011) Data derivatives: on the emergence of a security risk calculus for our times. *Theory, Culture and Society* 28(6): 24–43.

Amoore L (2013) *The Politics of Possibility: Risk and Security beyond Probability* London: Duke University Press.

Anderson B (2017) Towards a new politics of migration? *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40(9): 1527–1537.

Anderson B, Grove K, Rickards L, et al. (2019) Slow emergencies: temporality and the racialized biopolitics of emergency governance. *Progress in Human Geography* 44(4): 621–639.

Aradau C and Blanke T (2017) Politics of prediction: Security and the time/space of governmentality in the age of big data. *European Journal of Social Theory* 20(3): 373–391.

Ash J, Kitchin R and Leszczynski A (2016) Digital turn, digital geographies? *Progress in Human Geography* 42(1): 25–43.

Awad I and Tossell J (2021) Is the smartphone always a smart choice? Against the utilitarian view of the "connected migrant". *Information, Communication and Society* 24(4): 611–626.

Baldwin A (2012) Whiteness and futurity: towards a research agenda. *Progress in Human Geography* 36(2): 172–187.

Bejarano CA, Juárez LL, García MAM, et al. (2019) *Decolonizing Ethnography: Undocumented Immigrants and New Directions in Social Science*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Bissel D and Fuller G (2010) *Stillness in a Mobile World*. Oxford: Routledge.

Borkert M, Fisher KE and Yafi E (2018) The best, the worst, and the hardest to find: how people, mobiles, and social media connect migrants in(to) Europe. *Social Media + Society* 4(1): 1–11.

Browne S (2010) Digital epidermalization: race, identity, and biometrics. *Critical Sociology* 36(1): 131–150.

Browne S (2015) *Dark Matters: On the Surveillance of Blackness*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Burrell K and Schweyher M (2019) Conditional citizens and hostile environments: Polish migrants in pre-Brexit Britain. *Geoforum* 106: 193–201.

Butler J (2006) *Precarious Life: The Power of Mourning and Violence*. London: Verso Books.

Casswell J (2019) The digital lives of refugees: how displaced populations use mobile phones and what gets in the way. Report, 16 July: GSMA.

Chun WHK (2016) *Updating to Remain the Same: Habitual New Media*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Coddington K (2020) Incompatible with life: Embodied borders, migrant fertility, and the UK's 'hostile environment'. *Politics and Space* 39(8): 3–14.

Coleman R (2018) Theorizing the present: digital media, pre-emergence and infra-structures of feeling. *Cultural Studies* 32(4): 600–622.

Cresswell T (2010) Towards a politics of mobility. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 28(1): 17–31.

Danewid I (2017) White innocence in the black mediterranean: hospitality and the erasure of history. *Third World Quarterly* 38(7): 1674–1689.

Darling J (2022a) *Systems of Suffering: Dispersal and the Denial of Asylum*. London: Pluto Press.

Darling J (2022b) The politics of discretion: authority and influence in asylum dispersal. *Political Geography* 94: 1–10.

Davies T, Isakjee A and Dhesi S (2017) Violent Inaction: the necropolitical experience of refugees in Europe. *Antipode* 49(5): 1263–1284.

Davies T and Isakjee A (2019) Ruins of Empire: Refugees, race and the postcolonial geographies of European migrant camps. *Geoforum* 102: 214–217.

De Genova N (2013) "We are of the connections": migration, methodological nationalism, and "militant research". *Postcolonial Studies* 16(3): 250–258.

De Genova N (2018) The "migrant crisis" as racial crisis: do Black Lives Matter in Europe? *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 41(10): 1765–1782.

Dekker R, Engbersen G, Klaver J, et al. (2018) Smart refugees: how syrian asylum migrants use social media information in migration decision-making. *Social Media + Society* 4(1): 1–11.

Dieter M, Gerlitz C, Helmond A, et al. (2019) Multi-situated app studies: methods and propositions. *Social Media + Society* 5(2): 1–15.

Diminescu D and Loveluck B (2014) Traces of dispersion: online media and diasporic identities. *Crossings: Journal of Migration and Culture* 5(1): 23–39.

Duclos V (2017) Inhabiting media: an anthropology of life in digital speed. *Cultural Anthropology* 32(1): 21–27.

Ekman M (2018) Anti-refugee mobilization in social media: the case of soldiers of odin. *Social Media + Society* 4(1): 1–11.

Engbersen G and Broeders D (2009) The state versus the alien: immigration control and strategies of irregular immigrants. *West European Politics* 32(5): 867–885.

Erel U, Murji K and Nahaboo Z (2016) Understanding the contemporary race-migration nexus. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 39(8): 1339–1360.

Foucault M (2007) *Security, Territory, Population*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Foucault M (2008) *The Birth of Biopolitics. Lectures at the Collège de France 1978-1979*. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

Gillespie M, Osseiran S and Cheesman M (2018) Syrian refugees and the digital passage to europe: smartphone infrastructures and affordances. *Social Media + Society* 4(1): 1–12.

Cunniff Gilson E (2016) Vulnerability and victimization: rethinking key concepts in feminist discourses on sexual violence. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 42(1): 71–98.

Greene A (2020) Mobiles and 'making do': exploring the affective, digital practices of refugee women waiting in Greece. *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 23(5): 731–748.

Griffiths MBE (2014) Out of time: the temporal uncertainties of refused asylum seekers and immigration detainees. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 40(12): 1991–2009.

Haber B (2019) The digital ephemeral turn: queer theory, privacy, and the temporality of risk. *Media, Culture and Society* 41(8): 1069–1087.

Häkli J and Kallio KP (2021) Bodies and persons: The politics of embodied encounters in asylum seeking. *Progress in Human Geography* 45(4): 682–703.

Handyside S and Ringrose J (2017) Snapchat memory and youth digital sexual cultures: mediated temporality, duration and affect. *Journal of Gender Studies* 26(3): 347–360.

Hartman S (2017) The poetic timestamp of digital erotic objects. *Psychoanalytic Perspectives* 14(2): 159–174.

Hinger B (2022) Toward an expanded approach on black mobilities. *Progress in Human Geography* 46(2): 359–371.

Howell A and Richter-Montpetit M (2019) Racism in foucauldian security studies: biopolitics, liberal war, and the whitewashing of colonial and racial violence. *International Political Sociology* 13(1): 2–19.

Huysmans J and Pontes-Nogueira J (2016) Ten years of IPS: Fracturing IR. *International Political Sociology* 10(4): 299–319.

Hyndman J (2012) The geopolitics of migration and mobility. *Geopolitics* 17(2): 243–255.

Iliadou E (2019) Safe havens and prison islands: the politics of protection and deterrence of border crossers on Lesvos Island. *Graduate Journal of Social Science* 15(1): 62–88.

Kalir B (2013) Moving subjects, stagnant paradigms: Can the 'mobilities paradigm' transcend methodological nationalism? *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 39: 311–327.

Karpf D (2020) Two provocations for the study of digital politics in time. *Journal of Information Technology and Politics* 17(2): 87–96.

Koch R and Miles S (2021) Inviting the stranger in: Intimacy, digital technology and new geographies of encounter. *Progress in Human Geography* 45(6): 1379–1401.

Kutscher N and Kreß LM (2018) The ambivalent potentials of social media use by unaccompanied minor refugees. *Social Media + Society* 4(1): 1–10.

Latonero M and Kift P (2018) On digital passages and borders: refugees and the new infrastructure for movement and control. *Social Media + Society* 4(1): 1–11.

Latonero M, Poole D and Berens J (2018) Refugee connectivity: a survey of mobile phones, mental health, and privacy at a syrian refugee camp in greece. *Report, Harvard Humanitarian Initiative: Data And Society*, March.

Leurs K and Smets K (2018) Five questions for digital migration studies: learning from digital connectivity and forced migration in(to) europe. *Social Media + Society* 4(1): 1–16.

Leurs K and Ponzanesi S (2018) Connected migrants: encapsulation and cosmopolitanization. *Popular Communication* 16(1): 4–20.

Longhurst R (2013) Using Skype to Mother: Bodies, Emotions, Visuality, and Screens. *Environment and Planning D. Society and Space* 31(4): 664–679.

Lupton D (2018) How do data come to matter? Living and becoming with personal data. *Big Data and Society* 5: 1–11.

Lyon D (2001) Surveillance Society. *Berkshire*. Open University Press.

Maguire M (2012) Bio-power, racialization and new security technology. *Social Identities* 18(5): 593–607.

Mayblin L (2019) Imagining asylum, governing asylum seekers: Complexity reduction and policy making in the UK Home Office. *Migration Studies* 7(1): 1–20.

Mbembe A (2003) Necropolitics. *Public Culture* 15(1): 11–40.

Mbembe JA (2019) *Necropolitics*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

McKittrick K (2011) On plantations, prisons, and a black sense of place. *Social and Cultural Geography* 12(8): 947–963.

McKittrick K (2013) Plantation futures. *Small Axe: A Caribbean Journal of Criticism* 17(3): 1–15.

Mezzadra S and Neilson B (2013) *Border as Method, or the Multiplication of Labour*. Durham, NC: London: Duke University Press.

Miller PD and Matviyenko S (2014) *The Imaginary App*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Miller PD, Rabho LA, Awaondo P, et al. (2021) *The Global Smartphone: Beyond a Youth Technology*. London: UCL Press.

Negri H and Esposito S (2017) Affirmative biopolitics. In: Mills C(2017) *Biopolitics*. London: Routledge.

Minca C, Rijke A, Pallister-Wilkins P, et al. (2021) Rethinking the biopolitical: borders, refugees, mobilitlies. *Politics and Space C* 40(1): 1–20.

Nemer D (2018) Wired mobile phones: the case of community technology centers in favelas of Brazil. *Information Technology for Development* 24(3): 461–481.

Nguyen-Thu G (2021) Hectic slowness: digital temporalities of precarious care from a Global South perspective. *Feminist Media Studies* 22(8): 1936–1950.

Omar L (2022) Foreclosed futures and entangled timelines: conceptualization of the "future" among Syrian newcomer mothers in Canada. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 49(5): 1210–1228.

Pain R (2015) Intimate war. *Political Geography* 44: 64–73.

Papadopoulos D and Tsianos VS (2013) After citizenship: autonomy of migration, organisational ontology and mobile commons. *Citizenship Studies* 17(2): 178–196.

Pieterse H (2020) Mobile Forensics: Beyond traditional sources of digital evidence. In: Proceedings of the 19th european conference on cyber warfare and security project. London, UK, June 2020, pp. 25–26.

Pinelli B (2018) Control and abandonment: the power of surveillance on refugees in italy, during and after the mare nostrum operation. *Antipode* 50: 725–747.

Rose G (2017) Posthuman Agency in the Digitally Mediated City: Exteriorization, Individuation, Reinvention. *Annals of the American Association of Geographers* 107(4): 779–793.

Rose G, Raghuram P, Watson S, et al. (2020) Platform urbanism, smartphone applications and valuing data in a smart city. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 46: 59–72.

Seiler C (2016) Racing mobility, excavating modernity. *Transfers* 6(1): 98–102.

Scheel S (2021) The politics of (non)knowledge in the (un) making of migration. *Dialogues in Human Geography* 11(3): 520–522.

Scheel S (2013) Studying embodied encounters: autonomy of migration beyond its romanticization. *Postcolonial Studies* 16(3): 279–288.

Scheel S and Tazzioli M (2022) Who is a migrant? abandoning the nation-state point of view in the study of migration. *Migration Politics* 1(002): 002–023.

Skinner D (2020) Forensic genetics and the prediction of race: what is the problem? *BioSocieties* 15(3): 329–349.

Smets K (2017) The way Syrian refugees in Turkey use media: understanding "connected refugees" through a non-media- centric and local approach. *Communications* 43: 113–123.

Smith S and Vasudevan P (2017) Race, biopolitics, and the future: Introduction to the special section. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 35(2): 210–221.

Stoler AL (2013) *Imperial Debris: On Ruins and Ruination*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Tazzioli M (2015) *Spaces of Governmentality. Autonomous Migration and the Arab Uprisings*. London: Rowman and Littlefield.

Tazzioli M (2020) *The Making of Migration: The Biopolitics of Mobility at Europe's Borders*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Tazzioli M (2021) The technological obstructions of asylum: Asylum seekers as forced techno-users and governing through disorientation. *Security Dialogue* 53(3): 1–28.

Tazzioli M (2022) Governing refugees through disorientation: Fragmented knowledges and forced

technological mediations. *Review of International Studies* 48(3): 425–440.

Tazzioli M and De Genova N (2021) Minor keywords of political theory: Migration as a critical standpoint: A collaborative project of collective writing. *Politics and Space* 40(4): 1–95.

Trnka SH (2016) Digital care: agency and temporality in young people's use of health apps. *Engaging Science, Technology, and Society* 2: 248–265.

Turnbull S (2016) "Stuck in the middle": Waiting and uncertainty in immigration detention. *Time and Society* 25(1): 61–79.

Twigt MA (2018) The mediation of hope: digital technologies and affective affordances within iraqi refugee households in Jordan. *Social Media + Society* 4(1): 1–14.

Vaughan-Williams N (2008) Borderwork beyond inside/outside? frontex, the citizen–detective and the war on terror. *Space and Polity* 12(1): 63–79.

Weheliye A (2014) *Habeas Viscus: Racializing Assemblages, Biopolitics, and Black Feminist Theories of the Human*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Wevers R (2018) Unmasking biometrics' biases: facing gender, race, class and ability in biometric data collection. *TMG Journal for Media History* 21(2): 89–105.

Witteborn S (2015) Becoming (Im)Perceptible: forced migrants and virtual practice. *Journal of Refugee Studies* 28(3): 350–367.

Witteborn S (2018) The digital force in forced migration: Imagined affordances and gendered practices. *Popular Communication* 16(1): 21–31.

Wynter S and McKittrick K (2014) Unparalleled catastrophe for our species?: or, to give humanness a different future: conversations. *McKittrick K (2014) Sylvia Wynter: On Being Human as Praxis*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Yuval-Davis N, Wemyss G and Cassidy K (2018) Everyday bordering, belonging and the reorientation of British immigration legislation. *Sociology* 52(2): 228–244.

Zampagni F (2016) Unpacking the schengen visa regime. a study on bureaucrats and discretion in an Italian consulate. *Journal of Borderlands Studies* 31(2): 251–266.

Zijlstra J and Liempt IV (2017) Smart(phone) travelling: understanding the use and impact of mobile technology on irregular migration journeys. *International Journal of Migration and Border Studies* 3: 174–191.

Author biography

Hannah Morgan is a ESRC funded PhD candidate at the Univeristy of Durham. Her current research focuses on the everyday digital lives of asylum seekers in the UK.