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TUNISIA AS A REVOLUTIONIZED SPACE OF MIGRATION

Glenda Garelli and Martina Tazzioli

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Human mobility, whatever its scale, is often controversial. Hence it carries with it the potential for politics. A core feature of mobility politics is the tension between the desire to maximise the social and economic benefits of migration and pressures to restrict movement. Transnational communities, global instability, advances in transportation and communication, and concepts of 'smart borders' and 'migration management' are just a few of the phenomena transforming the landscape of migration today. The tension between openness and restriction raises important questions about how different types of policy and politics come to life and influence mobility.

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Tunisia as a Revolutionized Space of Migration

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Series Editors' Foreword

Much like the rest of the Arab world, by the end of 2010 Tunisia was at the epicenter of mass demonstrations against governmental entities. These protests, which ultimately ousted President Ben Ali, stemmed from public discontent with high rates of unemployment, corruption, and a lack of civil rights and freedoms. Coinciding with the demonstrations and following his ousting, Tunisia saw an *en masse* exodus of its people to various European countries, and with it the conquest of the political right to freedom of movement. This newly acquired freedom in conjunction with the president's ousting saw the disintegration of the externalized European border that Ben Ali had agreed to enforce in exchange for political and economic partnerships. While European states were keen to commend the laudable actions of the Tunisian people in standing up against a corrupt government, this approach quickly shifted as thousands of migrants arrived at European capitals claiming their right to protection. This migration has posed one of the biggest challenges to the European community and threatens the viability of the Schengen area.

Through a reflection on the Tunisian Revolution, Glenda Garelli and Martina Tazzioli provide an analysis on the revolution and its nexus with mass migration while answering what it means to be writing in the space of mobility in the four years following the Tunisian upheaval. As part of their argument, the authors identify different strands of mobility running across the Tunisian space and, in doing so, aim to intervene in the debate surrounding migration in the Mediterranean region. By framing the discussion through notions of precarity and by introducing the notion of migrantization, *Tunisia as a Revolutionized Space of Migration* provides

insights that open up the "Mediterranean signifier" past the fixation on its shores. Instead, it embraces a critical epistemology which provides a counter-mapping and interrogates institutionalized spaces as the primary framework of mobility and politics in the Mediterranean.

Garelli and Tazzioli structure their discussion through four conceptual parameters: the protean humanitarian border, mobilizing precarity in migration, autonomous returns, and statistical invisibility. These themes are addressed through the difference that two key moments present for mobility and politics—the upheaval in Tunisia and the global financial crisis. The authors draw on analysis of ethnographic research and archival materials that focus on different types of migrants, including European migrants in Tunisia, Tunisians who resided in Europe but returned home, Tunisian migrants to the Gulf states, and refugees from the Libyan or Syrian wars. They seek to explain how new spaces of migration in Tunisia impact the lives of refugees within the context of an emerging humanitarian regime.

The volume concludes by advocating that the internal discourse of the migration debate must move past mere "citizen politics" and "methodological citizenship" while adequately measuring the process of migrantization and precarization. Garelli and Tazzioli therefore propose that the debate should move beyond juridical categories and traditional incipient spaces and instead focus on non-cartographic counter-mapping of new routes of mobility into and out of Tunisia.

In the form of publications that critically examine the tension between the social and economic benefits of migration on the one hand, and with political pressure for restrictions on mobility on the other, the *Mobility & Politics* series pushes the envelope of transnational discourses surrounding migration. In an effort to address the aforementioned tensions, this new addition to the *Mobility & Politics* series provides the reader with an insightful look at one of the countries at the center of the Arab Spring, and in so doing, attempts to reformulate the global discourse on migration by advocating for smart borders, which meets the demands of current migration debates, and if not, exceeds them.

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FOREWORD

The economic and social conditions of mobile people, be they labor migrants or asylum-seekers, highly or low-skilled, educated or not, rich or poor, are inextricably anchored in national settings. National laws and administrative regulations adopted by governments, as well as the ways in which they are practically translated and enforced by their bureaucracies, continue to shape the destiny of mobile (and immobile) people across all continents.

Today, their resilience is palpable, despite repeated calls for regional harmonization of migration policies and for the recognition of an "international migration regime." Rightly, international organizations (IOs) continue to defend their own moral vision of world politics when calling on states to respect their international obligations, especially those related to the protection of the fundamental rights of migrants and asylum-seekers. They also have the authority to express concerns and criticisms when the transposition of internationally recognized standards in national law is partial or just non-existent, despite states' official commitments. However, their power and scope do not necessarily put at risk the manifest centrality of the state in the so-called "management" of asylum and migration matters. Nor are they designed to question the principal-agent model in which the relationships between states and IOs have been powerfully embedded to date. These issues raise a host of challenges that have been critically addressed in academic debates and across disciplines.

Perhaps one of the most emblematic policy developments which contributed to reinforcing the managerial centrality of the state lies precisely in the adoption of the international agenda for migration management.

It may seem paradoxical to argue that a multilateral initiative—based on common understandings and principles as to how human migration should be best administered and regulated—has been conducive to the reinforced centrality of the state and its law-enforcement agencies. However, this paradox can easily be tackled if one considers that the abovementioned international agenda was created in 2001 by states to consolidate their own sovereign preserve. "Migration remains largely in the sovereign realm of states" became probably the key precondition to the unquestioned acceptance of this state-centered agenda by all countries of migration worldwide. Its global diffusion was contingent on the production and reproduction of conventional tools with which IR students are familiar: repetition of general statements, identification of "shared problems" and policy priorities, and a vocabulary made of new notions and concepts used in an ad hoc manner. The latter have been essential to creating a reigning orthodoxy as to how migration and asylum-seeking should be addressed, framed, and understood by decision-makers, officials in governmental and international institutions, the media, and the public at large.

In the words of Raymond Boudon, we find ourselves in front of a "satisfactory system of reasons to support our belief." This system is based on the production of a knowledge expertise as well as on categories of thought and invented notions to rationalize political decisions, be they ill-grounded or not. Such notions and concepts have been produced and renewed at such a high speed that official statistics find it difficult to systematically respond to them. How can statistical offices precisely deal with "economic migrants", "bogus asylum-seekers", "economic refugees", "illegal border-crossing", and "voluntary vs. forced returnees", to mention but a few notions, when these categories turn out to be highly erratic political constructs? In this connection, repeated calls on the part of officials and policy-makers for "adequate" and "reliable" statistical data are more reflective of the speed with which such notions and political constructs have proliferated in multilateral migration talks than of the reliability of official statistics per se. In a similar vein, the quest for "effectiveness", including the recurrent reference to "best practices" and "operability" in official statements, stems from a normative discourse which would never have made sense to those who produced it, and those who repeated it, without the prior consolidation of this system of reasons.

Never before has the need to question these developments been so important. There exists a substantial academic literature which sets out to critically interrogate the vast repertoire that has accompanied and justified

by the same token policy decisions made by governmental actors and delegated to intergovernmental institutions. Another growing body of literature also focuses on the mechanisms exposing labor migrants and asylum-seekers to enhanced vulnerability and abuse of their rights, especially at a time of recession. Finally, there is a third body of literature which draws on the previous ones while exploring whether these developments are a consequence of migration gaining tremendous momentum in the external relations of state actors, or, rather, the manifestation of a much broader phenomenon associated, among many others, with the drive for wage flexibility and precarious work, the perceptible retrenchment of the welfare state in all countries of migration, rising social inequalities, and, last but not least, the reconfigured relationships between states and their own citizens in a globalized economy.

This essay, written by Glenda Garelli and Martina Tazzioli, belongs to this last body of literature. What the authors are interested in is not the statistical description of migration flows or their physical mapping with thick arrows and colored circles. To use their words, they lay emphasis on the perceptible "migrantization" of people, namely, the necessity for a growing cohort of people to leave their homeland regardless of the legal obstacles lying ahead. Today's Tunisia epitomizes a situation where various patterns of "forced displacements" co-exist. Forced displacements refer not only to people fleeing armed conflicts and violence in neighboring countries, but also to those who have been expelled from the socioeconomic environment of their own countries in a context marked by labor market deregulation, long-term unemployment, occupational risks, and the drive for wage flexibility. Perhaps the common denominator, shared by the various patterns of forced displacement identified by the authors, lies in the thinkable and acceptable circumscription of human rights.

In sum, this essay goes well beyond the mere denunciation of the conditions facing migrants in contemporary Tunisia. The authors are well aware that this endeavor would lead to no concrete change, if not to the paradoxical acceptance of things as they are. Their rich ethnographic material collected in Tunisia, five years after the popular uprisings leading to the collapse of the Ben Ali regime, shows that, today, the abovementioned system of reasons has remained untouched. Actually, this essay demonstrates that this system has been unimpaired by the popular revolts that utterly exposed the social political and economic realities faced by the dispossessed under Tunisian authoritarianism, and with the silent acquiescence of the West. Admittedly, short-lived self-criticisms publicly expressed by

international donors and European leaders in early 2011 were more an attempt to deal with the worldwide exposure of these realities having clear democratic significance in other parts of the world, especially in Europe, than an attempt to rethink the blueprint.

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CONTENTS

Counter-Mapping a Revolutionized Space of Mobility

Abstract This chapter presents our approach to the study of the Tunisian space of migration. First, reflecting on the revolution and migration nexus, we illustrate what it means to be writing about the Tunisian space of mobility four years after the outbreak of Tunisian upheaval. Second, by illustrating the different strands of mobility that crisscross the Tunisian space at this particular historical and political conjuncture, we intervene in the debate about the "Mediterranean region," opening up the Mediterranean signifier beyond a fixation on its shores. Third and fourth, we ground our approach to the Tunisian revolutionized space of migration in debates about precarity, introducing the notion of "migrantization," and about counter-mapping, which we embrace as a critical epistemology.

A Revolution's Temporal Borders

Writing this book four years after the outbreak of the Tunisian revolution, we are faced with the challenge of positioning our analysis in terms of that political process and, in particular, in terms of its temporal bor-

ders: Can we take stock of the Tunisian revolution? How could the new migration landscape of Tunisia be read against the political process of the revolution?

A nexus between the Tunisian revolution and migration has been characterizing the Tunisian process from the outset: the departure of thousands of Tunisian migrants in 2011, in the immediate aftermath of Ben Ali's ousting, was a way to enact a newly conquered political freedom *as a freedom of movement* (Sossi 2013a; Garelli 2013; Tazzioli 2015). As a matter of fact, even the possibility of Tunisian citizens leaving the country was an outcome of Ben Ali's fall, as it also led to the crumbling of the externalized European border he had agreed to enforce for European states in exchange for economic and political partnerships. The contested politics of mobility that Tunisian migrants enlisted across the Mediterranean Sea, moreover, reinforced this revolution and migration nexus, with migrants sort of carrying on the Tunisian revolutionary moment abroad, as they moved. This certainly happened as a result of deliberate political actions in organizing themselves into collectives, occupying spaces in European capitals, and claiming their right to be there[1]; but it also happened by mere virtue of their presence in the European space, like when they caused the collapse of the European territoriality of Schengen (Carrera et al. 2011; Garelli 2013).

In other words, the Tunisian revolution was immediately marked by migration "excess" (Casas-Cortes et al. 2015; Mezzadra 2011b; Papadopoulos et al. 2008): by the "undisciplined" movements, politics, and appropriations of Tunisian migrants on the one hand, but also by the governmental response to it. The mark of this "excess" was evidenced in European support to the Tunisian revolution, that is, a support contingent on Tunisian citizens' remaining in their country. In other words, Europe cheered at the democratization of Tunisia—either in the deeply rooted colonial narrative of a "delayed Enlightenment" or in the language of democratic standards and political models—and flaunted Tunisia as *the* promising "Spring" in the context of the Arab Uprisings; however, this enthusiasm would stop as soon as Tunisian citizens would cross out of their country and into Europe as migrants.

If the migration and revolution nexus was part of the Tunisian script from its inception,[2] and soon crystallized within institutional politics,[3] what bearing does this script have on the particular moment where our analysis is positioned—that is, four years after the revolution's outbreak—and in terms of the new migration movements we consider—that is, refugees and

migrants in Tunisia, return migration to Tunisia, and Tunisians' migration to the Gulf states? Let us start answering this question by clarifying the temporal *impasse* that the approach we propose aims at overcoming.

Revolutionary movements seem to be haunted by the question about their duration (is the revolution over?) and, most importantly, seem to be held to the scrutiny of their "post-"/"after" era in order to understand the significance of their outbreak. The historical specter of a degeneration, whereby a revolution falls out of control and gives rise to unexpected outcomes, is part of European readings of the Arab Uprisings where also Tunisia, despite being regarded as the success story of these revolutions, is constantly posited as hanging in the balance between the risk of an Islamic state drift and the achievement of the state of right. Such degeneration (the "post") would impact on the reading of the revolution itself: according to some leftist and Marxist interpretations of the Arab Uprisings, for instance, if the emancipatory and democratic process is not achieved in the aftermath of revolutionary moments, it means that these were actually "pseudo struggles" (Žižek 2013).[4]

Similarly, some commentators read the Tunisian revolution as a trajectory toward freedom and democracy. In this Hegelian perspective, the current Tunisian political and social impasse is interpreted as a series of "failures" embedded in the delayed Enlightenment of Arab countries.[5]

While clearly positioned four years after the revolution, our analysis does not build on such temporality *of* the revolutionary process and hence does not read migration changes in the Tunisian space as a revolution's success or failure (Dahkli 2013).[6] Methodologically, we instead assume the *un-decidable temporality of revolutionary movements* and deliberately leave the question about the end of the Tunisian uprisings[7]—in both its temporal and causal meaning—open. In his journalistic reportage about Iran in 1978 and 1979, Foucault (2000) engages in a reading of the Iranian *soulévement* moving away from the revolutionary script, which, he contends, has historically frozen any upheaval, fixing underway processes in terms of liberal freedoms and of known progressive narratives.[8] Our approach in this book builds from Foucault's indication: instead of the known narrative of democracy that reduced the Tunisian uprising to a tardy but finally accomplished democratic "spring," we want to look at the changing landscape of migration that arose from the Arab Uprising, leaving the question about the revolution's temporality open (Tazzioli 2015).

Let us clarify what this means. Certainly, if we narrow the revolution to the moments of the fall of Ben Ali and the occupation of the Kasbah, it is

out of the question that the revolution is over—many observers point, for instance, to a sort of restoration, with many of the politicians of Ben Ali's former party, the Rassemblement Constitutionnel Démocratique (RCD), back in power. Our analysis, however, does not aim for a progressive/regressive narrative of revolutionary events through the lens of migration. As Gilles Deleuze eloquently puts it in *To Have Done with Judgment*, the point is not to "close" struggles in a known narrative (Deleuze 1997, 134–5).[9]

Our analysis aims for the changes that occurred in the Tunisian political and social space, which we approach from the angle of migration and refugee issues.[10] Looking at the contested geographies of mobility in Tunisia, we contend, contributes to situating the revolutionary process within the growing landscape of mobility in Tunisia, which is rapidly evolving and becoming enmeshed in the Tunisian political space.

This is the angle from which we "intervene" in the debate about the Tunisian revolution, that is, the space of unfolding migrations and migration management practices on the Tunisian ground. Thus, we part ways from two dominant approaches which, while different in content, equally "fix" the revolution to a moment—the moment of actualization of a pre-fixed model of democracy, as per a dialectical approach; or the moment of disruption linked to the revolutionary outbreak, with its enactment of freedom as a destituent disruptive event.

Instead, we are interested in reading the *revolutionized space of migration*, in *"spacing,"* so to speak, *the revolution*, looking at the mobility struggles and governmentalities that the revolution brought on the Tunisian space. This approach, we contend, "opens" the reading of the Tunisian political transition to modes of struggling and governing that would not otherwise register as part of the post-revolutionary script—like the presence of European migrants and Libyan war evacuees in Tunisia and the ways through which they are/are not governed; or the out-migration of Tunisian citizens to the Gulf states (see Chap. 2).

Our spatial inquiry of the revolutionized space of migration in Tunisia maps the new configurations of migration movements and the unfolding territorialities of migration management, focusing analytical attention on their emerging new spaces. Our aim is to unpack the revolutionary process beyond an interrogation about its end (the temporal and ultimate end) and instead focus on its emergent spaces. This seems particularly important in a time when Tunisia has fallen off the radar,[11] with humanitarian and political crises escalating in Libya and Syria bringing a different

focus to the Arab Uprisings and with a generalized economic crisis in the Mediterranean region.

Mediterranean Trespassings in Tunisia

Tunisia has historically been a strategic vantage point for understanding the politics of mobility in the Mediterranean, in its different roles as a country of origin for migrants, as a country of transit for migrants and refugees coming from other countries and directed to Europe, and, most notably, as a partner of European states enforcing the EU externalized border and pre-frontier regime (Bialasiewicz 2012; Boswell 2003; Cassarino 2014; De Haas 2006; Lavenex 2006). In these past few years this role has expanded, turning Tunisia into a sort of *center of gravity* for some of the different strands of migration resulting from the two crises that have been crisscrossing the region, that is, escalating violence in Libya and Syria and the global economic crisis.

As early as 2011, Tunisia received and hosted people displaced from Libya, where the uprisings rapidly turned into a civil war that exposed everyone living in Libya to increasing violence and, moreover, exposed migrants living there—and particularly sub-Saharan migrants—to brutal racist raids. People forcefully displaced by the Libyan conflict crossed into Tunisia in large numbers in 2011 and 2012: at the Ras Jadir border-post in Southern Tunisia, for instance, people were fleeing the Libyan warfare and crossing into Tunisia at peaks of 10,000 people a day in March 2011, amounting to a total of 1,000,000 Libyan war "refugees"[12] in Tunisia in 2011 (Global Detention Project 2014). In 2013 and 2014, moreover, refugees from Syria also started to arrive in Tunisia, a place most of them perceived as a transit country to eventually make it to Europe, but that ended up becoming a much prolonged station for most of them (see Chap. 2).

This briefly captures how Tunisia is a lens on the human geography of displacement that, originating from the Arab Uprisings, has forced people from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region to flee their country. Our work aims to document the Tunisian front of the current refugee and migration landscape, looking at both geographies of displacement and technologies of migration management. In a regional context in which a European country like Italy could declare a state of humanitarian emergency in relation to the Arab Uprisings when only 5,000 people had arrived at Lampedusa Island in 2011, a focus on the Tunisian context provides a counterpoint to the narrative of "emergency" and "invasion" developed on the Northern

shore of the Mediterranean, and hence contributes to bringing into focus the "Mediterranean" of this so-called migration crisis.

But the Tunisian space offers an interesting vantage point also on the global economic crisis and its impact on migration, being traversed—inward and outward—by new migratory projects, or even just migration experiences, resulting from the economic crisis, and particularly from the crisis in the Eurozone. The expansion of migration flows of Tunisian citizens to Gulf countries, the growth of return-migration rates for Tunisians who were living in Europe, and the phenomenon of European citizens' migration to Tunisia in the aftermath of the revolution—these are all signs of a turbulent landscape of cross-Mediterranean mobility.

This turbulent landscape certainly bears witness to an incipient reorientation of mobility practices and a reconfiguration of migration experiences across the Mediterranean region, which are spurred by the different crises that crisscross it. We argue for a reading of these phenomena that would *open up the Mediterranean signifier* beyond the governmental plan of the policy region and beyond national confines.

First, we advocate for an ethnographic and theoretical engagement that would trouble the *cartographic trap* that still underpins accounts of the Mediterranean of migration, fixing the understanding of a spatial process to its edges—and particularly to the borders of countries facing the Basin. In the Tunisian context, instead, the mobility struggles that come to bear on the Mediterranean region are not simply those of its shores: Sub-Saharan migrants working in Libya who were forcefully displaced in Tunisia in 2011 and 2012 are certainly not "Mediterraneans"—that is, they are certainly not from a country along the Mediterranean shores—at least according to the country-of-birth gaze that characterizes migration and refugee normativity. Yet their stories of migration and displacement landed at the Tunisian refugee camp of Choucha at the border between Tunisia and Libya. It is a "Mediterranean at large" that our work is interested in documenting, looking at the human geographies of mobility that converge in the Tunisian space.

Moreover, these different experiences of mobility *in* and *from* Tunisia provide a rich repertoire about the ways in which people move and are displaced in the Mediterranean region today. For instance, they account for the vertiginous pace of intra-African mobility, which, while a deep-rooted reality as some scholars have underlined (Bakewell and De Haas 2007; Collyer et al. 2012), is seldom at the center of attention. Migration debates, in fact, tend to flatten the migratory paths South of the Mediterranean

"on the shore," so to speak, that is, at the moment and in place of departure.[13] In other words, this Tunisian context illuminates the multiple, turbulent, and also "diffused" geographies that come to compose the landscape of migration and displacement in the Mediterranean region, forcing us to look beyond the geopolitical borders of the countries facing the Mediterranean Sea to understand its contested politics of mobility.

Third, another cartographic trap that our work has to deal with is the South-North directionality of migration, often posited as *the* migration flow in the region, especially in the central Mediterranean. Instead, looking at the Tunisian migratory space of the past few years, the often neglected "third" shore of Mediterranean migration also comes to the fore, that is, that Eastern Mediterranean shore that is often erased in conversation about the South-to-North flows across the Mediterranean. Moreover, looking at the whereabouts of migrants and refugees in Tunisia complicates the governmental notion of routes—with its ordering of migration turbulence for "management" purposes (Ghosh 2000; Geiger and Pécoud 2010, 2013)—showing at the very least that a blurring of Eastern and Central Mediterranean routes is at play for refugees arriving in Tunisia. Finally, engaging with the multiple strands of mobility in the Tunisian space, Europe is clearly "provincialized" (Chakrabarty 2000) as the destination of cross-Mediterranean migration. While it certainly holds true that Europe remains the desired destination for most aspiring migrants and for refugees in Tunisia, our research documents that skilled Tunisian migrants are also looking elsewhere for opportunities, that Tunisians' return migrations are growing, and that Tunisia has become a desirable migration destination for specific groups of European citizens.

In sum, as an object of migration management, the Mediterranean is produced as a smooth "policy region," streamlined in the account of its shorelines, abstracted from the "asymmetrical" geographies of power these shores are embedded in (Cassarino 2014), and finally essentialized as a known geographical referent. In this book we focus on the Tunisian space of mobility with the opposite aim: by documenting the multiple practices of migration and the different struggles for a place to stay that Tunisia catalyzes at this economic and political conjuncture, we are interested in unpacking the landscape of Mediterranean migration beyond the geopolitical borders of the countries facing the Mediterranean Sea.

A move beyond national confines, we contend, is also an important critical move that would contribute to the understanding of the Arab Uprisings. While the slogan "Hurriya" (freedom) quickly spread from

Tunisia across the Arab world, the revolutionary political movements that constituted the Arab Uprisings did not enact a transnational pan-Arabic struggle and were finally contained within national borders in terms of their revolutionary movements. However, while maybe not coordinated in political terms, the Arab Uprisings triggered a generalized "geographical disruption" (Mezzadra and Neilson 2013, 6) in the region, as the reconfiguration of migration flows across the region shows. It is this spatial disruption's bearings on migration movements and struggles that our analysis of migratory movements to, out of, and across Tunisia tries to capture.

This move—into the Tunisian space of mobility but beyond its geopolitical borders—has important implications in epistemic terms also. The borders of the political upheaval underway in the Mediterranean area are in rapid transformation, requiring both ethnographic engagement to document their evolving human and political geographies and theoretical work that can mobilize analytical grids to keep up not only with the pace of the change but also with its different, intertwined layers.

Migrantization and Precarization

In a forthcoming joint interview for the radical geography journal *Antipode*, Étienne Balibar and Nicholas De Genova reflect on the current geopolitical crisis unfolding in the Mediterranean region and its impact on the challenges faced by migrants and refugees. Moving away from the cartographic trap we described above, Balibar and De Genova suggest directing analytical attention to "combined and heterogeneous struggles" that characterize Mediterranean movements. Back in 2011–2012, some of the conversations about social movements and the Mediterranean pointed in a similar direction—maybe rushing the identification of a convergence and marginalizing the reflection on heterogeneity—connecting the Arab Springs and anti-austerity movements (Balibar and Brossat 2011; Pirri 2011; Hardt and Negri 2012).

This book works through a similar challenge, but takes a different approach: focusing our attention on the Tunisian migratory space, we reflect on the different processes of "*migrantization*" that can be observed there and that point to "combined and heterogeneous struggles" of becoming migrant, being governed as a migrant, and resisting further precarization in migration. The spatial focus is key here. The point is not to create a nexus between phenomena happening in different places.

What interests us is to read different processes of migrantization that converge in a space like Tunisia, in the aftermath of the Arab Uprisings and in the context of emerging regimes of "migration management" where international organizations' practices, European Union interests, and local priorities and frictions intersect. What do refugees from Syria and Libya, Tunisians' return migration from European countries and out-migration to the Gulf States, and irregular immigration of underemployed Europeans tell us about this migratory space across the Mediterranean? From this Tunisian mosaic of migratory experiences, what analysis can be drawn about migrantization and precarization processes currently happening in the region, about who becomes a migrant today and which precarity conditions this process builds on and, most often, ends up reinforcing?

Let us clarify the approach we take on the debate about precarity. As Maribel Casas-Cortés explains in a recent contribution (2014), the concept of "precarity" could be traced back to the nexus between social movements and radical transformations of the labor regime unfolding in the early 1990s. Since then, the term has known different instantiations and has received attention from variegated strands of literature. Here, we retain the political salience of the term but part ways from the attempt to posit precarity as an ontological condition (Butler 2004; Mitropoulos 2007; Neilson and Rossiter 2008). Rather, precarity refers to a specific mode of labor exploitation and, simultaneously, to an existential condition. It is precisely this ambivalent dimension of precarity that, as Judith Revel suggests, makes it a strategic and reversible field of power that remains fundamentally open. In other words, precarity entails "a double level, one that consists in precarity conceived as a condition of existence, and another one which refers to a labor regime" (Revel 2012).

Precarity is the lens through which we read the "combined and heterogeneous" processes of "migrantization" that come to bear on the Tunisian landscape of mobility. We deploy this analytic to refer to a shared human geography of mobility and displacement, but also to differentiate these heterogeneous experiences of "becoming a migrant" in terms of their different subject positions, technologies of government, normative spaces, and temporal borders. We read the precarization of people's lives in the Mediterranean region—a precarization emerging from different but intersected phenomena of political crises, civil wars, and austerity—in connection with processes of migrantization. This is not meant to posit a substantial correspondence between precarity and migration. Instead, we are interested in reading how different conditions that spur people to move

from, to, and across different Mediterranean shores—and also across the Mediterranean "at large" illustrated in the section above—become part of a migratory space where different struggles for movement, technologies of government, and displacements of the condition of "being precarized" come into being and intersect.

Let us exemplify what we mean using two radically different migratory experiences that compose the current Tunisian landscape (see Chap. 2 for an extensive illustration), that is, underemployed European youth moving to Tunisia and Sub-Saharan migrants, formerly living in Libya, now displaced in a refugee camp in Tunisia. The Eurozone crisis had a dramatic impact on Mediterranean countries. While the average rate for youth unemployment across the EU was 22.6 percent in 2013, the same year registered much higher rates in the Mediterranean countries of the EU, reaching 51 percent in Spain and 40 percent in Italy, for instance.[14] This increased precarization of young Southern Europeans resulted in processes of migrantization of a group that was not as much on the move only a few years before, also corresponding to their "deskilling."[15] In Chap. 2 we touch on the reasons why some of these young Europeans chose Tunisia as their migration destination and how their life conditions changed there. Here we are interested in underlining that this migratory experience was an "escape route" (Papadopoulos and others 2008) for this group and that this path out of precarization, while certainly requiring creative energy, was normatively available to them (at a cheap and short direct flight distance with no need for visas) and remained safe also when these people became undocumented migrants in Tunisia.

The migrantization and precarity path for a group of Libyan war refugees displaced to Tunisia is rather different. While of course one radical difference has to deal with how this group entered Tunisia, here we want to point to the migrantization and further precarization that this group encountered once in "humanitarian processing" in Tunisia. Unlike undocumented European migrants entering and exiting the Tunisian space without much pressure on the part of migration management units, this group of refugees is highly governed—even if uncared for. Status refugees to whom UNHCR did not grant resettlement and refugees that were rejected are "migrantized" by humanitarian processing—either because status rejection equals irregular migrant status or because, even if they have refugee status, they become de facto irregular migrants in Tunisia since the country does not have a functioning refugee law yet in place. Equally undocumented as European migrants, these refugees easily face

detention and the risk of deportation. Their struggle against this extreme precarization of their life conditions enlists a strategy of "spatial insistence" (Sossi 2013b; Garelli and others 2013)[16] on the very humanitarian ground of the refugee camp, that is, persisting at the camp even after its official closure by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), persisting there—on this Tunisian symbol of the humanitarian regime—to demand resettlement in a safe country.

In mapping different processes of migrantization and precarization, our aim is to contribute ethnographic detail about spaces of migration struggle and control in Tunisia, against their reduction to a governmental discourse of statuses, with its problematic essentializations, statistical distraction, and selective enforcement practices.

Counter-Mapping as an Epistemological Approach

Our study of the Tunisian migratory landscape enlists a counter-mapping approach to unpack emerging spaces of migration control and to account for processes of migrantization that fall off the radar of political visibility. Let us clarify these two intertwined layers. Counter-mapping is a radical geography methodology which mobilizes geo-coding tools to "break through," so to speak, the "silences of maps," showing what remains unrepresented in official and state cartographies. By producing alternative cartographies of power relations, counter-mapping is at the same time a critique of the relations of power embedded in mapping devices (Broeders and Dijstelbloem 2016; Sparke 1998). So counter-mapping is both a critical approach to the arguments maps make about power relations and a practice of map-making that aims at developing "another" map of power relations, moving away from a governmental gaze and from a state-centered perspective on spatial processes (Pickles 2004).

While not engaged in making any map, our work deploys counter-mapping as an epistemological approach to the study of incipient migration spaces in Tunisia. This means an attention to a *politics of emergence* more than a politics of representation when our work targets the nexus between migrant practices and migration management technologies. In other words, we are interested in accounting for the Tunisian space of migration *beyond the economy of visibility* of state normativity and citizen politics. Counter-mapping refers to the attempt to move beyond these two frames through which migration tends to register in the public scene and in public discourse.

For instance, our ethnographic engagement at the refugee camp of Choucha (see Chap. 2) most interestingly illuminated the work of the humanitarian regime in Tunisia when we focused on the invisibilization of the camp and of the rejected refugees still living there when UNHCR officially closed the site as a refugee camp. As Nirmal Puwar put it (2012), "unmarked normative positions" underpin and constrain our imaginary of political spaces. In this context, she elaborates, processes of invisibility and visibility help us to understand the nuanced dynamics of subtle forms of exclusion as well as the basis of differentiated inclusion (Puwar 2012, 58).

Our counter-mapping approach focuses exactly on the "processes of invisibility and visibility" that characterize migration struggles and migration management technologies in Tunisia. We talk about a politics of emergence to refer to the ambivalent and intertwined conditions of identification that underpin visibility/invisibility of migrants on the political scene: on the one hand, this refers to being recognized (or not) as a political subject, as the subject *of* a certain political practice, a subject bestowed of political agency; on the other hand, the order of visibility/invisibility also refers to being subject *to* disciplinary mechanisms and to being governed as a particular group. A counter-mapping approach, we argue, allows to read how these processes intertwine to constitute a particular political space.

For instance, in regards to the group of rejected refugees at the Choucha camp we mentioned above, a counter-mapping epistemology allows to address the following questions: Does the enduring permanence of rejected refugees at the camp-site—that is, after UNHCR declared the humanitarian emergency closed—register as a political struggle with a legitimate jurisdiction within the realm of the "contested politics of mobility" (Squire 2011)? Or is it simply the recalcitrant behavior of a small group of people, as a refugee studies expert put it for us in an email exchange in 2014? Does the humanitarian regime's hold on rejected refugees' lives terminate when the camp is closed as a success story of migration management and these people are declared "people not of concern" by UNHCR? Or is there a "Choucha beyond the camp" (Garelli and Tazzioli, forthcoming) where rejected refugees' lives remain entangled with the humanitarian regime through its "exclusionary politics" (Squire 2009)? Does their demand to be resettled in a safe country fall outside humanitarian actors' "concern" since they have been ruled out as "rejected" refugees, or does it speak to the struggle of migrants who become refugees while residing abroad

(third country nationals living in Libya when the conflict broke out) but who are rejected refugee status according to the normative borders of asylum (with its country of birth territoriality)?

Elsewhere, we approached these questions from an epistemological angle, showing how they "displaced" and "rerouted" the disciplinary and normative frames through which refugees are studied and governed. Here we are interested in understanding them spatially. An institutional approach on the conditions of people at Choucha "after the camp" would probably answer negatively to both sides of the question, that is, both the question if Choucha's rejected refugees are "subjects of" a political struggle and the question if they are "subject of" the humanitarian regime after their claim to asylum is rejected. Instead, a counter-mapping approach allows to see beyond the borders of political and juridical visibility, at the time of the camp's invisibilization, and, finally, to account for its residents' struggles beyond the borders of what we call "citizen politics" (see Chap. 3).

By mobilizing a counter-mapping epistemology, our goal is also to expand and deepen the repertoire of migration practices, struggles, and experiences that are associated with the Mediterranean. In recent years, in fact, public attention has focused on migrants' shipwrecks talking about the Mediterranean as an open-air graveyard, in a delayed catching up with the long established reality of the Mediterranean as the deadliest border in the world (International Organization for Migration (IOM) 2015), which activists and activist scholars have been denouncing for the past twenty years. This Mediterranean scene of deadly crossing is certainly part of our analysis of the Tunisian space of migration (see, for instance, in Chap. 2, the sections on rescue operations and on local integration programs). Our aim with this book is to situate migrant shipwrecks in the context of other frontiers of migration that are unfolding in the Tunisian space of migration, documenting, for instance, the harsh destitution of refugees in Tunisia, a grim situation that convinced many of them to take a chance on a boat to Lampedusa; or the many governmobilities (Bærenholdt 2013) of the Mediterranean space of circulation, constraining or facilitating the mobility of different groups of migrants across the Middle Sea's shores. Looking at heterogeneous migratory movements in Tunisia—from European retirees to Syrian war refugees, from Sub-Saharan economic migrants in Libya who fled into Tunisia to Tunisians' migration to the Gulf states or return migrations away from Europe—and looking at the different ways in which these different movements are governed and not governed, our aim is to document a complex

landscape of mobility across the Mediterranean, directing our attention to deep-rooted migratory practices and emerging ones.

To this end, we mobilized a qualitative design for our research and engaged in multiple approaches to data collection, including archival research and interviews. Our archival research was intended to map the existing migration policy frameworks at play in the Tunisian space and the conversation about these policy's evolutions that has characterized the post-revolutionary moment, especially in terms of international actors' interest in supporting a change in the way Tunisia manages migration flows. We approached the study of policy framework by relying on primary sources (policy texts or, if not yet available, press releases and institutional discussions' about them) and the conversations they gave rise to in two specific epistemic communities, that is, policy think-tanks and activist groups. The policy pieces at the center of our study are: the "EU-Tunisia Mobility Partnership" provisional text; UNHCR statistics about refugees in Tunisia; the draft of the asylum law as part of the Tunisian Constitution; bilateral agreements between Tunisia and European nations about migration; and Tunisian regulations about third country nationals living on its territory (documented and undocumented) in terms of rights to presence, right to work, and access to health care. In order to document the different migratory experiences that crisscross the Tunisian space of migration, we conducted 50 interviews with different actors, including three main groups of respondents: first, migrants and refugees living in Tunis, Medenine, Sfax, Zarzis, and at Choucha camp, as well as Europeans living in Tunis; second, institutional actors engaged in migration management in different capacities (Red Crescent volunteers, UNHCR and IOM officers, employees of the Tunisian office of Foreigners living abroad, employment agencies facilitating Tunisians' emigration to the Gulf States, Italian and French registries for their nationals living abroad, and employees of the Tunisian Ministry of Labor); and finally migrant rights advocates and migration lawyers who have been engaged with migrants and refugees in Tunisia. Access to interviews was facilitated by our academic affiliations and/or our engagement with two struggles that have been characterizing the Tunisian space of migration since the revolution, that is, that of the families of missing migrants who fled in the aftermath of the revolution (Le Venticinqueundici 2011; Sossi 2013a, b, c) and that of Libyan war refugees who had seen their asylum claims rejected (Voice of Choucha 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015).

While the book relies on interviews with individuals and aims at documenting the stories of migration that fall off the radar of current accounts of post-revolutionary Tunisia, our goal is not just that of accounting for untold migratory experiences and "pluralizing" the discourse about the Tunisian migratory space. What is at stake is also the differential public attention these different practices of migration receive. In cartographic language, we could say that we are interested in counter-mapping the Mercator projection that characterizes governmental discourse about migration across the Mediterranean, a discourse marked by the dramatization of immigration to Europe as an invasion and as *the* paradigm of regional migration. Our attention to processes of migrantization, instead, "provincializes" (Chakrabarty 2000) this account and provides ethnographic detail about other spaces of mobility that are emerging across the Mediterranean.

In our counter-mapping approach, we do not necessarily aim for big numbers: in the unfolding space of migration in Tunisia, the point for us is not to weigh or measure flows, but to describe how practices of movement and technologies of government intersect, clash, and "make spaces"—political, social, and economic spaces. So it is not about statistical relevance but about a sort of genealogical relevance. Foucault defines genealogy as

> [that which] must record the singularity of events outside of any monotonous finality; it must seek them in the most unpromising places, in what we tend to feel is without history. (1971, 1)

In writing this book we have been following migrants and refugees in "the most unpromising places," as Foucault put it, trying to take stock of their mobility struggles in these particular struggles' own individual terms. This, we argue, is a counter-mapping approach, that enables new political *spaces that may not register* within the frame of majoritarian politics and in the imaginary of citizenship. For instance, the struggle of refugees at Choucha described in Chap. 2 is not a struggle that can be accommodated for within the framework of political representation; its interest to us is linked exactly to this struggle's laying beyond the threshold of political visibility and yet to be challenging this political visibility's assets. It is these frictions—between migrant and refugees' struggles, the spaces of government enlisted to govern them, and what counts as a political struggle—that we have called "politics of emergence."

Notes

1. A compelling example of this contested mobility of politics comes from the different collectives Tunisian migrants started in European cities, such as, for instance, the Tunisians from Lampedusa in Paris (Sossi 2013a).

2. The revolution and migration nexus has also been read in negative terms in two ways. The first reads migration as a betrayal of the revolution, that is, Tunisian citizens leaving their country at the moment of its political heyday. (For a compelling critique of this perspective, see, for instance, Sandro Mezzadra's 2011a piece "Mediterranean Adventures of Freedom" [in Italian].) The second reads the departure of Tunisians in 2011 and 2012 as providing a shortcut for a governmental stabilization of political unrest, that is, letting unruly mobs move away.

3. Following the revolution, Tunisian citizens residing abroad were allowed to elect their representatives to the Tunisian Parliament, resulting in 18 seats out of a total of 217. Moreover, the issue of migration was acknowledged governmental relevance with the creation of a Secretary of State for Migrations and Tunisians Abroad (SEMTE) under the Ministry for Social Affairs.

4. In a 2015 article for *The Guardian,* Žižek writes: "The ongoing struggle there [in Syria] is ultimately a false one. The only thing to keep in mind is that this pseudo-struggle thrives because of the absent third, a strong radical-emancipatory opposition whose elements were clearly perceptible in Egypt."

5. The philosophy of history through which the Tunisian revolution is coded tends to assume the terms "freedom" and "democracy" as the known terms of a Western political tradition and does not interrogate their specific deployment in the Tunisian revolutionary context and in the Tunisian political debate.

6. In her article "Une révolution trahie'?," Leila Dahkli cautions against considering the Tunisian revolution a 'betrayed' uprising, since, as she explains, social protests and political demands have not stopped at all after the fall of Ben Ali.

7. For a linguistic analysis of the Tunisian revolution's nomenclature—and particularly the different semantic camps of Arabic and French terms—see Angela Giordani's 2013 article "Keywords: Revolution/Coup d'état."

8. In "Useless to Revolt?" Foucault writes: "The Iranian uprising did not come under the law of revolutions." He prefers to talk about "uprising," he explains, in order to keep distance from the revolutionary script which historically has "constituted a gigantic effort to domesticate revolts within a rational and controllable history: it gave a legitimacy, separated their good forms from their bad, and defined the laws of their unfolding" (1979, 450).

9. As Deleuze puts it: "But is it not rather judgment that presupposes pre-existing criteria (higher values), criteria that pre-exist for all time […], so that it can neither apprehend what is new in an existing being nor even sense the creation of a mode of existence?" (1997, 134–5).

10. The choice of this analytical angle derives from the critical migration studies' perspective our work adopts, and particularly from its approach to the understanding power and sovereignty *through* mobility, instead of the other way around, as it is posited by mainstream migration and refugee studies (i.e., reading migrations through governmental frames—be they the discourse of legal status, integration, multiculturalism …). In particular, we align with the conversation that posits "space" and spatial processes as privileged vantage points to enact this approach (e.g., De Genova et al. 2015; Mezzadra and Neilson 2013; Casas-Cortes et al. 2015). Our notion of "space of migration" reflects these conversations and methodological approaches.

11. As we revise this manuscript for publication, the dramatic events of the terrorist attack at the Bardo Museum in Tunis brought Tunisia and its revolutionary process back into focus, even if just for a few days. We refer to these events in the Afterward "Writing in the turmoil of the present."

12. UNHCR did not recognize refugee status or some form of humanitarian protection to all the people displaced by the Libyan conflict into Tunisia. However, we retain the name "refugees" for all those who were displaced by the Libyan conflict and who, as we illustrate in Chap. 2, ended up stranded in the Tunisian desert in bureaucratic limbo first and humanitarian abandonment then.

13. This cartographic trap would reduce a common migration story (e.g., that of a Nigerian person arriving at Lampedusa Island from Zuwarah, Libya) to the cross-shore route (Libya-Italy), stripping from the picture the many intra-African migration routes that

person went through and maybe even her strandedness in the Tunisian desert as a Libyan war refugee before going back to Libya to attempt the crossing to Italy.

14. Source: *European Youth Forum*, http://intranet.youthforum.org/newsletters/node/33421 (accessed April 14, 2015).

15. It must be noted that the phenomenon of young Europeans with high school and university degrees ending up with unskilled jobs has received abundant attention in the literature and is at the center of many public policy debates. The same phenomenon of deskilling certainly also characterizes groups of non-European migrants and refugees but is very seldom commented on, showing that the statistical relevance of processes of so-called "deskilling" is racialized.

16. Federica Sossi used this expression to refer to Tunisian migrants' struggles in European cities in a series of compelling contributions on how Tunisians set their revolution in motion across the Mediterranean and into the spaces of European cities (Sossi 2013a, b).

The Tunisian Migration Space

Abstract This chapter engages with new spaces of migration in Tunisia, consolidating in the aftermath of the Revolution and in the context of a global financial crisis: the emergence of a humanitarian regime and its hold over refugees' lives; new routes of mobility to and out of Tunisia, with a focus on European migrants—mostly undocumented youth—in Tunisia; Tunisians who were residing in Europe and who spontaneously decided to return home; and Tunisian migrants' mobility to the Gulf States. Building on ethnographic and archival research, our analysis revolves around four conceptual frameworks: the protean humanitarian border, mobilizing precarity in migration, autonomous return, and statistical invisibility.

Keywords European migrants • Choucha camp • Rejected refugees • Return migration • Precarisation

Refugees in Tunisia: Humanitarian Spaces and Refugees' "Destitution"

The promotion of human rights and of humanitarian politics is one of the terrains where Tunisia is held to the democratic test by political observers, and especially by those promoting Tunisia as the success case in the context of the Arab Uprisings. It is also a terrain where funds have been easily mobilized to support civil society organizations in the post-Ben Ali

era.[1] However, the process of selecting *which* human rights should count toward democratic standing in this Tunisian test is geopolitically inflated and heavily guided by EU interests. In terms of mobility, in fact, the freedom of movement sealed in Article 13 of the Human Rights Declaration never features in these conversations about the democratic transition in Tunisia. Instead, it is the Tunisian apprenticeship as a "democratic" border-guard2 for the EU that gets prime attention. Hence, Tunisia's effectiveness in policing its maritime and land borders against the human right of "leaving one's country" is at the center of the policy conversation about Tunisia.

In terms of forced migration, the juncture between human rights and Tunisian democratization tends to be openly embraced by international actors, humanitarian organizations, and European institutions working in Tunisia. This engagement has targeted the normative front in particular, pushing for the implementation of Tunisia's law on asylum. On paper, in fact, Tunisia is a signatory of the 1951 Refugee Convention and adopted a new constitution in January 2014, which guarantees the right of political asylum in Tunisia[3] and the principle of non-refoulement—at the time of writing (January 2015), the refugee law draft is pending governmental approval. However, the Tunisian government has yet to put in place a procedure to determine refugee status,[4] and, more generally, the issue of international protection seems to be a very low priority in the Tunisian political debate across the spectrum—at the level of institutional politics, civil society organizations, but even at the level of human rights activists.

Yet the rights of refugees in Tunisia are a topical focus of international agreements (e.g., EU-Tunisia Mobility Partnership[5] and the Khartoum Process[6]), despite the issue being low on the Tunisian political and civil society agenda and the frictions to international standards that have been characterizing the Tunisian political space for a long time (Cassarino 2014). Indeed, in these conversations, human rights feature as one of the current challenges of Tunisia's path to democratization when the country is increasingly becoming a country of transit and destination[7] for migrants and refugees. As the 2014 Census shows, there has been a general increase in the number of third-country nationals living in Tunisia (from 35,000 in 2004 to 53,000 in 2014),[8] with significant growing increase of Sub-Saharan Africans[9] (the population this section on refugees is mainly concerned with) and European citizens (see next section). In terms of asylum

seekers and refugees only, Tunisia is emerging as a destination country (Global Detention Project 2014)—most often a "forced" destination as this section will demonstrate. An underestimate of refugees' presence in Tunisia (based only on people who registered with UNHCR)[10] speaks of a 2011 peak, in the midst of the Arab Uprisings and of unrest in Libya, when UNHCR recorded a "population of concern" in Tunisia amounting to 4657. Numbers stabilized between 1000 and 2000 a year in 2012, 2013, and 2014 (UNHCR 2008, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2013; UNHCR Tunisia 2014, 2015).

In this section, our aim is to document the developments of the humanitarian regime in Tunisia, despite the normative tardiness and the low priority of refugees issue in the Tunisian political debate. The disconnect between increasing arrivals of refugees in Tunisia and normative and political suspension on the topic of asylum has in fact multiplied the regimes of governance over refugees currently existing in Tunisia. Consequently, the "humanitarian hold" on refugees' lives in the Tunisian space got further complicated. In 2011—at the outbreak of the Arab Uprisings and in the context of civil unrest in Libya—the space of refugee camps became the icon of the emerging humanitarian regime in Tunisia, with a specific focus on the camp of Choucha in the south of Tunisia, on the route between Ben Guerdene and Ras Jadir. Even back then this was not the only (and certainly not the first) Tunisian "refuge" for people displaced by the Libyan war, since Tunisians living in border cities volunteered hospitality for them (La Casine 2011; Gresh 2011; Tazzioli 2012; Garelli et al. 2013).[11] The UNHCR-run refugee camp in the desert, however, was certainly at the center of the changing Tunisian landscape of asylum, both numerically and in terms of media attention.

Here we document the multiple "humanitarian" regimes that have been developing in Tunisia in these past few years, looking at different phenomena: the diversification of the refugee population (not only Libyan war refugees but also Syrian refugees, for instance), the multiplication of formal and informal spaces of "refuge" (from Red Crescent-run foyers, hosting centers, to the urban neighborhoods where status and rejected refugees settle, to the site of the refugee camp after its institutional termination), and the articulation of practices of refugee management (from the push toward local integration to practices of abandonment, eviction notices, imprisonment, and deportation).

"Local Integration": Forced Installation and Institutional Illegalization

Local integration is one of the three "durable solutions" UNHCR offers to refugees worldwide.[12] It is under this framework that UNHCR and the other humanitarian organizations involved in managing refugees in Tunisia have been pursuing "non-resettled status refugees"[13] and "rejected refugees." Talking with refugees, however, the reality of such "durable solutions" in Tunisia is rather shaky if not even a highly problematic instance of what we would call *forced settlement*. From people who have accepted local integration and are now living in Tunisian cities to people who favor the harsh reality of the Choucha esplanade after the official closure of the camp in June 2013, the comment is always the same: Tunisia is not a solution for refugees; it is not a country where refugees think they have options and can be safe. So for those who accepted the UNHCR program, Tunisia is a forced settlement country:

> Nobody really *accepted* local integration, we are trapped, we have no choice. *We are at gunpoint.* (Interview, August 2014, emphasis added)
>
> We know there is no future for us here, even Tunisian people can't live in this country because of the economic state here. (Interview, June 2014)
>
> I am blocked here because I can't go home. I asked to go, but UNHCR said no and I can't go away from Tunisia because I won't risk my life on a boat. (Interview, June 2014)

A Somali refugee we interviewed in February 2015 tells a similar story of being forced to stay in Tunisia, talking about her confrontation with a UNHCR worker. When the humanitarian agent tried to dissuade her from going back to Somalia—an idea she finally conceived, as she explained to us, given the lack of any support and prospect for change in Tunisia—and indicated that her life would be in danger in Somalia, she replied that she was *already* dying in Tunisia.

It is indeed an "at gunpoint" scenario, since accepting local integration in Tunisia means first of all being illegalized: currently a locally resettled refugee, in fact, has no residence permit, no work permit, and no medical support. Access to education and training programs is extremely limited,[14] and financial support is ridiculous (120–150 dinars, about $62–76, per individual a month; between 200–300 dinars, about $100–150, per family a month). This "international protection" practice is then first of all an *illegalization program* across the board for refugees: their presence, their

livelihood, and their housing are all "at gunpoint," as a refugee put it in describing his acceptance of the local integration program.

On July 16, 2013, the Tunisian Prime Minister granted residence permits (*carte de séjour*), accommodation, and access to services (health and education) to all those at the Choucha camp, whatever their status, as long as they registered and accepted to be fingerprinted at Police or National Guard stations. Those who registered, however, have not yet received any of these benefits at the time of writing (December 2014), despite having been fingerprinted and registered as resettled refugees in Tunisia. While UNHCR flaunts its "militancy toward the adoption of a legal framework to grant refugees' rights in Tunisia," (UNHCR Tunisia 2014) the agency could not even negotiate legal residence for those refugees for whom it nonetheless insisted for local integration in Tunisia. A precise temporal border marks such "insistance:" starting from December 2011, options for resettlement to a third country for refugees in Tunisia terminated, so to speak, when the UNHCR cap for the year was reached and when the humanitarian agency was getting ready to close the camp of Choucha. A family displaced by the Libyan war, who had arrived at Choucha camp in mid-December 2011, for instance, was told that they had "arrived too late" (interview, June 2014) to apply for resettlement and their only options were to either accept local integration or to go back to their country.

The lack of residence permits ends up turning supposedly "locally integrated" status refugees into undocumented migrants that are illegally present on the Tunisian territory and hence subject both to arrest and conviction at the detention center for foreigners of Wardia[15] and to arbitrary police assessment on where they belong:

> They don't give us papers, which means we are not welcome here. The policemen tell me I am supposed to be in the South not in Tunis, not in the city. Four years living like this! (Interview, August 2014)

Moreover, the lack of residence permits forces refugees—except for those hosted in foyers (hosting centers)—to resort to the informal market for housing,[16] work, and medical services. Upon enrollment in the local integration project, refugees are offered 1500 dinars ($758) to start what UNHCR calls "self-reliance" projects (UNHCR Tunisia 2015). While in UNHCR official documents these projects are intended as rather standard and seamless programs of economic integration, they instead result in

extreme challenges to refugees' survival in Tunisia where they are illegal, have no possibility of formal employment, lack food support, and see no chances for improvement:

> *Local integration is successful for leaving the country and taking the boat to Italy.* They give you the money, they ask nothing. UNHCR is inviting you to go to the sea. […] Some people have succeeded to reach Europe, some people died. (Interview, June 2014, emphasis added)

Many of those "locally integrated" and forcefully settled, only used the "self-reliance" fund to take the sea (the 1500 dinars, $758, "self-reliance" fund ironically equals the sum that smugglers would ask for a Tunisia-Italy crossing in 2014). Many have died in these attempted crossings of the Mediterranean, leaving no trace of their unprotected vulnerability while under UNHCR care in its Tunisian local integration programs.

Rescue at Sea—Sfax, Zarzis, and Medenine: Saved and Stranded Refugees

A Tunisian "humanitarian border" (Walters 2011; Williams 2014; Garelli 2015; Cuttitta forthcoming) is fast developing—intertwined, as it happens also on the European shore of the Mediterranean, with military and securitarian functions—through events such as shipwrecks of migrant boats, rescue operations, and post-rescue management. However, Tunisian fishermen working in the coastal towns of Sfax and Zarzis—two large centers for migrants attempting to cross the Mediterranean to Italy—report that they have been engaging in operations of rescue for many years now, since the 1990s (interviews, August 2014). What has changed in the Tunisian migratory space, then, is the addition of a humanitarian management infrastructure ('management' and 'infrastructure' of a sort, as we shall illustrate) to this spontaneous practice. As the vignettes here below show, however, this has hardly provided a safe docking for those rescued at sea, resulting instead in the sheer expression of the humanitarian regime's bordering functions.

Sfax Harbor, June 20, 2014
The Tunisian National Guard rescued 230 people, whose boat was detected in distress by local fishermen. They were coming from Libya and were headed to Italy. According to local newspapers this was a straightfor-

ward story of rescue. If one focuses on what happened upon disembarking, however, the partitioning system of the humanitarian regime takes centerstage. According to newspapers' coverage, "*les réscapés de la mer*" (those rescued at sea) were immediately handed over to humanitarian care and transferred to the south-eastern town of Medenine—where the Croissant Rouge manages a *foyer* (hosting center) in collaboration with UNHCR—while suspected smugglers were brought to jail.

Interviews with migrants, fishermen, and even some off-the-record officials instead tell a different story. Upon disembarking at Sfax harbor, people spent a couple of days at the police station while local authorities established who among them was a smuggler. In interviews with fishermen and young people at the harbor, though, we were often laughed at when we mentioned "smuggling" since, as we were told, the supposed smuggler is most often simply someone who can drive a boat and—very often, unfortunately—not very well. This evidence already complicates the first partition in the group of "rescued people," between migrants and smugglers. (More ethnographic and critical engagement is needed in relation to the geographically and historically situated instances of how migrants' trips are organized).[17]

Handed over to the local Red Crescent, survivors (devoid of alleged smugglers) were again targeted for partition. While at sea migrants are treated as a homogenous group—a migration flow or a group of bodies to be rescued—once they have disembarked, they become people to identify, label, and, most importantly, to assign to different places. Despite its peremptory outcome, the partition between refugees and migrants is handled in rather arbitrary ways. With no training on refugee issues whatsoever, it is the Red Crescent that is in charge of screening rescued people in order to establish those who will be brought to the UNHCR offices to deposit their asylum claim and those who will not. This managerial procedure is the result of an agreement between the Red Crescent and UNHCR. This procedure seems to align with the UNHCR strategy of avoiding direct contact with refugees since the official closure of Choucha camp. As one UNHCR worker told us the day we went hunting to find their secluded office in the countryside of Zarzis,[18] the office has to be protected from refugees' invasion (interview, August 2014). So in their intermediary role between refugees and UNHCR, how do Red Cross volunteers establish who should be allowed to deposit an asylum claim? This decision is based on the highly problematic notion of "safe country," a "procedural function vis-à-vis accelerated procedures," which should be

avoided "where it serves to block any access to a status determination procedure" (UNHCR 1991). But let us now move closer to how rescued people are "managed" and the different paths to which they are assigned based on Red Crescent screening, focusing in the below sections on the Red Crescent's official and unofficial hosting centers for people rescued at sea.

Medenine, August 2014

Officially, there is only one foyer (hosting center) in Medenine, where people rescued at sea are brought, joining refugees from Choucha camp who accepted the local integration program. Visiting the center, however, we were immediately struck by the meager number of people there, much fewer than the numbers of those local newspapers reported as rescued at sea.[19] At a closer look, moreover, it seemed that those missing corresponded to particular nationalities: Somalis were at the foyer, for instance; but what happened to people of other nationalities—the Ghanians, Nigerians, Moroccans, and Senegalese people who had been reported among those rescued but were not in this foyer? No convincing answer came from the Red Cross, UNHCR, or the other authorities we talked with. Their dismissive comment was that they probably fled to go back to Libya in order to attempt the crossing again.

Medenine residents who witnessed the arrival of rescued people, however, confirmed our impression that there were about a couple hundred migrants rescued at sea in Medenine (August 2014). But where were they, if not at the foyer? Finally our car was escorted to another place, what we would call the hidden center for rescued people's *discharge*: a decrepit three-story building, which maybe was a school at some point, with people crammed on sparse foam rubber mattresses on the floors of rooms with no natural light. Food provisions, we were told, were left entirely to the charity of locals. No institutional figure had approached these "rescued" people to inform them of their situation, their rights, and their options. In this decrepit place of discharge for those who did not pass the Red Crescent screening for humanitarian care, the notion that these people had supposedly been rescued was hard to maintain given the complete abandonment to which they were left.

There is even more to this story. Some of the people we talked with in this secret place of discharge actually contended that their boat was not in distress when they were allegedly rescued by the Tunisian National Guard, hence turning their supposed rescue into one of the well-known instances

of pre-frontier operations that Tunisian authorities have been handling for Italy and other European states for years, either informally or as part of formal bilateral agreements (Tazzioli 2011). For instance, two migrants from Ghana tell the story of being on a boat sailing toward Lampedusa when the Tunisian Navy approached them by shooting into the air to command their boat to stop (interview, August 2014). They went on to tell us that once they arrived at the harbor, the police identified them and the Red Crescent proceeded to divide them based on their nationality. While they made clear to local authorities that their boat was not in distress, that their trip had been interrupted, and that they did not want to be in Tunisia, it is in Tunisia where they ended up stalled: blocked in their trip, uncared for by institutional actors of the humanitarian regime, abandoned in a decrepit building—certainly not a hosting center, not even properly a detention center, but a decrepit waiting zone that represents a new facet of today's humanitarian regime and border-work of the Tunisian space of migration.

Tunisian and Italian Waters, August 2014

Seventy-four migrants of different nationalities who were trying to flee Libya are rescued, on August 22, 2014, by a group of Tunisian fishermen from Zarzis, after five days of sailing. This is part of a series of rescue operations conducted by Tunisian fishermen between 2013 and 2014. Tunisian fishermen in Sfax and Zarzis have been involved in these operations either in collaboration with Tunisian authorities (the Navy or the National Guard) or, as they told us in Zarzis, at times also alone, when Tunisian authorities refused to intervene on an SOS launched by fishermen who detected a migrant vessel in distress (interviews, August 2014).

Only marginally covered in the Tunisian press (Reliefweb 2014), these operations certainly did not get much international attention. National and international authorities on immigration and refugee issues—from the Tunisian National Guard, to UNHCR, and IOM—seemed invested in hiding these rescue operations from the political scene. While the intensity of interventions and the total number of people rescued were certainly contained, the stark contrast with the "spectacle" of rescue (Sossi 2006; De Genova 2013; Cuttitta 2014; Garelli 2015; Tazzioli 2014) staged by the Italian Navy operation Mare Nostrum is noticeable.[20] While the public eye in the Mediterranean of migrant shipwrecks was on the Mare Nostrum interventions, what actually fell out of critical gaze were these Tunisian operations of rescue or, as some rescued migrants from Ghana told us in

Medenine (see above), these operations of *blockade* of migrants' boats on the part of Tunisian authorities who were enforcing a preemptive border under the humanitarian banner, reducing the number of boats successfully crossing the Mediterranean sea or, at least, reaching Italian territorial waters.

As a space of migration, the central Mediterranean is a relational space. In order to understand its humanitarian frontier—with its border spectacles, humanitarian scenes, and obscene enforcement rational (De Genova 2013)—it is important to understand it in terms of different Mediterranean spaces and of their effects on one another. This is not for the purpose of comparing the Italian with the Tunisian shore in terms of their humanitarian *prise en charge*. Rather, the methodological goal is to look at more spaces of migration simultaneously and to see how they are connected to one other; hence, our looking at a space of migration like the central Mediterranean in its heterogeneous strategies of containment and selection. For instance, the notion of pre-frontier—which is increasingly used in EU documents concerning mobility controls in the Mediterranean[21]— is best understood from these Tunisian premises of the humanitarian border, with their operations of containment, hosting centers, and spaces of discharge, for instance. As a matter of fact, while Italy enlisted the Mare Nostrum mission of rescue, it simultaneously strengthened bilateral agreements with Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt in order to assure their functioning as pre-frontiers (Casas-Cortes et al. 2013, Cobarrubias et al. 2014; Mountz and Kempin 2014).

Detention Centers—Human Rights in Prison, Refugees Falling Out of Concern, and the Injunction to "Deport Yourself"

Wardia[22] Detention Center, Tunis, August 2014
We came across the *carceral dimension of rescue* operations when refugees at Choucha alerted us about their friend Z.'s intention to take to the sea again, as he had done already in 2013. Unlike his friends, all rejected refugees still living at Choucha camp, Z. was a statutory refugee. He was recognized refugee status at the camp when UNHCR was still running it. Yet, with no residence permit, work opportunities, and institutional support associated with programs of local integration in Tunisia, he felt he had no choice but to take to the sea and attempt the dangerous crossing from Libya. Indeed things went wrong for him, but not due to a natural

calamity: as his boat was crossing the Sicilian channel, it was intercepted by Italian authorities, who handed the boat back to the Tunisians. Upon disembarking in Tunisia, however, Z. and the other "rescued" people on his boat were all arrested as undocumented migrants and brought to the detention center of Wardia in Tunis. When calling UNHCR headquarters for help to release Z., a friend of his, a status refugee himself, learnt about the borders of refugee status: when refugees leave Tunisia to migrate to Europe, he reported the humanitarian officer telling him, it is as if they give up their status, and UNHCR does not do anything further for them if they are arrested (interview, August 2014).

As we started to investigate Tunisian detention centers, we realized that Z.'s case was not an isolated one: status refugees "rescued" by the National Guard—either from a shipwreck or as part of a pre-frontier border patrol—are arrested and remain in prison, with no intervention on the part of humanitarian actors. The normative instability of humanitarian categories and migration statuses is at the heart of this situation: the same people who had been declared in need of international protection by UNHCR in Tunisia re-entered the Tunisian territory as illegal migrants upon being "rescued" at sea by the National Guard. Why this identity reshuffling? From a juridical standpoint, this is the outcome of the contradictory regimes under which refugees are governed in Tunisia at the moment: since Tunisia has not yet implemented its refugee system, the National Guard has leeway in "streamlining" third-country nationals with no residence permits into "undocumented migrants"—a process, however, which is heavily racialized as shown in the next section on undocumented European migrants, who do not incur in the same treatment.

Yet, that an international organization like UNHCR dismisses its own recognized "people of concern" while they are jailed is a puzzling enactment of the humanitarian b-ordering regime that underpins the refugee's agency. We could say that refugees in Tunisia are *humanitarian illegal subjects,* not only for Tunisian authorities, but also for the refugee agency. Recalling Sandro Mezzadra's argument about the "right to escape" (Mezzadra 2006, 2015), it could be argued that the humanitarian regime is based on social and spatial norms with which the refugee is required to comply and against which migration stands as a disobedience, one that is heavily criminalized.

Actually, the illegality of statutory refugees is tolerated in the Tunisian territory as long as they comply with the capture in which they are held, that is, no legal residence, no access to the labor market, and no medical

care. As long as they comply with these impossible circumstances, their presence is tolerated by authorities, mapped by UNHCR yearly statistics, and differentially absorbed into Tunisian society. However, such tolerance is quickly interrupted when refugees end up denouncing these impossible life conditions by leaving, breaking the spatial bondage that their liminal presence is tied to in Tunisia. Once rescued at sea, in fact, refugees re-enter Tunisia as undocumented migrants.

Migrants' Detention in Tunisia

Secrecy about immigrants' detention in Tunisia was the trademark of Ben Ali's era and continues to this day (Global Detention Project 2014), enough so that migrant-rights activists and members of civil society have demanded Tunisian authorities to release the numbers and locations of detention centers for migrants in the country. What is known is that the construction of detention centers for immigrants in Tunisia was financed by Italy as part of the 1998 re-admission agreement with Tunisia aimed at implementing containment policies in countries of transit (Migration Policy Center 2013). The centers of Wardia in Tunis and Ben Guerdane in Southern Tunisia are the two publicly known facilities, but research indicates that they are not the only ones.[23] Wardia is administered by the Ministry of the Interior. However, its regulations and mandates are quite unclear. The center hosts not only third-country immigrants who commit felonies but also undocumented migrants, status refugees, including entire families with children (Interviews, August 2014).

A recently published report by Storiemigranti (Storiemigranti 2015) denounces several violations of detainees' rights in detention: no access to legal aid, no contact with the exterior, malnutrition, poor sanitary conditions, no proper medical care, and blackmailing. Moreover, the report documents the criminal practices through which the National Guard manages detainees' exit from the detention center, that is, through *different removal and deportation strategies* that re-route migrants and refugees out of Tunisia—or at least away from the capital—and far away from the EU, in an uncanny double practice of expulsion from the Tunisian national territory and externalized border-patrolling of the European one. In both instances, migrants and refugees are abandoned to situations of dire risk to their lives.

For instance, interviews in the Storiemigranti report document a practice of weekly deportations (for an ethnographic account of these deporta-

tions, see the *Chronicle of a Deportation: Choucha Refugees' Continuing Struggle* here below) of migrants and refugees who can't pay their way out of the prison. A refugee who was able to survive his exit from Wardia reports that during his two-months detention in 2014 about 400 people were deported: about 240 people were deported to Algeria and about 180 were deported in Turkey. The report focuses on the logistics of deportations to the border-zone between Algeria and Tunisia:

> They deport them clandestinely. They give them a bottle of water and they abandon them there. Some people got lost in the desert and died or, like the Nigerians who were with them, walked a lot but finally found themselves again in Tunisia, finding again the Tunisian policemen. (Storiemigranti 2015)

> I know the Somalis who have been deported […] [One of them] called me once to tell me that in Algeria the police arrested them [migrants] and, after six months, they would bring them to the desert between Algeria and Niger and that, over there, they have only 15 days to leave Algeria [before being] deported. (Interview, March 2015)

> When the Somalis who were detained in my cell were deported, the guards put pressure on me, saying that if I did not have the money to buy my repatriation's ticket, they would have deported me to Algeria as they did with my comrades. (Storiemigranti 2015)

No public outcry followed the imprisonment of these people, previously classified as "people of humanitarian concern." We learned of this carceral dimension of the Tunisian humanitarian regime only by chance, when a refugee who was at Choucha called us to denounce the situation. As we followed some of these refugees' struggles, the picture that emerged was rather grim. Refugees have a chance to leave the prison (and to escape the threat of deportation to the Algerian border) only through a sort of *self-deportation* if they agree to pay for their airline ticket out of Tunisia. If self-deportation entails pushing refugees out of the Tunisian territory, refugees' "disappearance" is produced also through their invisibilization and by scattering them throughout the territory. Indeed, those who have no ability to pay for their return, after an indefinite period spent at Wardia, are then left on the territory and 'encouraged' to go south towards the cities of Medenine and Ben Guerdane where their presence is tolerated. The cycle of invisibilization to which they are subjected then includes: deten-

tion, deportation at the border with Algeria, practices of self-deportation, and dispersal in Southern cities.

The shift from a politics of generalized tolerance toward refugees' presence in Tunisia in the aftermath of the revolution to their invisibilization, incarceration, and deportation has also to be read in the context of changing patterns of border enforcement in the central Mediterranean. During the Fall of 2014, for instance, the military-humanitarian operation of rescue Mare Nostrum—in charge of detecting and rescuing migrants' boats in distress in the central Mediterranean—was terminated by the Italian government (Carrera and Den Hertog 2015; Cuttitta 2014; Tazzioli 2015). The EU operation Triton replaced it: coordinated by the EU border patrol agency Frontex, the primary focus of Triton is border surveillance; while this surveillance also eventually includes rescue operations,[24] it centers on enforcement. As a matter of fact, the launch of Triton brought the furthering of the Euro-Med Neighborhood countries as the EU border 'watchdogs': in this capacity, Tunisia's involvement in pre-frontier operations in the Mediterranean was reinforced. The active role of Tunisia in working as a space of containment and deterrence for migrants en route to Europe was officially sealed with the signature of the re-admission agreements between Tunisia and the European Union on December 2014 (Council of the European Union 2014). Migrants and refugees detained at Wardia are certainly the target of a strategy of removal from the Tunisian public space (and especially from the capital). But they are also the target of a *strategy of desistance* linked to their project to reach Europe. The Tunisian space of migration needs to be situated within these co-existing layers of migration governmentality.

Chronicle of a Deportation: Choucha Refugees' Continuing Struggle
Tunis, August 24, 2015: A group of ten refugees from Choucha camp is arrested in front of the European Union delegation quarters in Tunis. The group had organized a peaceful protest to demand resettlement in a European country and to call attention to their situation as Libyan residents who fled the civil war, saw their asylum claim rejected by UNHCR at Choucha, and are now illegalized migrants in Tunisia.

EU delegates watch the protest barricaded inside their quarters and don't intervene even when the Tunisian National Guard arrests the group of refugees that was simply trying to bring a message to the EU delegation. The group is forcefully brought to the police station and is told to wait for a representative of the EU who would come to talk with them.

Instead, a few hours later, it is again the Tunisian National Guard who comes meet the group in order to transfer it to the detention center of Wardia. The lawyer the refugees were in contact with is denied access to Wardia, and is hence, prevented from talking with the people he wants to represent.

Tunis, September 1, 2015, 5:30 am: While in Tunis conducting field-work research, we receive a phone call from R., one of the ten refugees arrested at the end of August in front of the EU headquarters. "We are on a police truck. They are driving us to the Algerian border, we are …" The call is cut off. We immediately inform international organizations such as UNCHR, IOM, and the Red Cross about the underway deportation. UNHCR cuts us short saying that they won't mobilize in support of these deportees since they are not "people of concern" by UN standard since they had received a rejection of their asylum claim. The Red Cross and IOM don't even reply.

Tunis, September 1, 2015, 10 am: Another phone call from R.: "We are now at the Algerian border, still on the Tunisian side, but the police told us that if we don't cross the border on foot they will shoot us." The call is cut off again.

Tunis, September 1, 2015, 1 pm: We finally reestablish contact with the group of refugees. It is R. who answers the phone informing us that they are now in Algeria, close to a police station in Bou Chebka, not too far from the Tunisian town of Fériana, in west-central Tunisia along the frontier with Algeria. This means they were taken to Algeria through the militarized zone of Mont Chaambi, which spans the west-central Tunisian area from Kasserine to the border. They spend the night by the crossing point and are being pushed back and forth the two sides of the border by the Algerian and the Tunisian police: Tunisian authorities threaten to kill them if they dare coming back to Tunisia; Algerian authorities tell them refugees can't stay there and actually in the country altogether.

Also on September 1, the journalist Sana Sbouai publishes an article on the deportation,[25] opening a political case in Tunisia where a migrant deportation had never been reported on in real time. Despite multiple sources of evidence about the underway deportation, all Tunisian and international human rights associations (allegedly working in support of migrants and refugees) refuse to take a public position on the case.

September 2, 2015, 10 am: "We are back in Tunisia, we are under arrest at the police station of the city of Fériana." As we were trying to understand how to mobilize legal support to get them released, R. calls

us with a surprisingly positive update: they were back in Tunis, sent back on a collective taxi paid by the authorities. According to R. this was the result of the attention the news got as Sbouai's article was published and spread through social media. As they are finally safe in Tunisia, we also learn that they were beaten several times "in deportation," starting from the moment they were apprehended at the detention center to be driven to Algeria and onward. Tunisian authorities didn't appreciate the media attention and sent refugees back on the sly, in an attempt to minimize the political impact of the news. Refugees are abandoned at the Tunis taxi station. No international organization accepts to help. Only the art collective Twiza—a group of Tunisian and European artists based in Tunis—decides to host them in the house the group rents for their artistic activities.

November 2015: At the time of revising this manuscript, the group of refugees is still at Twiza, lacking legal, medical, and financial support and stuck in a juridical paradox. They are in fact illegalized migrants who have no right to be in Tunisia, while being refugees who fled the Libyan war; they can't move back to Libya or their countries of origin and they can't even legally exit Tunisia as they would be charged a fee as visa over-stayers that they can't afford. "Not of concern" for both Tunisian authorities and humanitarian agencies, the group won't long be able to support itself in Tunis and is considering going back to the desert, to Choucha, the only space where their presence seems to be at least informally tolerated. Bounced from Algeria to Tunisia, from a detention center to a border town, from the capital to a campsite in the desert, corresponds to a tactic of government whereby, the group of refugees is governed by being scattered in space and being marginalized.

Syrians and the Permanent Seeking of Asylum by Humanitarian Policy
The prison of Wardia stands as a magnifying glass of the humanitarian regime also in terms of its multiple jurisdictions and their contrasting outcomes on people's lives, as the story of Syrian refugees in Tunisia eloquently shows. In July 2014, more than 3000 Syrian refugees were estimated to be in Tunisia, all having arrived after the outbreak of war in Syria. The number of Syrians who entered Tunisia through Algeria increased starting from December 2014,[26] when Algeria introduced visa restrictions for Syrian asylum seekers. Most of them fled to Libya and Algeria, but finally moved to Tunisia where it seemed easier to get temporary residence status. Indeed, already in 2012, former Tunisian President

Marzouki promised to grant a humanitarian protection to all Syrians fleeing the war, hence bypassing both his country's lack of an international protection system and the UNHCR mandate in Tunisia.

However, such promised protection was never actually implemented and Syrian refugees found themselves in a suspended humanitarian space. For those who finally decided to register with UNHCR Tunisia—despite that most aspired to claim asylum in a European country and that resettlement from Tunisia was not an option—the decision resulted in the uncanny status of permanent asylum claimant, that is, being under the jurisdiction of the Tunisian government as per President Marzouki's 2012 declaration, uncared for by UNHCR, and blocked in Tunisia due to the lack of resources needed to pay the penalty fee for over-stayers that would be charged upon their exit.

This hollow refugee status led many of them to end up at Wardia, arrested as undocumented migrants in Tunisia. Because of their liminal status, Syrians tend not to be visible in Tunisian cities despite their settlement in cities like Tunis, Sousse, and Sfax, which is also part of UNHCR's approach to the urban dispersal of refugees versus the creation of refugee camps like Choucha. It is hence in the detention center that their otherwise untraceable presence in Tunisia becomes slightly mappable.

At the end of 2014, the presence of Syrians at the detention center of Wardia is under another uncanny paradox, as refugees both who were still at Wardia or who had exited told us: Syrians in the detention center were threatened to be deported to Algeria unless they could buy an airplane ticket to go to Turkey, in a perverse neighborhood logic whereby it is their neighboring country that should take care of them. Hence, Syrian refugees are *migrant-ized* and asked to proceed toward *self-deportation* (even self-funded) to a third country. Despite the absence of official statistics about Syrians in Tunisia, humanitarian organizations' statistics estimate the number of Syrians in Tunisia between 9000 and 12,000[27] (a peaked presence, in comparison with the 2014 estimate of 3000 Syrians in Tunisia).

Self-imprisonment: A Way Out of Tunisia?
We want to close this overview of the detention center of Wardia with a story of volunteered imprisonment chosen as a way out of Tunisia.

> Last week two refugees from Cameroon went to the prison of Wardia with their luggage, asking to be put in jail. (Interview, February 2015)

This was their strategy for not paying the over-stayers' penalty of 160 dinars ($81) per month that any irregular migrant is supposed to pay to the Tunisian state for leaving the country after an irregular stay. The Cameroonians' case is not an isolated one, as migrants based in Tunis and people involved in refugee support activities told us. This is another instance of illegalization—in this case, a chosen illegalization—for migrants and refugees in Tunisia. Indeed, the Cameroonians who decided to go to Wardia had refugee status, like many others who instead have been apprehended and put into jail by the Tunisian police. The Tunisian-Algerian border is a "burning frontier" whose border effects and conflicts—between Algerians authorities, Tunisian authorities, and groups of Islamic fighters—go well beyond the geopolitical borderline, turning this into a particularly dangerous place where to be deported.

The Refugee Camp: Refugees' Struggles, Humanitarian Government, and the Camp After the Camp

The refugee tent camp of Choucha was opened in late February 2011 in the South of Tunisia in the middle of the Tunisian desert, 9 kilometers from the Libyan frontier of Ras Jadir, to house those displaced by the Libyan war, hundreds of thousands Libyan residents—mainly "third-country nationals" living and working in Libya—who fled the conflict toward Tunisia. Run by the UNHCR, in collaboration with the Tunisian Red Crescent, the camp hosted an average of 4000 people, with a peak of 22,000 presences between March and April 2011. Daily life at the camp was characterized by riots and protests due first to the slowness, then to the many rejections that characterized UNHCR processing of asylum seekers. In October 2012, the humanitarian agency stopped providing food, water, and medical services to rejected refugees, and at the end of June 2013, UNHCR officially closed the camp, when about 400 refugees—including rejected refugees and non-resettled refugees[28]—were still living there in makeshift tents on the Libyan side of the border, with no connection to water or electricity, with no humanitarian assistance, and with escalating violence only a few kilometers from the camp.

At the time of writing, four years after the opening of the camp and almost two years past its official closure, there is still a group of people displaced by the Libyan war who live at the camp. In this section, we reflect on the significance of these Libyan war refugees' *enduring presence* in this humanitarian space, the landmark of the humanitarian regime's landing

in the revolutionized Tunisian space in 2011, which, as we shall illustrate, also became the struggle-field for a group of refugees against the humanitarian regime's borders. Our aim is to unpack the political geography of this humanitarian space, the invisibilization its enduring residents were targeted for, and refugees' claims and strategies of resistance.

For the actors of the humanitarian regime, the camp's official closure coincided with a deliberate erasure of the significance of people's presence at the camp:

> Choucha does not exist anymore. People there are just nomads in the desert. (Red Cross worker, August 2014)

> We closed Choucha. Choucha is a story that ended a year ago, and it was a successful case story. There is no longer any Choucha camp for us. People living there are not of our concern. (UNHCR worker, August 2014)

Yet about 300 people were still at the camp at the time of these interviews: all former Libyan residents—originally from Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Iraq, Ivory Coast, Chad, Mali, and Nigeria—who arrived at Choucha between 2011 and 2012 and who either were acknowledged refugee status by UNHCR but were not resettled in a third country or saw their asylum claim rejected. Against the foil of the invisibilization and depoliticization of this group as either "nomads in the desert," "people not of our concern," and the externality of a "successful case story" of humanitarian management, here we are interested in studying the *spatial politics* this group enlisted from the premises of the camp.

Let us start from the right claiming stance of this spatial politics, quoting from the banners that refugees showed in their protests along the state highway by the camp, in Tunis, and in front of UNHCR offices: "We demand the rights of all who fled the Libyan crisis in 2011," "Grant international protection to all who have fled the violence in Libya," "We are all from the Libyan war." While the claim to have been displaced by the Libyan conflict is uncontroversial, the *rights-claiming* that the Choucha group attaches to this uncontroversial evidence clashes against the humanitarian regimes' borders. Refugee status, in fact, is granted based on conditions in the country of birth and not in the country of residence, and is hence tied to the citizen's ontology of sedentarity. According to this framework, then, economic migrants living in Libya at the time of the war would be granted international protection *not* as Libyan war refugees but

because of persecutions they would be the target of if returned to their country of birth—a country most of them left many years ago.

It is based on this geography of displacement that the group kept demanding "resettlement for all in a third country," issuing a political claim from within the humanitarian regime's normativity (i.e., resettlement is one of UNHCR's recognized paths to international protection) but against the borders of the outdated geography of displacement that underpins this legal framework.[29] But there is even more to this claim for resettlement, which enlists the universality of a struggle—to be "all" from the Libyan war context—in a governmental technology that is based on individualization and partition, like the humanitarian regime but also, more generally, in migration management practices. In other words, the Choucha group enlists a universalized condition of struggle into the exclusionary politics of asylum (Squire 2009; Scheel et al. 2014).

Demanding a political solution for its displacement and strandedness at Choucha, the group insists on its entanglement with the humanitarian regime, addressing UNHCR as the agency governing their lives. On the homepage of Voiceofchoucha[30]—a blog started by Choucha rejected refugees in 2012—the big banner reads: "UNHCR finish your job." This firm conviction of being not only humanitarian subjects deserving international protection, but *subjects of the humanitarian regime*, governed by UNHCR and its rules never abandoned the Choucha group and was reiterated in all the interactions we had with them throughout the years. In *The Horizon is Far Away,* a remarkable documentary about Choucha camp, one of the rejected refugees interviewed radicalizes this claim, explaining how he is governed by UNHCR:

> Actually, when you are in a system that does not give you any explanation, but that yet controls you… […] I have no country, my country is UNHCR, my government is UNHCR […] I mean, I'm in their camp, I'm under their mandate, and they are my government since they are managing the camp.[31]

In this statement, the interviewee points to the paradoxical situation of *being governed* by UNHCR and migration agencies *despite* being "out of their concern," despite being a rejected refugee. Indeed, the humanitarian regime is a political technology that acts directly on people's lives, not only by producing status and rejected refugees or resettled and non-resettled refugees but also by extending its governmental hold onto those

it excludes. Looking at the space of Choucha when it is no longer an official UNHCR camp allows for reflection on the long range of the humanitarian hold on people's lives—that is, how people's movements and lives keep being contained, hampered, and finally governed even beyond the temporal borders of UNHCR jurisdiction on the camp.

To support its resettlement claim, the Choucha group enlisted many of the staples of spatial politics, for example, blocking a street by the camp with a march in May 2011,[32] organizing a seven-month sit-in in front of UNHCR offices in Tunis in 2013, and staging a protest at the World Social Forum in 2013 and at the International Film Festival of Human Rights in November 2014.[33] Refugees appropriated these public spaces to claim the right to resettlement and, even if only momentarily, registered as political subjects on the public scene. We argue that also their endurance in the desert after the official closure of the camp is a form of political protest and a practice of resistance by political subjects—actually, a rather extreme one, in the sense that it challenges these very subjects' survival while challenging the regime that has stranded them there. We propose to look at this form of political action as a *spatial disobedience* in two senses: it places the physical presence of struggling people in opposition to the humanitarian regime's declaration of a "closed success story" for Libyan war refugees at Choucha; also, it works toward a political articulation of the shared experience of those at Choucha, all those who fled the Libyan war and who were all further vulnerabilized by four years of life in the desert. In this capacity, *the camp after the camp* (Garelli and Tazzioli, forthcoming) is a political site of struggle where refugees' presence goes against the humanitarian regime's calendar of emergencies and its cartography of refugee management.

In particular, the presence of refugees at Choucha camp after its official closure stands in the way of refugee management planning. In governmental terms, in fact, "after Choucha" meant "no more Choucha": after the 2011–2013 experience of housing refugees in camps, local and international organizations working in Tunisia opted for a turn toward smaller-scale housing solutions in urban centers for refugees—a move that aligns with UNHCR urban integration programs, which are, however, far from promoting any type of integration in Tunisia at this stage (see section on Medenine above). In particular, humanitarian organizations feared the consolidation of Choucha into a basis for refugees and migrants. As we learned from our interviews in 2014, in fact, Choucha had become a tem-

porary hostel for refugees who could not afford rent in Tunis yet and who wanted to rely on a support network of people who had been living in Tunisia for four years now. So closing Choucha corresponded also to the plan of spreading refugees on the Tunisian territory, where spreading presence around also coincides with diluting the possibility for political organizing and protest.

So, *after* Choucha, humanitarian territoriality aims at local integration programs in Tunisian towns. As we discuss above though, these programs coincide with a "politics of discharge" (Tazzioli 2015) where refugees are not only dispersed but also uncared for while stranded in decrepit housing facilities. So the attempt to leave this Tunisian context and cross back into Libya to take a boat to Italy—as many from Choucha and humanitarian foyers (hosting centers) in Tunisian towns did—stands as another instance of spatial disobedience to the borders of the humanitarian regime in Tunisia.

Refugees at Choucha camp challenged the territoriality of asylum normativity: advocating for "resettlement for all," they contested the national boundaries of the humanitarian, which tides protection to the country of birth. When these refugees, after being abandoned by humanitarian actors and stranded in camps and foyers (hosting centers), resort to risking their lives and cross the sea toward Europe, they do something similar: they "trespass," so to speak, the national boundaries of asylum, claiming to be "people of concern" independent from their particular location. This claim, however, is quickly reabsorbed and constrained within the normative borders of international protection, where a territorial bondage underpins the *humanitarian contract* between a state (or an international organization granting refugee status) and the person receiving status. A sort of *non-citizen obedience* is expected from refugees, first of all in the form of a territorial discipline. In fact, while the decision to grant asylum to an individual by a state should be respected by the international community,[34] such a decision does not coincide with an obligation to protect this individual on the part of other states. In other words, while a right to mobility is granted in principle to refugees—however difficult actually obtaining travel documents often is—the rights associated with international protection do not necessarily travel with them.

We want to conclude this section on Choucha camp by reflecting on how the governmental logic of humanitarianism played out in the Tunisian context. In an interview at their headquarters in Tunis, a UNHCR worker put it in the following terms:

When you don't have a stable population with a clear orientation, it is difficult to govern it. (Interview, August 2013)

The UNHCR worker was commenting on the difficulty of closing Choucha. Building on this comment, we ask: what type of political technology is at play in the humanitarian government of Choucha, and how does it play out on the lives of the refugee "population?" A clarification on the notion of population is needed here, drawing on Foucault's analyses on biopolitics where the "population" is posited as the object upon which governmentality acts, or to put it better, "a multiplicity of individuals who are and fundamentally and essentially only exist biologically bound to the materiality within which they live" (Foucault 2009, 37). While this is meant to indicate a national population, many scholars have also applied this notion to non-national groups, in which unity is given by a certain element shared by its members (Hacking 1982; Hannah 2000; Legg 2005). While the non-national group of Choucha refugees could hence be regarded as a population, there is one interesting element that distinguishes its governability. In the case of other non-national populations, there tends to be a homogeneity that defines the commonalities shared by the individuals who are considered to be part of a population-group.

In the context of migration governmentality, instead, it is precisely such a homogeneity that, we contend, is actually missing. The *norm of governability* of a migration group is extremely blurred and depends on changing geopolitical, political, and economic conditions, which determine the criteria according to which migrants are partitioned, allocated in space, granted international protection, or denied refugee status. Moreover, the constitutive instability of a migrant multiplicity is also the result of the partitioning aim that characterizes migration policies. Indeed, the humanitarian government works through temporarily formed multiplicities which it governs according to specific rules, by selecting and dividing people (into status and rejected refugees; people who are resettled in a third country and others who are excluded from resettlement programs; migrants receiving a temporary residence permit and those who remain illegal on the territory). To account for this governmental practice, we propose to use the expression *divisible multiplicity* to point out the production and government of migrants as taken not as singular conducts but as part of a temporarily formed migration group. Such a multiplicity ultimately defines *temporary governable groups* that later will be unavoid-

ably disaggregated and broken up and any individual eventually will be associated to another migrant multiplicity.

Let us provide an example from Choucha. Choucha served as a unifying spatial referent of migration management discourse—or rather to instate a humanitarian management discourse in Tunisia—for both the humanitarian and migration agencies working on the terrain and for migrants and refugees themselves, who started to identify themselves as "of Choucha." Little by little, though, even such a spatially unifying label—which also functioned as a reference to a shared condition of displacement—started to teeter. It teetered first of all for the refugees who left Choucha, those who scattered across the Tunisian territory looking for informal jobs, or those who settled in Tunis in neighborhoods inhabited by other migrants. But it teetered also for Tunisian authorities. If UNHCR proceeded to erase Choucha by politically declaring that it did not exist anymore (despite that refugees were still living there), Tunisian authorities enforced such erasure with very tangible outcomes for refugees. As a matter of fact, being "from Choucha" or "of Choucha" quickly ceased to be a deterrent that could be used by rejected refugees to avoid being treated as illegal migrants and being jailed. Until 2013, instead, the name of Choucha camp had worked synonymously to a space of protection, thus granting leeway of tolerance for the people of Choucha when they used to go to Ben Guerdane or other Tunisian towns to find temporary jobs—despite being undocumented and being often stopped by the National Guard, they were rarely jailed.

However, in the span of a few months, the spatial economy of Choucha considerably changed and the ex-camp, already a military zone at the land registry, became effectively part of a broader military border-area, the Ras Jadir insecurity zone. Such a militarization of Choucha and the 'dissolution' of the humanitarian space into a border-zone monitored by the Army is linked to the worsening of the political crisis and the escalation of violence in Libya, a situation that had a great impact on the Tunisia-Libya border where Choucha is situated. The Ras Jadir border-post, in fact, has been closed and reopened many times since 2011. The Tunisian economy has been negatively affected by the Libyan crisis and the subsequent shrinking of Libyan market labor, which was a source of economic relief for Tunisians and which dramatically decreased Libya's interactions with Tunisia, especially since 2014. Indeed, if it is the case that the labor market in Libya had been largely developed since the 1970s, the political enthusiasm triggered by the Arab Uprisings generated the hope of an increased liberalization of economic exchange and people mobility between the

Arab countries.[35] Actually, in 2012, the Tunisian government signed a bilateral agreement with Libya to facilitate the employment procedures of Tunisian workers in Libya. But already in 2013 a comparison with the pre-revolutionary period shows a one-third decrease in the number of Tunisians residing in Libya.[36] Therefore, in order to understand the transformations of humanitarian spaces, it is necessary to step out of the borders of migration and asylum, situating these within the broader field of spatial economies and their mutations.

The Production of Remnants, Vanishing from Statistics, and the Protean Humanitarian Frontier

The Tunisian space is crisscrossed by a complex set of humanitarian interests and economies. While the Arab Uprisings and increasing unrest in the region have contributed to bringing refugees to Tunisia, the UNHCR focus on transit states as local integration sites[37] and the EU approach to "neighboring" countries as containment zones, have made Tunisia a target for humanitarian programs and investments. While promotion of a refugee law and a functioning asylum system in Tunisia go in hand with the discourse of democratization, what happens on the Tunisian ground is quite far from this. Asylum and refugee issues are very low (if not nonexistent) priorities in the Tunisian political debate. Refugees do not yet have residence permits and are hence undocumented migrants in Tunisia—tolerated in the South, but jailed and targeted for deportation to Algeria in Tunis and other major cities. Yet the humanitarian regime—with its multiple actors, projects, organizations, and even conferences—is at work on the Tunisian ground. Very far from contributing to refugees' protection, however, what this Tunisian instantiation has so far shown with a compelling clarity is that the humanitarian regime is first and foremost a *partition system.*

In a compelling analysis of humanitarian politics, Didier Fassin argues that:

> Statistics are much more than a technology that produces information on population. It is not only an expression of biopolitics, it is also a powerful indicator of the politics of life. (Fassin 2014, 37, our translation)

This section has documented different practices of invisibilization for refugees. In closing, we want to reflect on their statistical invisibilization, look-

ing at UNHCR data on Choucha camp, which, focusing only on whom UNHCR defines "people of concern" (asylum seekers, status refugees, and returned refugees), excludes rejected refugees. Let us provide an example. In 2011, the presence of people from Nigeria or Ivory Coast was marked in the column "asylum seekers" and the number that was registered in the box "total population of concern" corresponded in fact to the people effectively present at Choucha camp. Instead, since 2012, and more extensively since 2013, when almost all the asylum claims were processed, UNHCR started to remove from its statistics the presence of Nigerians and Ivoirians at Choucha camp: while the camp was still operating and these people were still living there, they tended to disappear from UNHCR statistics since most of them received a rejection of their asylum claim. Despite the fact that their mobility and their conduct at the camp was still controlled by the humanitarian actors involved in the management of Choucha, their illegalization produced by UNHCR through the asylum claim rejection also signified their invisibilization as presences in the Tunisian space through their removal from any statistics.

> When lives are no longer counted, it means that they don't matter anymore. (Fassin 2014, 140)

Indeed, over time the space of Choucha has been reconfigured as *a space of remnants*: after the closure of the camp, UNHCR and even Tunisian authorities stopped to count the people who were still living there. In our interviews, people leaving at Choucha estimated that about 200 people were still living at Choucha after its official closure in January 2014 (and that during the day about 90 people were staying at the camp). These people are a sort of *scant multiplicity* (Garelli and Tazzioli 2015) which, on the one hand, is 'not of concern' for humanitarian actors and so is left uncounted and, on the other, generates a sort of "fear of small numbers" (Appadurai 2006) or an uncanny fear of *the uncounted few* and keeps being governed.

Invisibility is potentially a double-edged sword that could be played strategically: not being counted may allow those who, being rejected by UNHCR, were de facto illegalized as undocumented migrants in Tunisia, potentially to escape controls. This was not the case, however, for rejected refugees at Choucha. Despite being rejected, they were constantly monitored at the camp and hampered from freely move elsewhere. Those who left the camp for Tunisian cities were often apprehended by the police as

undocumented migrants. Their political and statistical invisibility did not allow them more leeway for staying and moving in Tunisia undisturbed (even though it is true that this zone of indiscernibility—between institutional invisibilization and effective presence at Choucha camp—contributed to a certain threshold of tolerance among Tunisian authorities).

UNHCR statistics for refugees in Tunisia in 2013, report zero presences under Nigeria and only ten people under Ivory Coast, despite our having had the chance to talk with many people from the Ivory Coast during our visits to the camp (UNHCR 2013). Nevertheless, this does not mean that the rejected were not counted at all: a separate UNHCR table lists migrants in Tunisia, dividing them between refugees, rejected refugees, and asylum seekers, and showing a total number of unidentified group of rejected (328) that, according to our interviews, should include Chadians, Malians, Nigerians, Ghanaian, Ivoirians, and Gambians. It is interesting that UNHCR started to produce statistics about Tunisia only in 1998, suggesting that, before that year, Tunisia was not considered a country of asylum at all, and in fact until 2011, the number of applications was very low (averaging 120 people of concern every year from 1998 to 2011). Detailed statistics, dividing refugees by nationality and including the total number of those rejected, was introduced in 2006.

The militarization of the area surrounding Choucha increased after June 2013, in part due to the changed political conditions at the Ras Jadir border due to the rapid worsening of the Libyan crisis, and in part because the Tunisian army remained the only presence in the premises of the camp after UNHCR and humanitarian organizations had left. Indeed, the constant slippage of the humanitarian into the military represents the kernel of the political technology that shapes, addresses, and governs migrants' lives (Fassin 2007, 2012). In this regard, the argument that we push forward is that in order to not conceive the slippage of the humanitarian into the military and their mutual intertwinement as exceptional characters, we should look at them in conjunction as part of a political technology governing (migrants') lives. Actually, looking at both the humanitarian and the military from the point of view of political technology over life allows taking what apparently seem to be two opposite poles as different but complementary mechanisms for ruling and containing mobility.

The protean form of migration governmentality can be grasped only to the extent that it is conceived as a hold on migrants' lives which, in order to be effective, needs to vary and adapt its strategies. A versatility that

basically depends on the political context, on the recalcitrant subjectivities it has to govern, and on the changing notion of life that sustains the discourse on mobility control. Carrying on this perspective brings us to challenge the position that frames humanitarian politics as the discursive regime simply mobilized for legitimizing securitarian and military measures for controlling borders (Williams 2014).

Although the strategic use of the humanitarian regime at the service of the military cannot be disregarded, it is fundamental to recognize the humanitarian as a technology in itself for selecting and governing people's movements with an autonomous rationale. In fact, it is indisputable that

> contemporary border enforcement efforts are also going through a simultaneous process of humanitarization [...and] humanitarian discourse and rationality is increasingly integrated into the way in which border enforcement efforts are both framed and justified (Williams 2014, 1).

One of the peculiarities of the present government of migration and refugees consists precisely in the functioning of borders as a distinctive mechanism of partition through the humanitarian regime (Walters 2011).

EUROPEAN MIGRANTS: FLEEING THE EUROPEAN PATH TO PRECARIZATION

In the aftermath of the Tunisian revolution, Tunis became a destination for some young Europeans fleeing economic precarity and political stagnation at home and moving toward social and political change across shore, with a two-hour, low-cost flight.

In the words of a 31-year-old Italian woman who moved to Tunisia in May 2012:

> In Tunisia you feel you can have a political impact; the spaces for that are so many more in comparison with what you have in Italy, where everyone is so negative and the energy is only that of depression. I work with community radios, and Tunisia is the first Arabic country legalizing community radios and TVs. Tunisia is the place to be. (Interview, January 2015)

A curiosity toward the Tunisian revolution was the basis of a 25-year-old PhD student's decision to move to Tunis to complete the writing of her dissertation, turning her meager bursary stipend into a good liveli-

hood in Tunis (interview, January 2015); the same is true for two twenty-something-year-old girls who opened a cultural association in the Medina of Tunis and travel back and forth across Europe and Tunisia. In 2011, Tunisian society started to appear as a lively context in which to experiment with new political practices of radical democracy. The revolutionary unrest certainly triggered an unprecedented wave of "activist tourism" among the young Europeans who went to Tunisia in the months after the January 14, 2011; some decided to remain there, carrying on their activities as reporters of the revolution and eventually finding a job.

North-south mobility across the Mediterranean is a growing phenomenon, also increasingly covered in the academic literature and through journalistic reportages. Yet, from a sheer statistical vantage point, Europeans' migration to North African countries remains a marginal phenomenon (where, if anything, Morocco plays a leading role, more than Tunisia). We are not looking at the mobility of Europeans to Tunisia from such a statistical vantage point. What interests us, instead, is to map how the increased precarization of life conditions in Europe impacted the Tunisian space of mobility and the role of the Tunisian revolution in spurring a reorientation of mobility across Tunisia.

In order to understand the reorientation of mobility generated by the Tunisian Revolution, we should look not only at the departure of thousands of Tunisian citizens heading to Europe but also at the departures of Europeans who decided to follow the stream of social and political upheavals in Tunisia and moved there. This reorientation, moreover, is also situated in the context of the world economic crisis that started in 2008. As a matter of fact, already between 2008 and 2012, the number of Europeans living in Tunisia grew, showing that a reorientation of mobility across the two shores of the Mediterranean was underway even before the revolution.[38] For instance, data from the Agency for Italians Residing Abroad (AIRE) show a significant increase of about 11 percent of Italians residing in Tunisia in the immediate aftermath of the revolution, between 2011 and 2012; but factoring in the economic crisis as well, and looking more broadly at the period between 2008 and 2012, the increase peaks to about 27 percent. Italians' presence in Tunisia after the revolution represents 8 percent of the total amount of foreign residents in Tunisia and 15 percent of foreigner workers (Kriaa et al. 2013). Another example of this strand of economic migration of Europeans to Tunisia comes from France: the number of French citizens in the Tunisian Electoral French Register doubled in 2014 in comparison with 2004 (going from 4000 to

8000),[39] showing a similar trend to the Italian peaks in the economic crisis and Tunisian revolution conjunctures.

But these numbers represent only a very partial picture of European migration to Tunisia. Like the case of UNHCR data supposedly mapping the population of humanitarian concern in Tunisia (see previous section), statistics of Europeans residing in Tunisia also fail to include many cases. Foreigners living in Tunisia without documents are not counted, that is, those who entered the country with a tourist visa, became over-stayers, and never registered at their respective consulates or local institutions as Tunisian residents.[40] In our small qualitative sample of 10 interviews, only one of the European respondents had regularized her status as the wife of a Tunisian citizen. All other European migrants in Tunisia were undocumented and had no intention of regularizing their status.

> I have heard that the bureaucracy for a residence permit in Tunisia is never ending, so despite the fact that I have been living and working here for two years, I never regularized my position. I go back to Italy every now and then and, since the ticket is quite expensive, I often end up overstaying my three-month tourist visa, but in all these years I never had to pay a fee. I have never heard that a European citizen was asked to pay the over-stayer fee. (Interview, January 2015)

> When I spent an entire year living in Tunisia, I would always try to leave every three months because I knew there was a fee I would be charged if I overstayed my visa. But one time it happened to me and after talking with the guards, they let me go and I did not have to pay. (Interview, February 2015)

> I never got a residence permit in the years when I was living in Tunisia. I would go back to Italy every three months. In the end a deck chair on the boat to Palermo is between 40 and 50 Euros, so I preferred to do that. (Interview, January 2015)

But what happens when a European remains "illegally" in Tunisia? As one of the above stories documents, not much. Other European migrants told us that when they went to the airport with an expired visa, they either had to pay the fee or as over-stayers or were let go. In principle, the over-stayer fee applies to any foreigner who doesn't have a regular residence permit. As a matter of fact, when IOM organizes "voluntary returns" for migrants and refugees to leave Tunisia to go back to their countries of origin, it

needs to factor the fee, together with the expense for the ticket. However, this fee differently impacts European migrants' lives and non-European refugees (including refugees illegalized as undocumented migrants) making it for *unequal experiences of illegality.* Through this expression we refer to the differential impact of borders on people's lives. Residency status for foreigners in Tunisia is not governed according to a stable norm acting equally on all foreigners. Fickle boundaries of legality, instead, are at play in this context, showing how normative frames have always to be read in their contingent contexts of application, where they are used differently on different groups and where their implementation practice may change over time.

To what extent the juridical status of being "irregular" in a country—in this case in Tunisia—affects people's lives and hampers their freedom to stay there and move away from there? For migrants and refugees we talked about in the previous section, the irregularity of their status means the detention center of Wardia. For European undocumented migrants it means, at worst, paying a fee, which most often gets amended anyway. This disparity is even more problematic if one considers that irregularity is a choice on the part of Europeans in Tunisia, while it is a forced condition for refugees, irregularized as migrants because of the lack of a proper asylum implementation system in the country.

With undocumented presence, the recent European migrants we interviewed were also employed informally, either in temp jobs or as part of a regular job in an office or institution. Who are these recent undocumented European migrants who fall off the statistical map of foreigners living and working in Tunisia? They are all—either permanently or at some point—*over-stayers* of a tourist visa, that is, European citizens who remained in the country beyond the three-month limit of the tourist visa. Within this larger group, we observed a practice of "fast mobility" that characterizes young Europeans in their twenties and early thirties: tourist over-stayers who keep moving between their country of birth and Tunisia and whose intermittent practice of mobility does not correspond to the temporality and practices of more traditional experiences of migration that target settlement and regularization.

Who, then, are these European over-stayers and fast mobility migrants, and how do they describe their decision to leave European countries for Tunisia? Alongside the political curiosity listed in the opening, a rebellion against the financial captivity looming over their lives in Europe is also always at the center. These migration stories, in fact, tend to converge

around the attempt to either put to value a meager income originating in Europe (from a scholarship, a retirement pension, or a small family property) or to leave a situation of underemployment in an expensive European country to possibly find a job in a more affordable country like Tunisia:

> In Italy I was making 800 Euros a month working in a community center for underage people, and my rent for a shared room in a small apartment was 500 Euros. I wasn't making ends meet. In Tunis, instead I was working in a school, making 1600 Tunisian dinars. It corresponds to about 800 Euros, but with that sum you are rich in Tunisia, and my rent was only 250. (Interview, January 2015)

> I was living in Rome. I left my job in 2005. Then, in 2007, my husband was on unemployment insurance, and we couldn't go on like that in Italy. Under Italian law, you can keep getting your underemployment insurance even if you live abroad, so we decided to move to Tunisia where it would be cheaper for us. (Interview, February 2015)

> We sold our house in Italy, and we live here with the income we made. We would not be able to survive in a European country with the same amount of money. (Interview, February 2015)

> I was a PhD candidate with a 1500-Euros-a-month bursary. I decided to come write my dissertation in Tunisia, where I would spend only one third of what I would in Europe, where the revolution had just happened, and where I could learn Arabic in a good school with an affordable fee. In this way, I was able to save two thirds of my bursary every month. I used the money saved to support myself in Europe when I moved back in 2013 and couldn't find a job. (Interview, January 2015)

The ongoing precarization of people's lives—and especially of young people's lives—brought by the economic crisis is a key vantage point to understanding the reorientation of mobility across the whole Mediterranean region. While, for instance, the "migrantization" of Spanish citizens and their increasing presence in Morocco is a well-documented phenomenon,[41] in the case of Tunisia, this phenomenon has yet to be adequately investigated. While there are few quantitative data available and the phenomenon is still significantly smaller than the Moroccan case, this emerging and under-researched practice of mobility in Tunisia is of extreme interest to us. By highlighting how processes of migrantization and pre-

carization are intertwined, our goal is to move beyond both the set of juridical categories that make sense of migration as well as the presumed connection between migration and movement. We argue that it is precisely by looking at the articulation between temporal and spatial precariousness[42] that it is possible to effectively grasp the impact of borders on subjects, producing some of them as migrants. In their 2014 *Liberating Temporariness?*, Vosko, Preston, and Latham contend that the production of temporariness is today one of the main techniques of governmentality to contain, select, and precarize mobility, or at least the mobility of some. In this sense, "temporariness" works as the necessary opposite pole to the notion of "permanence," that is, to the founding value of the geographic imagination of the nation-state:

> Permanence is predicated on an exclusionary definition of the nation in which only citizens have full rights [...] In this sense permanence is [...] inextricably intertwined with the production of temporariness. (Vosko et al. 2014, 6)

The inextricable and constitutive couplet of permanence/temporariness hampers making a choice between the two poles—releasing temporariness versus obtaining permanence. Moreover, living in a state of *permanent temporariness* is the common existential burden for migrants and refugees. The liberation of temporariness that Vosko, Preston, and Latham indicate as a way for unsettling and overcoming the binary opposition permanence/temporariness goes in the direction of putting into place forms of "collective political and social life" that would disrupt the theoretical and practical assumptions upon which temporariness is produced as a tool of government. However, to liberate temporariness implies that a precarious condition should be released from the constraints and boundaries of its opposite master signifier, that is, permanence.

Instead, more than valorizing temporariness per se as a potentially positive condition, we are inclined to analyze how people put their precariousness into play, how they experiment with it, how they transform precariousness and temporariness into practices of spatial disobedience.[43] As far as European migrants are concerned, many put the "forced" economic movement away from Europe into play through migration patterns that elude the integration paradigm through which migrations are normed and thought. This is the angle from which we look at the "fast mobility" of this group of young European migrants in Tunisia.[44]

Call centers in Tunis represent one of the main employment opportunities for both Italian and French migrants who have just arrived in Tunis and are looking for a first job and for Tunisians who are fluent in Italian and French. The medium salary for working in a call center in Tunis is 800 dinars (about 400 euros). While this allows decent living conditions in Tunisia, it also comes with a professional "deskilling" of young people. The phenomenon of "deskilling" is at the center of mainstream literature about the intra-European mobility of young people (Cuban 2013; Malit and Oliver 2013; Nowicka 2012). The phenomenon, however, has stark manifestations also across the Mediterranean, involving both European and Tunisian youth, and call centers are certainly one of the venues where this can be observed most evidently. Call centers' employees, in fact, tend to qualify as at least medium-skilled by labor standards: these are people who, being fluent in Italian and French, accept a relatively well-paid job that doesn't match their professional background or aspirations, while looking for better opportunities.

In absolute terms, call centers employ more Tunisians than Europeans, also due to legal restrictions that limit to 4 percent any enterprise's foreign workforce—a legal regulation whereby the externalization of European factories in Tunisia is channeled to alleviate unemployment of Tunisian nationals. However, young Europeans' applications increased in the aftermath of the revolution and in the midst of the European crisis. As the manager of an Italian call center in the Tunisian neighborhood of Belvedere told us, his employees tend to be mainly Italian-Tunisians or Tunisian citizens, but in the past few years, he witnessed an increase of job applications from Italian people:

> I just received eight job applications of Italian young people in the last two weeks but I will only be able to hire 1 due to the 4 % limit of foreigners in Tunisian enterprises imposed by law.

The Italian and the French schools in Tunis are also two places where young Europeans tend to seek employment. Very far from the situation of deskilling described above, these are often places where Europeans who want to undertake a career as educators in their own countries can easily enrich their CV with a first teaching experience, advancing their professional standing with a teaching experience abroad. Hired on a short-term basis, these European citizens working in schools in Tunis tend not to

be part of official data, neither through their respective embassies nor through Tunisian institutions.

However, the mobility of European migrants to Tunisia did not coincide with European investments in Tunisia. The political turmoil in Tunisia and its economic backlash have, in fact, resulted in many industries leaving Tunisia. For instance, in 2012 about 100 Italian enterprises based in Tunisia moved elsewhere, not only for economic reasons: the protests made by Tunisian workers, who were encouraged by the recent successful revolutionary uprisings and demanded better working conditions, appeared as barely manageable. Far from being in a stage of economic development, post-revolutionary Tunisia has been struggling with growing unemployment. The conjuncture surrounding the revolution and the economic crisis generated a troubled and unstable political-economic space. So what encouraged some European citizens to move there was not Tunisia's economic prosperity, but simply the comparatively favorable cost of living and the curiosity toward the political transition that the country would undertake.

The crisis in North African countries has hit Tunisia particularly hard, unlike Morocco where unemployment has only slightly increased (Trentin 2014).[45] In this regard, it is important to underline that Tunisia's unemployment rate was 12 percent in 2010 and reached 19 percent in 2011, while Morocco's remained around 9 percent.[46] After two years of deep economic crisis, the Tunisian unemployment rate decreased to 15.2 percent in 2014, but showed unemployment for skilled workers at 31.2 percent (*diplômés chômeurs*).[47] After the revolution, the national debt reached 50 million dinars in 2014.[48]

In sum, the presence of Southern Europeans in Tunisia in the aftermath of the revolution and in the context of the financial crisis is a complicated phenomenon. The economic crisis was not in itself an element for leaving Italy or France, for instance, and moving to Tunisia, considering the deep economic instability that the revolutionary uprisings triggered there, adding to the weight of the global financial crisis. But the lack of opportunities in southern European countries, the high cost of life, and political stagnation, converged as part of this new migration scenario.

What all these 'European migrants' seem to share is an attitude to *tarry with precariousness,*[49] by moving where it is easier to figure life out while in precarious financial conditions and, where, at the same time, the pos-

sibility to participate in a changing political scenario seems available. It is somehow a way to reappropriate precariousness as on the part of these young Europeans. The "tarrying with precariousness" that we referred to among Europeans working in Tunisia happens somehow off the radar of governmental institutions and is hence a phenomenon whereby their intermittent labor experiences escape state control.

While in the 1960s "precariousness" emerged as a strategy of refusal against the Fordist labor regime, in these past few years, it has been absorbed as a technology for governing labor (Lorey 2015). The increasing fracturing of labor time on the one hand and the concurrent expansion of labor into all aspects of people's live on the other represent the ways through which power capitalized on precarity, that is, on what was workers' strategy of flight from exploitation. Now, young Europeans are exposed to increasing forms of temporary displacement (across Europe and beyond) to find employment. As the analysis of the Frassanito Network[50] suggested, in the last decades, we witnessed a radical change of labor corresponding with its feminization on the one hand and with its "migrantization" on the other, that is, "a general tendency of labour to mobility" (Frassanito Network 2005). This "migrantization" of Europeans, however, is very different these days from the early Nineties' enthusiasm of intra-Schengen mobility and refers often to conditions of forced displacement away from southern European countries.

The *permanent precariousness* experienced by many young Europeans, inspire some to use the time in-between employment opportunities as a possibility for new experiences, not simply as a waiting time. As we explained above, the salience of the presence of young Southern Europeans in post-revolutionary Tunisia relies less in their actual numbers than in the changed conditions of mobility—who moves, and at what price; who is forced to move; who cannot move.

As we write, this scenario of "tarrying with precariousness" is again evolving, pushed by the ongoing economic hardship in Tunisia, the social discontent that reigns across Tunisian society, the terrorist attacks that took place in March 2015 in Tunis (Bardo museum) and in July 2015 in Sousse (in a resort), and the restrictions to personal freedoms that followed. These elements are prompting some Europeans in Tunisia to leave the country. Likewise, some highly-skilled Tunisians who were involved with the revolutionary movement are starting to leave the country as well, as a response to the "political backlash" that is bringing officials of the Ben Ali's regime back in power.

Tunisian Migrants: New Routes of Emigration and Return Migration in Time of Economic Crisis

Gulf States: A Space of Tunisian Migration

But where do skilled Tunisians migrate to find a job? Is Europe an attractive and feasible goal for them at this point? Actually, the visa regime on the one hand and the economic crisis on the other have discouraged many Tunisians with high qualifications to look for jobs in Europe. The destination of this group of migrants is increasingly shifting on the Gulf States. In fact, although a visa is required for Tunisians to reside and work in the Gulf States, it is—unlike the Schengen visa—a quite easy procedure, also thanks to the infrastructure of job agencies whose role consists exactly in facilitating contacts between Tunisian workers and companies in the Gulf States. Upon being selected by one of these firms based on the CV posted by the job agencies, Tunisian migrants are immediately granted a visa. Based on our interviews with job agencies (August 2014), it looks like the highest demand is for teachers, doctors, and engineers, all professions that are severely underemployed in Tunisia. Moreover, the medium salary for a skilled worker in the Gulf States is usually two or three times higher than its Tunisian equivalent, making the Gulf States an appealing destination— an emigration project of even just a few years, in fact, grants the possibility of coming back to Tunisia with a considerable amount of savings.

The situation is different when it comes to unskilled labor. The number of Tunisian unskilled workers who migrate to the Gulf States is relatively low, if one excludes informal labor. Not only is it easier to find informal labor in Tunisia for unskilled migrants, but the economic advantage for moving to the Gulf States is not as high for unskilled jobs as is the case for skilled ones.[51] In fact, the highest rates of unemployment in Tunisia affect people with some type of qualification (educational degree or professional experience), not unskilled labor, as national statistics show.

Yet, as we refer statistics about unemployment in Tunisia, it is important to underline the borders between work and non-work that are performed through these figures. Tunisian statistics concerning unskilled labor, for instance, cover the total number of people involved in an economic activity, and thus include also those who are employed informally. As Bridget Anderson points out:

> it is not the nature of the task but the social relations that govern its performance that determine whether work is employment … the national labor

> market is not only about the national territorial borders of the state but also about the social borders between market and non-market, work and labor (2013, 79).

This clarification about statistics is important also to underline how the informal economy is *not* an exception to the rule of a formal labor regime but possibly even the condition of possibility of this latter (Denning 2007).

The Gulf States have a very strict policy against undocumented migrant workers (consisting mainly of people who overstayed their residence and work permit), resulting in very high rates of deportations in the last two decades. And while in the 1970s migrant labor force in the Gulf States was hired mainly from Arab countries, since the late Nineties an opening toward hiring workers from the Indian subcontinent emerged, decreasing Tunisians' possibilities to find jobs (Al-Shehabi 2015)[52] and putting unskilled migrants in a particularly harsh situation.

Migration from Tunisia to the Gulf States is not a new phenomenon. It gained relevance in the early 1970s at the time of the Oil Crisis, when the Gulf States started to hire workers from abroad and to build their growing economy on migrant labor (Khalaf et al. 2015). However, in the last two decades, migrant composition has changed: if in the 1970s and in the 1980s, the majority of migrants were mainly unskilled, since the 1990s this changed to include mainly migrants from the high-tech sector, scientific research, and engineering. Since 2008 there has been an increase in the number of Tunisians who moved to the Gulf States to work, due to the economic crisis in Tunisia as well as in Europe. According to the agency ATCT[53] (Agence tunisienne de cooperation technique), while in 2008, about 1400 Tunisian migrants moved to the Gulf States, in 2013, the number peaked to about 3400 (interview, April 2014).

The first bilateral agreement between Tunisia and the Gulf States was signed with Qatar: dating back to 1981 and revised in 2010, it facilitates and promotes the hiring process of Tunisian labor force. The Tunisian revolution has not triggered relevant transformations at the level of economic agreements with the Gulf States. The new 2012 agreement with Qatar does not alter the conditions for economic cooperation, despite the significant increase in Tunisian migrants' presence in the Gulf States which, according to the Tunisian Ministry of Labor's statistics, reached almost 60,000 in 2013, with the highest concentrations in Saudi Arabia and the

Emirates.[54] Even such high numbers are not comparable to migrations to Europe, which, despite the economic crisis, remains the first destination for Tunisian migrants. However, if we take into consideration regular labor migration only, an interesting piece of data emerges: out of about 10,000 Tunisian citizens who on average leave the country every year as migrant workers with a regular contract, around 5500 move to the Gulf States, and almost 1000 go to other Arabic countries, while only between 2500 and 3000 end up going to Europe[55] (Ministry of Labor, interview, March 2015).

A quite different case is represented by Tunisian labor migration to Libya, historically the main labor market for Tunisian citizens since the 1960s. In 2011, with the fall of the Libyan dictatorship and the outbreak of the Tunisian revolution, it seemed like Libya could be the primary economic partner to support the relaunch of the Tunisian economy and to help reduce Tunisian rate of unemployment, especially in the sector of tourism, hydrocarbons, and industry. But the "Libyan solution" had already vanished at the end of 2012, with the radicalization of the civil war and of raising political instability, a situation that discouraged Tunisian workers to move there and that prompted Tunisian migrants residing in Libya at the time to flee.[56] The last bilateral agreement between the two countries was signed in March 2012 and is aimed to facilitate the migration of Tunisian workers and to grant them better conditions.[57] At the time of writing (December 2014), the main formal economic cooperation still maintained by Tunisia with Libya is not so much in the sector of labor migration but in trading. This as far as the formal economy is concerned— a different landscape is certainly affecting informal economies, especially in the sector of illegal traffic in border-zones between Libya and Tunisia.

Gulf States represent at the moment a new frontier for Tunisian migration, at a time of political unrest in Libya and economic constraints in Europe.

Europe: Spontaneous Return Migration Routes

Looking at statistics documenting Tunisians who live abroad, one could certainly speak of a "Tunisia outside of Tunisia," with about 11 percent of the Tunisian population residing in a foreign country. However, due to the economic crisis in Europe, and especially starting in 2009, groups of Tunisian migrants living in European countries started to move back to Tunisia. In 2009 the number of migrants who returned to Tunisia

was higher than the number of new Tunisian citizens who registered as living abroad (interview, February 2015). It is important to underline, moreover, that these statistics about "return" migrants only account for regular migrations, hence leaving significant information off the map—that is, Tunisians residing in Europe as undocumented migrants and who decide to return home are invisible to the statistical gaze. This is true in both directions. Departures remain uncounted: there is no statistic about Tunisian *harraga* leaving the country en route to Europe without a visa. Likewise, upon returning, there is no count of Tunisians coming back home after having lived irregularly abroad, unless this coming back is part of an institutional program (for example, the so-called "voluntary return programs" carried out by IOM or by national migration management programs, which are anyway very limited in number) or the result of forced removal and deportation, a different phenomenon than the one we are concerned with here. So migrants' autonomous decisions to return to their country of origin remain under the threshold of "statistical perceptibility."[58] Considering that irregular migrants' spontaneous returns—when migrants decide to come back, not as part of IOM programs— are not counted in the above statistics from 2009, it is even more remarkable that the outbreak of the crisis in the Eurozone immediately resulted in a change to the ratio between departures and returns documented in national statistics.

We started to become interested in trying to understand the phenomenon of Tunisians' autonomous returns based on ethnographic evidence in Italian and French cities. Interviewing undocumented migrants who arrived in the aftermath of the Tunisian revolution, a story regularly emerged: I came here with many friends from my hometown/from my neighborhood, but most of them left and went back because they could not find a job and it's very expansive to live here (2012 and 2014 interviews). We collected similar evidence in Tunisian cities and neighborhoods where everyone we talked with had at least one friend or relative who migrated to Europe in 2011, in the aftermath of the revolution, when they put into play a freedom of movement as part of the revolutionary moment (Sossi 2013a; Garelli 2013; Tazzioli 2015). In a neighborhood in Tunis, for instance, a return migrant talks about his decision to leave Europe and return home as follows:

> Here in the neighborhood of Zaharoni you will find so many people who returned from Italy, and in particular from the city of Perugia. I lived in

Perugia for some years, but now there are no jobs in Italy, so I decided to come back … at least here in Tunisia you can get by [*on se debrouille*]. (Interview, August 2014)

So we went to Tunisia in 2013, in 2014, and again in 2015, with this question in mind: How many of the Tunisians who arrived in Europe in the aftermath of the revolution[59] ended up returning home on their own volition? In Tunisia, however, we soon had to realize that this was not only a difficult question to answer because of a lack of data, but also a notably unasked one. Officers at the Tunisian Home Office seemed puzzled by our question and finally reported that it was practically impossible to count those who came back in an autonomous way after having been irregular migrants in Europe, since there is no central database about voluntary returns. There may be some information, we were told, but dispersed across different institutions, ministries, and migration agencies.

State authorities' data, we learned, subsume under the label of "return" those who are forcefully removed from abroad (i.e., deported migrants), those who migrated without a passport and had to request it from the Tunisian consulates abroad in order to return by plane, and those who joined so-called "voluntary return" programs run by IOM. So, according to these data, between 2011 and 2012, around 50,000 Tunisians emigrated regularly and between 22,000 and 25,000 "returned," registering an increase in returns in comparison with the 2004–2009 period when about 41,200 left regularly and only 17,000 "returned." These data, however, tell us little about the migrants who decided to return to Tunisia: deportations are *forced* returns and are likely to compose the majority of these statistics' numbers, especially if one considers that bilateral agreements between Tunisia and European states for fast-track deportations have been formally and informally in place under Ben Ali and were a political priority for European states in the post-revolutionary moment.

Talking with IOM officers in Tunis, in fact, two things became clear. First, IOM is not interested in mapping the total number of autonomously returned Tunisian migrants but only those who returned through IOM return projects. Second, these numbers—of so-called "voluntary" returns—are very meager to say the least: an average of 30 people a year for the 2011–2014 period left an EU member state to go back to Tunisia through IOM programs (interviews, February 2015). To these small numbers, another 30 return projects have to be added to account for return programs run by IOM in collaboration with the Tunisian Minister

of Social Affairs; the Minister of Labor is also in place to support the reintegration of return migrants (interviews, February 2015). Finally, only slightly larger numbers come from IOM collaboration with the Swiss government: from 2011 to 2014, a total of 749 Tunisian migrants in Switzerland signed up for a so-called "voluntary" repatriation program through IOM thanks to a considerable incentive awarded by the Swiss government to returning migrants. These overall meager numbers made us realize that those who decided to return—those who were not forcefully removed in deportation—did not only do it "voluntarily" but also autonomously. But these *autonomous paths of return* tend to fall outside the map of recorded flows of mobility.

In interviews with state institutions—the Tunisian Ministry of Social Affairs and the Office of Tunisians abroad (OTE)—the statistical invisibility of irregular migrants is further reinforced.

> We work with Tunisian residents abroad, facilitating their life there and also their return, but our efforts can't be focused on those who are not officially there. (Interview, April 2014)

But how are these very few migrants facilitated by IOM and state institutions in their return and reintegration? Mainly through a *discipline of debt* (Lazzarato 2012; Ross 2014): most projects, in fact, consist in circuits of microcredit and facilitations to get a loan with banks to initiate a given economic activity. "START" is the name of the larger IOM framework[60] under which return migrants are governed, through debt management programs and seminars teaching how to earn and save money, in a program of economic self-discipline that migrants are tied to in order to get the financial and technical support for their planned economic activity. The START Project has been launched in El Kef, Jendouba, Kairouan and Siliana, cities of the inner and poorest regions of the country, where the revolution started. As a matter of fact, the stated goal of the project is "stabilizing at-risk communities and enhancing migration management to enable smooth transitions" to democracy in the post-Arab Uprisings stage.[61] The logic that underpins these projects basically consists in making migrants learn to be responsible citizens in the face of the "democratic challenge." The aim of IOM's project is to help migrants "valorize their own space, the Tunisian space in which they live."[62] In the name of democracy—as a goal to be fully achieved through transition—return and

would-be migrants are fixed in space: a politics of "democratic containment," which builds around the migration-development nexus.

This complex and ambiguous entanglement between politics of mobility, developmental schemes, and democratic transitions clearly shows that migration governmentality largely exceeds the field of border policies and is instead situated within broader technologies of population management.

Notes

1. Civil society organizations existed before the Revolution but numbers boomed in its aftermath (Mirescu 2013).
2. Tunisia was already playing this role under Ben Ali when a law imposing draconian penalties on emigration and emigration facilitation was implemented.
3. Article 26, Tunisian Constitution.
4. UNHCR is responsible for running refugee status adjudication processes and for managing asylum seekers and refugees, in collaboration with Tunisian Red Crescent, Danish Refugee Council, Islamic Relief International, and Save the Children, which are establishing their presence for the first time in Tunisia (UNHCR Tunisia 2014).
5. The Partnership was singed between Tunisia and the following EU countries: Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Spain, France, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, and the UK.
6. See the EU-Horn of Africa "Migration Route Initiative" (Rome, November 28, 2014), signed by Tunisia as well.
7. For instance, UNHCR underestimates for 2014 (including only status refugees and asylum seekers and excluding rejected refugees and refugees who did not register with UNHCR), show a "population of concern" of 1208 people.
8. Source: Recensement général de la population et de l'habitat 2014 http://rgph2014.ins.tn/sites/default/files/rgph-chiffres-v3.pdf (accessed April 15, 2015).
9. Some examples: the presence of Nigerian citizens in Tunisia raised from 129 in 2004 to 522 in 2014; Cameroonians went from a unrecorded number of presences in 2004 to 628 in 2014; Malians went from 222 in 2004 to 958 in 2014. Source: Recensement général de la population et de l'habitat 2014 http://rgph2014.

ins.tn/sites/default/files/rgph-chiffres-v3.pdf (accessed April 15, 2015).

10. Many refugees, intending to leave for Europe and having the resources to pay for the trip, would not register with UNHCR in Tunisia.

11. It is important to underline, however, that Tunisians' spontaneous hospitality was directed to Libyan nationals in particular and not to the third-country nationals living in Libya—it was particularly *not* directed to Sub-Saharan migrants—who were equally displaced into Tunisia by the war.

12. The other two "durable solutions" composing the agency's rationale are "resettlement to a third country" and "repatriation" (see, for instance: http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646cf8.html).

13. A rather odd definition that we kept hearing in Tunisia is "non-resettled status refugees" to indicate those whom UNHCR recognized as having a right to refugee status and even to resettlement but who ended up not being resettled in a third country.

14. Only primary education is granted for refugee children. No high school or university education is available to them (Interview, August 2014).

15. Located in the southern outskirts of Tunis in the neighborhood of Wardia (also spelled Ouardia or Whardia), the detention center is operated by the Interior Ministry.

16. In order to rent in Tunisia, a foreigner needs to show a valid residence permit.

17. While there is certainly a business related to migrants' travels, it is important to investigate its situated instances and put them in context. More ethnographic and critical engagement is needed to detail the logistics of migrants' trips across the Mediterranean in different places of departure and at different historical and political moments. This variegated landscape is problematically under-investigated, leaving the criminalization of smugglers unsituated, both in its local context and in relation to the EU visa policy that forces migrants and refugees to resort to expansive and dangerous boat crossing in the first place.

18. During UNHCR operations at Choucha camp, the office was on the main tourist road (where all the hotels are situated). After the Choucha camp's official closure, the office moved to a rather remote neighborhood not well-connected to the main street.

19. According to the local press, the number of rescued people as of August 2014 was about 300. Instead, there were only a few dozen people at the foyer.

20. While Mare Nostrum saved 150,000 migrants during its 2013–2014 tenure, data reported by the Tunisian press during the same time-frame do not even reach the thousands. However, it is from this "scant multiplicity of migrants," we claim, that evolutions of migration control can be teased out (see Chap. 1). Moreover, now that the Mare Nostrum mission is over, Italian and European authorities are working toward externalizing rescue operations to Tunisia (see Chap. 3).

21. For instance, it is a crucial issue of Eurosur—the European border surveillance system—, whose objective is to produce a "pre-frontier intelligence system" (Council of the European Union 2011).

22. The detention center is in the southern outskirts of the city of Tunis, in the neighborhood of Wardia (also spelled Ouardia or Whardia). It is operated by the Interior Ministry.

23. According to an employee of the Wardia detention center, the total number of detention centers currently operating in Tunisia is five: Ben Guerdane, Bizerte, Sfax, Silialna, and Wardia (interview, February 2015). According to activists' networks and research projects, the number may be closer to a dozen, but no location is identified beyond Ben Guerdane and Wardia (Global Detention Project 2014; Migreurop and OEE 2013).

24. As of April 1, 2015, migrants rescued by the Triton operation amounted to 15,000.

25. Source: https://inkyfada.com/2015/09/expulse-frontiere-migrant-algerie-ouardiya-tunisie/

26. According to the Tunisian Red Crescent, Syrians entering Tunisia through Algeria are currently increasing at a rate of 30 percent a month (interview, January 2015).

27. The lack of official and accurate statistics about Syrians' presence in Tunisia can be traced back to the fact that Syrian citizens tend not to want to register with UNCHR in Tunisia hoping to be able to leave the country and claim asylum where they feel they would be safer. They hence tend to settle in peripheral neighborhoods in Tunis and live as off the radar as possible. (Source: http://directinfo.webmanagercenter.com/2015/08/14/enquete-sur-la-situation-des-refugies-syriens-et-libyens-en-tunisie/).

28. This expression indicates people to whom UNHCR recognized refugee status with a program for resettlement in a third country, a program that was never actually implemented.
29. International protection still relies on a WWII geographical imagination, anchored in the citizen's sedentarity, and hence, does not account for contemporary geographies of displacement and intra-African mobility.
30. The website can be found at: https://voiceofchoucha.wordpress.com, last accessed: April 11, 2015.
31. The documentary can be found at: https://vimeo.com/121456138, last accessed: April, 11, 2015.
32. Source: http://fortresseurope.blogspot.it/2011/05/tunisia-caos-al-campo-profughi-di.html (accessed April 15, 2015).
33. Source: http://www.leconomistemaghrebin.com/2014/12/17/tunisie-camp-de-choucha-les-refugies-protestent-devant-la-salle-de-cinema-le-rio/ (accessed April 15, 2015).
34. Declaration on Territorial Asylum (1967), Art.1.
35. In 2012 Tunisia launched the idea of a transnational space of mobility between the countries of Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania, Tunisia, and Libya), but such a political project was blocked at its outset due to the political conflicts between Morocco and Algeria.
36. According to the Tunisian Ministry of Labor, Tunisians residing in Libya were 90,000 in 2010, 30,000 in 2013 (interview, April 2015).
37. While refugees in the immediate aftermath of the Tunisian revolution were resettled to third countries, already in 2012, the resettlement project stopped and refugees had no other option than to accept local integration.
38. For instance, the number of Italians living in Tunisia in 2005 numbered 2390; in 2006, 2408; in 2007, 2483; in 2008, 2626; in 2009, 2784; in 2010, 3006; in 2011, 3159; in 2012, 3537; and 2118 in 2014. (interview, February 2015; Census 2014).
39. Source: http://rgph2014.ins.tn/sites/default/files/rgph-chiffres-v3.pdf
40. Their presence is partially documented through the Tunisian Home Office database on temporary work visas for foreigners. But also in this case statistics are far from being exhaustive. As the director of the Italian School in Tunis told us (interview, January

2015) foreigners who work for non-Tunisian companies in Tunisia are not requested to get a work permit.

41. Sources: http://lejournaldusiecle.com/2013/06/12/quand-les-espagnols-entrent-clandestinement-au-maroc-pour-y-travailler/ and http://www.financenews.press.ma/La-Une/emigration-la-crise-bouleverse-la-lnormaliter.html (accessed April 15, 2015).

42. In *Us and Them?* Bridget Anderson underlines how the term "precarity" refers both to the increasing temporariness of labor conditions as well as, more broadly, of people's life conditions in contemporary society (Anderson 2013).

43. Following Bridget Anderson's analysis on the mutual constitution and impact of labor politics and migration laws, it could be argued that temporariness is actually one of the main features of precarious labor conditions, enforced by migration policies; and, at the same time, immigration controls function "as a mold constructing certain types of workers […] and thus requiring and enforcing certain types of employment" (Anderson 2013, 91). However, the temporariness we refer to and that affects young people moving across the two shores of the Mediterranean, refers less to a regimented labor regime that generates and builds on precarious labor activities—as per Anderson's analysis—and more to the sheer lack of employment that pushes people to constantly move.

44. An exception to this trend is represented by Europeans working in enterprises or factories that delocalized in Tunisia. In these cases, there is a tendency toward regularization and settlement. Skilled migrants working in European enterprises delocalized in Tunisia are formally hired. The same is true for people working in call centers where a European language is required. In these cases, however, workers tend to be dual citizens, not immigrants, that is, people who lived in Italy or France at some point and speak the language very well but who are also Tunisian citizens. In European factories in Tunisia, instead, the workforce tends to be local.

45. The economic situation in Morocco is quite different, also due to the political stability in the country: the growth rate in 2013 reached 5.1 percent while in Tunisia it was only 3 percent after having reached 3.9 percent in 2011 soon after the outbreak of the revolution. This is also one of the reasons why in Morocco, the phenomenon of European migration dates back longer, is larger, and better documented.

46. Source: http://data.lesechos.fr/pays-indicateur/maroc/taux-de-chomage.html; http://www.lavieeco.com/news/actualites/legere-hausse-du-taux-de-chomage-au-maroc-29516.html (accessed April 15, 2015).

47. Source: *Al Huffington Post Maghreb,* http://www.huffpost-maghreb.com/2014/11/20/tunisie-diplomes-chomeurs_n_6190346.html (accessed April 15, 2015).

48. After having decreased from 2007–2010, the national debt started to grow again in 2011. http://data.lesechos.fr/pays-indicateur/tunisie/dette-publique.html (accessed April 15, 2015).

49. This expression draws from Papadopulos et al (2008). expression "tarrying with time" in *Escape Routes* (2008).

50. The Frassanito Network is a transnational network of collectives working all over Europe within the movements and the struggles of migration. See http://www.fluechtlingsrat-hamburg.de/content/TheFrassanit%20Network_Mai06.pdf

51. For instance, a technician working in a Tunisian factory makes around 1000 dinars, while in the Gulf States he could make the local equivalent of about 1500 dinars.

52. As Omar Al-Shehabi explains, "workers from the Indian subcontinent were relatively less expensive than their Arab counter-parts due to the severity of the push factors in those countries. Second, investors and political leaders began harbor suspicions regarding Arab labor, seeing them as a primary cause of Arab nationalism, Nasserism and leftism in the Gulf" (Al-Shehabi 2015, 21).

53. ATCT is one of the employment agencies facilitating migration from Tunisia to the Gulf States.

54. Saudi Arabia: 20,000; Bahrein: 1500; Emirates: 19,300; Kuwait: 3000; Oman: 4000; Qatar: 10,000 (interview, March 2015).

55. Data collected during interviews with the Tunisian Ministry of Labor worker (March 2015).

56. 40,000 individuals are estimated to have escaped Libya. Sources: http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Project-and-Operations/Migrations_des_Tunisiens_en_Libye_Dynamiques_d%C3%A9fis_et_perspectives.pdf; http://www.businessnews.com.tn/la-relance-economique-en-tunisie-menacee-par-la-poudriere-libyenne,519,49052,3

57. The facilitations for the Tunisian workers concern most of all in access to healthcare. Source: http://www.emploi.nat.tn/fo/Fr/global.php?page=2&id=2803&imprimer=1

58. A slight exception to the lack of traceability of autonomous returns concerns migrants who arrived in their country of destination without a passport. In order to return to Tunisia, they would need to ask the Tunisian consulate to have a passport re-issued to them, hence leaving some "trace" of their voluntary return. However, this does not apply to those who moved abroad with their passport; they come back home leaving no recorded trace of their undocumented residency abroad.

59. 27,000 Tunisians are recorded to have arrived in Europe in 2011.

60. The project also targets alleged would-be migrants and is active in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya.

61. Source: http://www.egypt.iom.int/Doc/START%20Regional%20EN.pdf (accessed April 15, 2015).

62. Interview with IOM's officer in Tunis, April 2014.x.

Beyond Citizen Politics

Martina Tazzioli

Abstract This chapter sums up the theoretical stakes of the book, focusing on the emergence of new spaces of governmentality we looked at. It stressed the importance of going beyond institutional and mapped spaces focusing instead on what we call "incipient spaces" that remain below the threshold of political visibility. The chapter explains how the noncartographic counter-mapping approach we have developed in the book allows to go beyond "citizen politics" and "methodological citizenship." Then, it reconceptualises the notion of "struggle" and "migrant struggles" building on the struggles for movement analyzed in the Chap. 2. Finally, building on the notion of "unequal illegality" introduced in Chap. 2, it concludes that in order to adequately analyze how processes of migrantization and precarization are intertwined it is necessary to move beyond juridical categories.

Keywords Citizen politics • Governmentality • Visibility • Precarisation

Incipient Spaces of Migration and New Spaces of Governmentality

This book has dealt with the spatial upheavals that occurred in Tunisia through the Tunisian revolution and in conjunction with the "migration turmoil" that has been affecting the country, unsettling national borders

and spurring a reconfiguration of the existing politics of migration control, and containment in the Mediterranean in the aftermath of the Arab Uprisings. Far from narrowing the analysis to the Tunisian space, Glenda Garelli and I followed the resonances that these upheavals produced beyond national boundaries and the new spaces of migration governmentality that emerged in Tunisia to manage different strands of migration. By looking at these spatial re-configurations from the point of view of migration movements, in the previous chapters, we engaged in a twofold gesture. Firstly, a focus on migration brings the attention beyond national boundaries, due not only to the transnational dimension of those movements but also for the macro-regional or global blueprint of migration policies. Secondly, through the lens of the spatial upheavals produced by migrants in the aftermath of the Tunisian revolution—for example, the crossing of the Tunisian border of Ras Jadir by about one million of people escaping Libya in 2011–2012—the opening up of new spaces of governmentality can be seen as the re-fashioning of mechanisms of capture and control of migrants and as a response to the migration turmoil. Instead of taking space-units as the starting points of our analysis, we have drawn attention to spatial formations stremming from the instability of different borders—geopolitical, epistemic, humanitarian and securitarian borders—and the production of new spaces of governmental intervention. Thus, in place of assuming borders as the edges of territories and spatial-units, we have focused on the re-crafting of spaces generated through the working of borders. Such a move relies on a twofold assumption. Firstly, instead of mobilizing an inside-outside gaze that looks at the "stable" space for then moving to its margins, we have engaged in an opposite gesture, taking spaces as the outcome of re-adjustments and conflicts at the borders. Secondly, the blurring between humanitarian and military technologies of government in the management of refugees in Tunisia shows that we should approach borders as producing different spaces and subjectivities, while they are governing and disciplining them.

Within this framework, the book has drawn attention to emerging spaces of governmentality in Tunisia as the new humanitarian zones and as the statistical language through which they have been governed—that is, from the point of view of governmental policies; but it has also focused on spaces and practices that escape a governmental gaze or that remain out of the map of statistical counting and the logic of numbers. In this sense, we have looked at the incipient spaces (see Chap. 1) produced by practices of migration through *struggles for space* and the *struggles for movement*

and have articulated the narration of the Tunisian space as a complex and revolutionized space of mobility.

Together with the refugees, Tunisian-returned migrants and the "new" European migrants in Tunisia are part of these revolutionized migrant spaces in Tunisia. If for the governmental gaze some of these practices are irrelevant—both in terms of numbers and as target of particular policies of control—from the standpoint of critical migration studies, they matter and actually highlight incipient spaces of movement, temporary stay, or strandedness in the Tunisian territory.

This simultaneous move of spaces of governmentality that open and subjects that are excluded from the "count" of migration management agencies, has characterized the refugee camp of Choucha, at the border between Tunisia and Libya, which we talk about in Chap. 2. At Choucha, in fact, we followed the re-assemblage of the humanitarian border into spaces of migration containment—that is, de facto blocking many status refugees and rejected refugees in Tunisia—and in "spaces of discharge" (Tazzioli 2015), where Libyan war refugees receive a rejection status and are treated as "people not of our concern" by the humanitarian government.

This book has presented analytical and ethnographic snapshots on the liminal spaces and unspoken events unrecorded both by governmental actors and also by journalists, human rights organizations, and activists. Facts and stories that happened and are unfolding and that tend otherwise to be dismissed, either because they are regarded as non-political acts or because they go undetected and unrecorded. As long as one conceives of these stories within the existing codes of perceptibility (Papadopoulos and others 2008) and within what Judith Butler calls the "frame of violence" that sustains and regulates our political perceptibility (Butler 2009), then these stories are deemed to be dismissed.

Instead, we engaged what we call a "counter-mapping epistemology" (Chap. 1) to account for these stories. This has not meant for us engaging in "giving voice" to the unheard claims of subjects. Rather, what in this book we aimed to record and bring to the fore have been facts, subjects and struggles that remain below the thresholds of political perceptibility, showing that some of them actually trouble the order of citizenship, even just insofar as they do not fit into its political language. Most importantly, some of these struggles are dismissed as political struggles because that they do not address power or institutions demanding inclusion and because they do not struggle in the mode of claiming.

To speak to this focus, we mobilized the category of "precarization." It is important to underline that "precarization" is not mobilized to flatten differences under the umbrella of a supposedly common condition—an attentive gaze to the effects of migration governmentality prevents such flattening, showing instead the differential ways in which the same bordering technologies act selectively on certain groups of migrants and not on others. Our use of "precarization" refers to the politics that turn people into migrants, in juridical terms but also in spatial terms (i.e., the effective conditions at which people can move or can stay in a place). In other words, "precarization" here does not designate a condition but, rather, the processes of transformation that concern the economic and social condition of some people and that make it more difficult for them to stay in a certain place or to move. Moreover, such a term allows us to unpack the migration-crisis nexus, exploring the impact of the increased uncertainty and precarious labor conditions brought by the economic crisis on practices of mobility. Focusing on different migration experiences, the book shows that something like a common migrant condition does not exist and that the government of migration is predicated upon an incessant differentiation of migrant subjectivities and bordering mechanisms.

Instead of assuming the normative standpoint of citizenship and taking on the task of giving voice to migrant claims, we have in fact accounted for migrant and refugee struggles that fall beyond the dimension of claims and beyond the citizen's codes of political engagement. In this sense, instead of 'accommodating' migrant struggles and events within the order of citizenship, we documented these struggles and used them to read normative frames. This finally amounts to a *move beyond and against the methodological citizenship* that sustain the current literature on migration and on migrant struggles.

Politics of Counting Unsettled

By looking at migrants and refugees in Tunisia, what becomes clear is that the national frame cannot be really undermined to the extent that one maintains "methodological citizenship" as the implicit yardstick to read mobility struggles. Indeed, despite the fact that national frame is surely broader than that of citizenship, and refugees are in fact eventually asked to integrate in Tunisian society (and not 'offered' the option to become citizens), the tendency in migration studies is to look at migrants' movements and struggles through the lens of the citizen-subject. In other

words, migrants are framed as political subjects as long as they struggle using political modes and political claims that are easily readable within the codes of citizen politics. Instead, when different languages or different practices are mobilized, there seems to be an incapacity to see these struggles for movements as political. More specifically, the form of agency that is implicitly conveyed through the model of *political visibility* is ultimately the one shaped on the active citizen, which is then transposed and generalized to describe all struggles. Thus, there is a sort of integrationist and territorializing gesture at stake in many analyses that assume citizenship as the implicit political frame from which reading struggles for movement (Mezzadra 2015).

The authors of *Mobile Commons, Migrant Digitalities and the Right to the City* formulate their task in terms of an attempt to break with the dominant integrationist canon of migration studies which maintains the fundamental assumption that migrants' practices become political only if they become integrated into an existing polity, be it in the country of origin or in the country of destination or in one of transit (Trimikliniotis and others 2015, 38).

Within the migration literature that mobilizes more or less explicitly the citizen model of visibility, *subjects in struggles are formally turned into citizens without however granting them citizen rights*[1] (Isin 2012; Mc Nevin 2011; Rancière 2004). The theoretical gesture made by these analyses ultimately consists of transposing the task of revitalizing citizenship—a frame in deep crisis—on migrants, through claims that are addressed to the existing space of the political in which they are uncounted or whose voices are unheard.

In his insightful analysis of migration in the Gulf States, Adam Hanieh radically challenges the methodological nationalism that underpins most of the works on labor migration in the region that mobilize "state-centric approaches," proposing instead to see migration "as a spatial structure that extends beyond the nation state" including both the regional dimension and the its position in the global market[2] (Hanieh 2015). This thesis cannot be translated as such in the Tunisian context, due to the peculiar migration composition in the Gulf States—which is exclusively labor migration—and the different economic situation in Tunisia, making a far less 'structured' phenomenon of migrants' presence in Tunisia. However, the move beyond a state-centric approach through the idea of migration as a spatial structure represents an important point of reference to highlight the way in which heterogeneous migrations *bring the state out of itself*. The

humanitarian crisis spurred by the Arab Uprisings crafted specific "spatial strategies" (Martin 2012) in Tunisia which connected immediately to the transnational space of the humanitarian regime. The 'humanitarian crisis' experienced in the region could neither be bordered nor be localized within the national space. Indeed, in 2011, the 'crisis' poured out in the Tunisian space from the borders of Ras Jadir and Dehiba, with the arrival of hundreds of thousands of migrants fleeing the war in Libya. For some, Tunisia was only a space of transit from which to fly back to their countries of origin (from the airport of Djerba, for instance). For others, it became the temporary space of a long wait (in the case of asylum seekers who got the refugee status and then had been resettled elsewhere) or a space of a *permanent strandedness* (as for the rejected refugees of Choucha camp).

With the new escalation of conflicts in Libya in 2014 and in 2015, the crisis has re-mobilized the borders of the national space, although in a different way in comparison to 2011, and spread immediately beyond Tunisia itself, reaching the northern shore of the Mediterranean. Differently from 2011 when Tunisia opened its frontiers to people fleeing the Libyan conflict, in 2014 and in 2015, the border of Ras Jadir has often been closed due to the restrictive border politics that Tunisia undertook to face the risk of terrorist infiltrations and to cope with the lack of financial funding from abroad. Let me provide a vignette from this renewed Tunisian border politics.

July 8, 2015: Tunisian authorities announce the construction of a 168 km wall that will run along the border with Libya and present it as a security initiative to prevent terrorists and jihadists to enter the country. Who is funding the project remains unclear. The Tunisian Home Office refuses to provide information on this thorny decision. The decision triggers repeated riots in the border city of Ben Guerdane, which has close economic ties with Libyan towns. The length of the wall does not cover the entire frontier with Libya. Far from sealing the border with this security measure, the initiative will likely destabilize the political balances of this border-zone and involves transformations in the relationship between the state and the local militia. The Libyan border is currently crossed by heterogeneous transnational movements–migratory, economic, terrorist, and jihadist movements—and is the vehicle of different routes—from Libya to Tunisia, to Algeria, and to Morocco, and the other way around. In other words, the border effects that the wall will bring are doomed to spread far beyond the Tunisia-Libya borderline, impacting on the circulation of people and goods.

The Tunisian revolution deeply reshaped border dynamics at the border post of Ras Jadir. The inflow of refugees from Libya to Tunisia has only been the most visible of these "border's operations" (Mezzadra and Neilson 2013, 7). Ras Jadir had historically been controlled by Libyan and Tunisian traffickers' groups, while state authorities never managed to have total control of that border-zone.[3] Two main historical events unsettled such well-established double management of the frontier: in 1910, France (which had established the protectorate in Tunisia in 1881) defined the exact line dividing Libya and Tunisia on paper, destabilizing the existing political equilibrium between the two tribal groups (Inkyfada 2015); in 1911, the Italian occupation of Libya provoked the inflow of thousands of Libyans in Tunisia. The periodical destabilizations that affected the Libyan-Tunisian frontier zone never stopped the intense circulation between the two countries. It is important to notice that until 1988 that frontier zone was also a space of "irregular" migration both for Tunisians and Libyans; then, between 1988—when the border between Libya and Tunisia was opened, allowing the free circulation of Libyan and Tunisian citizens between the two countries—and 2011, the Ras Jadir border has "irregularly" been crossed mainly by goods and weapons. The year 2011 marked the opening of a new space of migration and Ras Jadir started to be again a migration border: the arrival of thousands of third-country nationals in Tunisia was the beginning of huge transnational crossings at Ras Jadir.

Yet, after the fall of Gaddafi and the outbreak of the war in Libya, the Libyan militia lost control of the border-zone, as well as over the commerce of weapons. On the Tunisian side of the border, the revolution troubled the (always precarious) stability at the border-zone, and the arrival of thousands of war escapees from Libya in the span of a few weeks in February 2011 accelerated the chaotic situation at the border. Moreover, as the report of the International Crisis Group illustrates, although the state had only a partial control of the border-zone, since the fall of Ben Ali, the traffic increased in an anarchic way mainly because of the lack of police forces in charge of monitoring the borderline (International Crisis Group 2013, 21). The Algerian-Tunisian frontier is likewise deeply unstable. However, due to the ongoing political crisis, Libya is today a sort of no man's land, and Tunisia is in fact trying to secure the border with Libya as much as possible, while the Algerian frontier remains a much more "porous" border—for trafficking—and at the same time a highly conflicting one. The fight against jihadists and traffickers conducted by the Algerian and

Tunisian authorities in the area of Mont Chaambi has transformed that area into a military zone.

Moreover, beyond the borders with Libya, the internal space was also targeted for reorganization, where hosting centers were far from Choucha and were initiated with the purpose of not creating large groups of migrants, of preventing a breeding ground for migrants' unrests, and of invisibilizing the space of the camp of Choucha, which had hosted refugee waves since 2011. Thus, the humanitarian crisis immediately overflew national borders and could not be contained. Beyond the 'movements' of borders and of border-zones, the humanitarian crisis brought in the Tunisian space a series of international actors, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and even projects of financial and humanitarian support. What emerged from this situation was a full picture of the *government of the crisis* and of the *crisis as a technology of government,* a technology for tracing and transforming borders (Garelli and Tazzioli 2014; Mezzadra and Neilson 2013). The 'mutations' of the management of the crisis do not concern only the spatial arrangement for hosting migrants or the functioning of borders but also the slippages of the very meaning of the crisis, from a humanitarian issue to a securitarian and military affair. As Chap. 2 illustrates, the border-zone where the Choucha camp was located was transformed into a military zone at the frontier, when the camp was officially closed. The departure of humanitarian actors turned the space into one exclusively controlled by the soldiers of the Tunisian Army who surrounded the premises of the camp and the area spanning from the city of Ben Guerdane to the borderline of Ras Jadir. Far from being people simply "not of concern" for humanitarian actors, rejected refugees who still live at the camp site have become people of concern for police and military forces, as illegal presences in the Tunisian territory.

This move to unsettle the borders of citizenship and of the nation—or, better, to resist assuming them as a privileged lens through which to read movements—seems particularly important in the revolutionized Tunisian context where the national frame is currently absorbing any space of the political debate. The discourse on democratization of Tunisia that started from abroad, as Europe's 'hope' concerning the development of the Tunisian revolution, and the internal urgencies to politically stabilize the country building new institutions, finally produced a marginalization of migration and refugee issues in public debate. Against this background, the choice to look at the Tunisian space from the point of view of the new migrant composition in the country as well as of migrant mobilities does

not mean disregarding that actual lack of influence of those themes in the Tunisian context. Rather, such a choice is meant to let appear—hearing the "noise," so to speak—the reality of how migrant and refugees' presences are affecting the space of citizenship.

Certainly, the "mobility" of the Tunisian space—its being unsettled—is not conceived here in terms of numbers or impact. On the contrary, the book refuses to assume the angle of statistical majorities. In the previous chapters, we have in fact highlighted practices and movements that according to that paradigm of "big flows" are quite invisible or irrelevant. Refusing to endorse the *logic of the count*—who counts as a subject in the space of citizen? what is the political weight of a phenomenon based on its size?—means assessing the political relevance of practices and struggles for the transformations they engender, for the spaces they open, and for the disruption they produce within the *order of borders*. Our contribution parts way from the language of public visibility and numeric relevance, in order to understand the disruptions of mobility in the Tunisian context (Deleuze and Guattari 1986; Sibertin-LeBlanc 2009). This is also the reason why we engaged with the study of this phenomenon despite the fact that migrants' presence in Tunisia is currently not only a marginal phenomenon in Tunisian political debate but also an incipient phenomenon on the Mediterranean landscape of mobility.

Disengaging the logic of the few and the many, the book also disengaged the *citizen politics* that characterizes the literature on migration. By "c*itizen politics"* I mean the primacy that the claim-form and struggles for recognition have both in academic literature and in the political understanding of the meaning of political struggles. In this regard, the major theoretical stake consists in grasping processes of subjectivation that do not rely on a citizen politics, and that do not take place in a space of address where they lay claim and ask for recognition. Moving in-between the folds of what remains unmapped by migration governmentality or migration scholarship allows us to read these movements without judging them against the yardstick and the norm of the active citizen and the political agent: what is crucial from such a perspective are transformative movements that certain modalities of "tarrying with precariousness" engender, and thus instead of counting or mapping them we drew attention to the spaces they produced.

This is also one of the reasons why the struggles for movements that are enacted by migrants usually remain in the shadow insofar as they do not appear in the form of those claims and protests that are well recognizable

in the language of social movements. Indeed, even in radical left-wing movements, the catalyst of political activities tends to be represented by struggles based on the logic of "the many" against financial elites or world corporations (see, for instance, the Occupy movements and their slogan "we are the 99 percent"). In this way, the majority-signifier is reintroduced time and again as a marker of the strength of the struggle (Nunes 2012). However, more than grounded in the idea of a unitary subject, the logic of "the many" relies today on the attempt to build coalitions and alliances between different claims and struggles and to establish connections even at a distance.

These struggles speak to one another: this is Michael Hardt and Toni Negri's argument commenting on the different uprisings of 2011 and 2012 across the world, what they name a "cycle of struggles" that resounded each other (Hardt and Negri 2012). These were movements that, Hardt and Negri contend, shared the same spatial "form" (being eminently "sedentary") and the reasons of the struggle ("struggles for the common"). What matters for the purpose of this book are two things: first, the emphasis on a supposedly common political language spoken by the subjects in struggle and in all these spaces in struggle across the world; and, second, the reference to a majoritarian subject, not so much in terms of numbers— since the people directly involved in the movements Hardt and Negri talk about were not the majority in national terms[4]—but rather as the movement of the "many."

Here we took a different approach. Looking at struggles for movement, we followed what emerges from unrecorded struggles and undetected experiences of migration. Or, to put it better, we paid attention to the movements that sometimes simply remain non-relevant to the political perception of the "many," since the very reason why these movements trouble the order is that they are unspeakable through the codes of the political many as well as the political multitude. The question of "the few" in the context of undocumented migration, is certainly also a numeric one. Yet, the issue of "the few" goes well beyond a numeric dimension: it concerns more broadly the disqualification as non-political to strategies of mobility and struggles that, in fact, in many circumstances cannot gain the public stage due to the "irregular" position of the migrants in question.

Looking at the Tunisian space through migration movements and migrant struggles involves going beyond the logic of the few and the many, and instead to pay attention to presences and transformations that can even be overshadowed or disregarded within the space of citizenship.

After all, the "few" and the production of "residuals" as human beings in excess are at the core of the functioning of migration governmentality—thus, not (only) the numeric excess of sur-populations, when a migration crisis explodes, but rather a political one, an excess formed of human "residuals" for whom migration policies do not envisage any place. For instance, the "few" of Choucha camp, those who remained, those unplaceable subjects who are an inconvenience after the humanitarian operation of Choucha camp is declared not only to be concluded but also successful.

> We found a solution for all the people at the camp. Some came back to their country of origin, others have been resettled in Europe and others have accepted the local integration in Tunisia. (UNHCR worker, April 2014)

> Choucha does not exist anymore. People there are just nomads in the desert. (Red Cross worker, August 2014)

"The few" who ultimately constitute the unavoidable remainder of migration policies and of the humanitarian logic—which entails that in order for a space of protection to be created, un-assimilable bodies should be posited and hence excluded (Scheel et al. 2014). At the same time, "the few" are the not-erasable remainders; they "persist" at the camp of Choucha even after its official closure. The space of the camp was hence declared as non-existent, or simply "not of concern" by humanitarian agencies.

Recalling what Federica Sossi argued about the constitutive presence of liminal spaces and temporalities—those "internal stories" of the nation-space, as she put it—the revolutionized Tunisian space cannot be narrated and accounted for without a history of minorities that emerges in that space only as residuals.

Struggles for Movement and Struggles for Space Beyond the Claim-Form

The Tunisian revolutionized spaces this book accounted for allow to refashion the notion of "struggle" and "migrant struggles" beyond the language of citizen politics and beyond the practice of laying claims. Paying attention to *struggles for movement* that do not make it to the thresholds of political visibility and perceptibility, does not mean to dilute the notion of struggle into daily practices of survival. In other words, the notion of struggle does not refer to any form of existence and strategy of survival.

Such framework would miss the discrepancy between the ordinary and supposedly smooth functioning of borders and the frictions produced by subjects that try to escape or disrupt these borders. These frictions are not only the unavoidable outcome of the physical clash of borders with migrant bodies. Rather, they concerns the space—at times a space that can turn into a small leeway—in which the actions or even the mere presence of subjects do in fact alter, interrupt, and transform a particular power configuration. Struggles are not narrowed to deliberate challenges and demonstrations against the regime of borders. For this reason, instead of using the term "agency," that entails the capacity of being an agent that acts up against a certain context and that immediately recalls the model of citizen politics I mentioned, it is actually more helpful to start from Foucault's ambivalent definition of subject: being *subject of* (subjectivation) and *being subjected to* (assujettissement) power relations (Foucault 1982). This is the general frame through which struggles are conceived in this book, that is, as part of a field of forces that are ambivalent in their effects of subjectivation and in which people do not simply "act" but where they also produce, disrupt, and give shape. Instead of assuming a frame or a space in which people exercise their capacity of agency, I turn to the materiality of struggles for movement and practices of spatial disobedience that trouble the order of citizenship precisely because discordant in relation to its norms and to its language. In this sense, struggles are not narrowed to the image of subjects who face up against power: rather, they also refer to movements and subjectivities whose presence or practices exceed and trouble normative terms. More than engaging in the task of 'detecting' the form and the stake of any struggle at the moment in which this takes place and in unpacking the claims it makes, in this book we shifted the attention to the spaces of subjectivation that struggles potentially open (De Genova 2015b). In this sense, the temporality of struggles is not narrowed to that of the time in which they act and in which people are part of it.

If on the one hand there is not something like one migrant condition, but rather different ways of being migrant and of being affected by borders, on the other hand it is also true that becoming a migrant is a process that is related to a constitutive struggle field. Indeed, if it is true that borders—in their heterogeneous forms—exist for migrants and non-migrants, being migrantized, however, involves that those borders impact in different ways on different groups and also hamper people's freedom of movement or freedom to stay in different ways. It is important

to underline that human mobility is never completely free, it is constantly controlled by national and international laws and border practices (e.g., passport controls at airports) and this is not necessarily perceived as a violation of freedom or, at least, it does not necessarily spur a resistance. As the authors of the "New Keywords" explain:

> Every practice or experience of migration is situated within and grapples with a specific field of tensions and antagonisms. This structural relation between "migration" and "struggles" fundamentally derives from the fact that practices of mobility that are labelled as "migrations" are captured, filtered and managed by migration policies and techniques of bordering […] And at the same time, migration forces the border regime to continuously revise its strategies, working as a constitutive "troubling factor." (Tazzioli et al. 2014, 81)

To look at struggles beyond the frame of citizenship entails focusing on the materiality and contingencies of people in struggle instead of superimposing the conditions of the "active citizen" or any other instantiation of the "resistant subject." Foucault's analyses on resistances suggest that it is only when the analysis acts at the local and tactical level that it is possible to grasp how practices or refusals are inscribed into a specific field of power relations, and hence, seeing how they alter it (Foucault 2014). In other words, far from thinking of behaviors and conducts that are resistant in themselves, such an approach looks at them by analyzing the field of governmentality in which they act. From such a perspective, Foucault's definition of power in terms of government allows to shift away from a "reactive" conception of resistances, enacted against some relations of force. This perspective conveys a flat image of power relations. A Foucaultian approach, instead, by reframing power in terms of government, enables taking into account a dissymmetry, "an unbalance that gives to someone the possibility to act upon others" (Foucault 2014, 64). It is precisely by starting from this unbalance that practices of resistance appear as struggles *for*, and hence, generate an asymmetry in that field of unbalances. In order for a struggle to resist to the actual unbalance of power relations, the struggle must produce or mobilize something that introduces an element of discordance, which would hamper existing categories. Ultimately, going beyond methodological citizenship and focusing on the discrepancy that migrant struggles introduce in the order of political visibility means going beyond the logic of "cost" calculation. The

irreducibility of some migrant struggles to an equation between claims and gains is something that allows to escape the juridification of conducts, an approach that leads to frame all struggles in terms of claims addressed to the space of citizenship. The struggle for space of the rejected refugees at Choucha camp is, for instance, beyond the logic of "costs" and balances: indeed, their decision to remain at Shout in order to struggle for a space to stay elsewhere (away from Tunisia) exceeds any logic of "costs" and actually even appears unreasonable.

This reconceptualization of migrant struggles beyond a citizen politics is important also to address a related issue that was raised in the first chapter: how to account for the (Tunisian) revolution five years after its outbreak, beyond the account of "success" and "failure" superimposed on the present landscape of migration in Tunisia? In critical migration literature, the notion of freedom—and particularly freedom of movement—is at the center of how migrant struggles are read, that is, freedom as the core and the driver of these struggles. However, the kind of freedom assumed in these contexts tends to be conceived as the autonomy of movement and the freedom to choose where to go. If on the one hand it is indisputable that this type of freedom is at the core of many struggles for movement— like, for instance, the one of Tunisian migrants who left by boat soon after the outbreak of the revolution—on the other one, it should not stop to interrogate, case by case, what are the practices of freedom that migrants enact and the freedom that is at the core of their claims. Indeed, the risk is to transfer to all migration struggles a model of freedom that, ultimately, has Europe as its geographical referent and the citizen as the political subjectivity that exercises it.

UNEQUAL ILLEGALITY AND THE PRODUCTION OF MIGRANT SUBJECTS

As all the people at Choucha camp, H. also arrived in Tunisia from Libya, where he was working when the war broke out. Before arriving in Libya he crossed different inter-African borders, from the West coast to the East. For him, the arrival in Tunisia did not only represent the beginning of a life stranded in that country—having no possibility to go back to Libya— but also the first encounter with the borders of migration policies:

> I started to be a migrant, and to be aware of that, only when I arrived in Tunisia. In Libya and also in all other African countries I was a foreigner, but

never a migrant. When I crossed the Tunisian border of Ras Jadir I heard there was a group of people called UNHCR and that I had to go to them. They took me to Choucha camp. There, all my borders started. (interview, March 2015)

H.'s "clash" with the humanitarian border and with the mechanisms of containment that the papers released by UNHCR exercise over people's lives speaks of the emergence of the migration regime as a complex mechanism of capture that transforms spaces and subjects into governable matters. Moreover, as H.'s astonishment shows in the face of the multiplication of borders that suddenly impacted on him, the fact that people's movements and spatial strategies are hampered by specific border formations that label and govern them as "migrants" is far from being the *conditio sine qua* non to think about free mobility. On the contrary, the migration regime, as a set of specific border formations, is the juridical and political actualization of the effort to build up spaces of governmentality[5]: thus, troubling subjectivities and strategies of mobility become subjects undetectable from the multiple borders that define people as migrants.

The counter-mapping approach this book opened with provides an approach for *not* looking at migration through the lens of borders, and to try instead to focus on migrants' situated experiences and struggles in their own terms, "tearing migrants off," so to speak, from the borders that define them as migrants. This does not mean to convey an image of subjectivity free from power relations; rather, it means to focus on the material effects that borders have on people's lives, to highlight the struggle-field where some subjects and their practices of movement are "attached" to specific borders and where their practices of freedom appear as by-products of the mobility channels established by migration policies. In this regard, it is important to focus on the ways in which mechanisms of migration containment are exercised on people's practices of freedom.

(Some) people become migrants fixed to and molded by the borders that inscribe their practices of mobility into a field of governmentality. A militant research approach (Garelli et al. 2014) to the border regime entails engaging in the theoretical work of *undoing* and *decoupling*. In other words, it requires undoing *border ontologies*[6] that present the governability of some people as migrants as naturally given, It also requires to detach subjectivities from the legal categories that regulate them, showing that the definition of (some) people's mobility in terms of the borders that they cross and "violate" is the result of forcible bordering

mechanisms. Such a gesture enables us to see borders as "the always-contingent determinations of indeterminate relations of struggle" (De Genova 2015a, 6).

The notion of "unequal illegality"—developed in Chap. 2 to describe how the Tunisian fee for visa over-stayers' impact on different groups of migrants— encapsulates the *working through differences* that is at stake in migration governmentality. To account for the revolutionized space of migration in Tunisia, the book focused on the differential effects of bordering mechanisms, not simply on the emergence of new borders or even on the spatial reorientation of mobility across the two shores of the Mediterranean. The domain of the law does not fully account for migrant conditions–as demonstrated in Chap. 2, the juridical status of migrants as, say, undocumented tells us only a little about their effective migrant condition, that is, over-staying a visa in Tunisia does not mean the same thing for an undocumented European migrant and for an undocumented Malian migrant. Thus, what Judith Butler calls the "extra-legal conditions for becoming a citizen" (Butler and Athanasiou 2013) is at stake also in the processes through which some people become migrants.

The inadequacy of legal statuses for taking into account irreducibly different migrant conditions is demonstrated by the case of European migrants who moved to Tunisia to find a job or to spend some time there due to the high living cost in Europe. They entered Tunisia as 'legal' tourists, simply by showing their passport since no visa is required for Europeans to enter Tunisia. Unlike any Tunisian citizen who arrives in Europe without a visa, a European citizen enters the Tunisian terrain with a tourist visa. However, from an initial condition of legality, these Europeans rapidly become 'illegal' due to their permanence on the territory beyond the three-months limit. However, their illegalization does not correspond in reality to the same illegality experienced by many Sub-Saharan migrants in Tunisia: the borders of the national law impact in unequal and asymmetric ways among "illegal" migrants themselves**.** Thus, the asymmetrical working of geopolitical borders does not exhaustively account for who effectively becomes a migrant beyond juridical restrictions. At the same time, the fact of being undocumented migrants is not in itself a tell-tale sign of how borders impact and 'attach' to bodies. It is actually important to refuse a *horizontal* gaze on borders, a gaze that focuses primarily on the location of frontiers and on the legal conditions established by migration policies to cross them, engaging, rather, in the study of "the migrant condition." This means resisting to assume normative categories to read

struggles for movement and instead focus on situated struggles for movement, beyond the model of the active citizen-subject.

In this book, we have looked at the reorientation of mobility in the region due to the economic crisis and at the precarization of people's lives. The choice to bring attention to the migrantization of young Europeans and their mobility to Tunisia, for instance, contributes to the attempt to decolonize migration studies, going beyond the focus on north-south movements. Our move has been to associate the analysis on the spatial reorientation of migrations with the analysis of processes of migrantization. This has corresponded to asking the following questions: "who becomes a migrant in Europe today?", "at which price and at which conditions do some people move?", and "how do borders impact on people in different ways?". Indeed, one of the main stakes of our inquiry on the migrantization of some European citizens and on their southwards movements is that their mobility and their presence in Tunisia remain fundamentally unmapped, as they are neither visible to Tunisian authorities as residents in the country nor to their national consulates as "residents abroad."

Protean Borders for Taming Practices of Freedom

This book looked at the transformations in the revolutionized space of migration in Tunisia focusing less on spaces as such than on *differential border effects* on migrants' lives (Mezzadra and Neilson 2013). This choice is the result of two related considerations stemming from the conceptualization of power relations that any analysis of borders presupposes, where borders are seen as the kernel of governmentality since they produce differences in space, selecting people and containing certain movements. The two methodological considerations refer to the productivity of borders.

The first point concerns a look on border mechanisms that takes into account the forms of subjectivity that different borders shape, and the specific "capture"—conceived not only as blockage but also as modulation and stratification (Jeandesboz 2015)—that they exert on subjects. Instead of asking the question "who comes first, between subjectivities and border effects?" it may be more interesting to shift away from the ontological level, and to instead interrogate the complex interplay of processes of subjectivation and subjection that are at stake in the government of migration. Borders produce migrants (and citizens) as governable subjects, but at the same time, they are mechanisms of capture put into place for taming "non-steerable movements" and subjects out of place. Thus,

borders' captures are also always an attempt to transform people into governable subjectivities, producing them as humanitarian subjects, for instance, or set of digital data to disassemble and re-assemble with other data, or rejected refugees, or shipwrecked persons to rescue, or, finally, unassimilated remnants in a closed refugee camp. Drawing on Foucault's analyses on power relations, in this book we have drawn our attention to the contested production of (migrant) subjectivities that characterizes migration governmentality.

The second point is more specifically about space: the spatial transformations that Chap. 2 accounts for are the result of new practices of migration, or, more precisely, of the re-assemblages of migration governmentality that emerged in response to the new practices of migration. By looking at the specific way in which borders work and reassess the mechanisms of capture for containing and filtering people's movements, the spatial transformations of border-zones comes into focus. For instance, Choucha camp goes from being a humanitarian border zone to a military frontier where refugees are illegalized and in danger. This shows eloquently how easily humanitarian and military borders blur, instead of being two distinct political technologies. The mutation of the one into the other is precisely what makes possible for a migration govermentality to adapt the hold over lives. This book is a counter-map of the Tunisian space of migration where the polymorphous and protean function of borders is taken as the vantage point from which to observe how migrant subjectivities are produced.

Notes

1. This expression refers to the ways in which migrant struggles are read, thought of, and hence, made intelligible.
2. According to Adam Hanieh, migration spatial structure in Gulf States depends on a specific class system, that in turn comes to undermine traditional class analyses: "migration to the Gulf can be understood as a process of class formation that is necessarily spatialized […]. it is through this spatial structure that Gulf States are able to institutionalize extremely high rate of exploitation […] but the key point is that this exploitation is enabled by the spatial structuring of class and the differential laws that demarcate citizenship rights" (Hanieh 2015, 66).

3. The fact that up to 1910, the Libyan-Tunisian frontier was not even traced as a fixed and clear borderline is a case in point. The frontier was in fact under the control of two tribal groups, the Nouyaels—on the Libyan side—and the Touzaines—on the Tunisian side (Chandoul and Boubakri 1991).

4. An important distinction must be drawn between revolutionary uprisings against political regimes—for example, Tunisia and Egypt—where people who actively participated represented the majority of the population, and other movements like the Occupy Movement or the Acampadas in Spain, where despite the slogan "we are the 99 percent" the effective number of people who mobilized was far from constituting the majority of the national population.

5. A clarification about this point is due. As Sandro Mezzadra underlines, by speaking of a global migration regime "we do not refer to the emergence of an integrated global political government of migration. We rather refer to a contradictory and fragmentary formation of a body of knowledge within disparate epistemic and political communities" (Mezzadra 2011a, b, c, 592).

6. "Border ontologies" refers to the power effects that stem from the naturalization of specific border formations as well as of mechanisms of bordering and containment that make some subjects governable as migrants. The result is that some subjectivities are defined exclusively on the basis of the borders that they cross and by the mechanisms of capture that hamper their movements.

Afterword: Writing in the Turmoil of the Present

Abstract This afterword speaks about Tunisia as an important laboratory in the EU politics of externalization where border enforcement activities are tested, pointing, however, also to the frictions between Tunisia and the EU concerning migration controls. More broadly, the afterword refers to the social transformations that occurred in Tunisia five years after the outbreak of the revolution and to the huge political instability that is at stake today in the country. Finally, it focuses on the terrorist attacks that happened in Tunisia on March 18 and June 26, 2016, to which the Tunisian government responded by declaring a national state of emergency in the country and building a barrier at the Libyan border.

Keywords Terrorism • Libya • EU-Tunisia • Security • Humanitarian

March 12, 2015. At the Justice and Home Affairs Council, the Italian Ministry of the Interior Angelino Alfano relaunched the idea—already supported by the UK in 2003— to externalize the European processing of asylum claims in third countries, starting from Tunisia, Egypt, Morocco, Sudan, and Niger. The proposal was welcomed by France and Germany. In particular, in a Confidential Note discussed the same day,[1] Tunisia and Egypt were presented as the initial laboratories in which to test border

enforcement activities,[2] from which to repatriate rescued migrants to their countries,[3] and in which to process asylum claims for European countries.[4] This was the policy project and governmental fantasy of European "humanitarian border" (Walters 2011; Cuttitta forthcoming; Garelli 2015; Garelli et al. forthcoming).

This scenario corresponds to the EU's effort of turning the humanitarian border into a technology of containment of migrants and refugees south of the Mediterranean and away from Europe. It is certainly important to interrogate the transformations that may result from this border recomposition in a humanitarian fashion. However, one should also not take these governmental fantasies at face value, and take their cartography-in-the-making of the new borders of Europe as a fait accompli. As a matter of fact, assuming that Tunisia will accept the role of EU pre-frontier and of a "humanitarian" space of out-migration containment would mean fully embracing the governmental perspective that looks at Tunisia and at other southern Mediterranean countries from the northern shore. Tunisia's resistance to playing the role of the watchdog of European borders has in fact been found not at the level of official declarations but in the ordinary practices of migration governance on the terrain. So far, Tunisia seems to be engaging in a sort of silent disobedience, when it, on the one hand, signs the EU-Tunisia Mobility Partnership but, on the other, proceeds to govern migrants and refugees according to different and contrasting normative frames that break the terms of the partnership.

In this book we looked at migrants' border struggles in Tunisia through the lens of spatial transformations. This allowed a focus on the friction that migrant practices bring forth to any governmental frame. Moreover, this allowed a focus on migrant practices as recalcitrant practices of freedom emerging from the Tunisian landscape of migration governmentality.

In closing, we want to point to a shift in focus in the governmental agenda characterizing the Tunisia-Libya border. During the time frame this book is concerned with, the border between Tunisia and Libya came to public attention as the site of a humanitarian crisis, that is, as the border crossed by refugees fleeing conflicts in Libya and Syria. In recent months, and particularly after the 2015 terrorist attacks in Tunis and Sousse, the border was presented as the site of a securitarian crisis and has become one of the landmarks of the Tunisian government's fight against terrorism (see the plan for the construction of a wall presented in Chap. 3). This securitarian turn also impacts people's mobility and circulation across the border and in Tunisia in general.

On July 4, 2015, the Tunisian government declared a state of emergency in the country, in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks at the Bardo Museum in Tunis (March 18) and at the tourist resort in Sousse (June 26). The state of emergency lasted over two months. In the name of preventing terrorism, the Tunisian government implemented a series of political and personal restrictions to citizens' freedoms, including exceptional measures to control and restrict citizens' mobility. For instance, all Tunisians under 35 had to present their parents' authorization to leave the country under this state of emergency. It was particularly Tunisians flying to Turkey and Morocco who were targets of harsh checks, as they were suspected of joining terrorist groups in those countries. If in 2011 and in 2012 Ras Jadir worked mainly as a "humanitarian border" (Walters 2011; Cuttitta forthcoming; Garelli 2015; Garelli et al. forthcoming) and, more broadly, as a migratory border crossed by thousands of war escapees, in 2015 its filtering function was reconfigured around the figure of the suspected terrorist-trafficker.

Notes

1. Source: http://www.statewatch.org/news/2015/mar/eu-med-plan. htm (accessed April 14, 2015).
2. Source: http://www.statewatch.org/news/2015/mar/eu-med-plan. htm (accessed April 14, 2015).
3. "Afterwards, they could take them to their own ports, in accordance with the principle of "place of safety," as foreseen by the Law of the Sea." Source: http://www.statewatch.org/news/2015/mar/eu-med-plan.htm (accessed April 14, 2015).
4. Source: http://dirittiefrontiere.blogspot.it/2015/03/lunhcr-sostiene-davvero-la-proposta-di.html (accessed April 14, 2015).

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Index

Note: Page number followed by "n" denotes notes