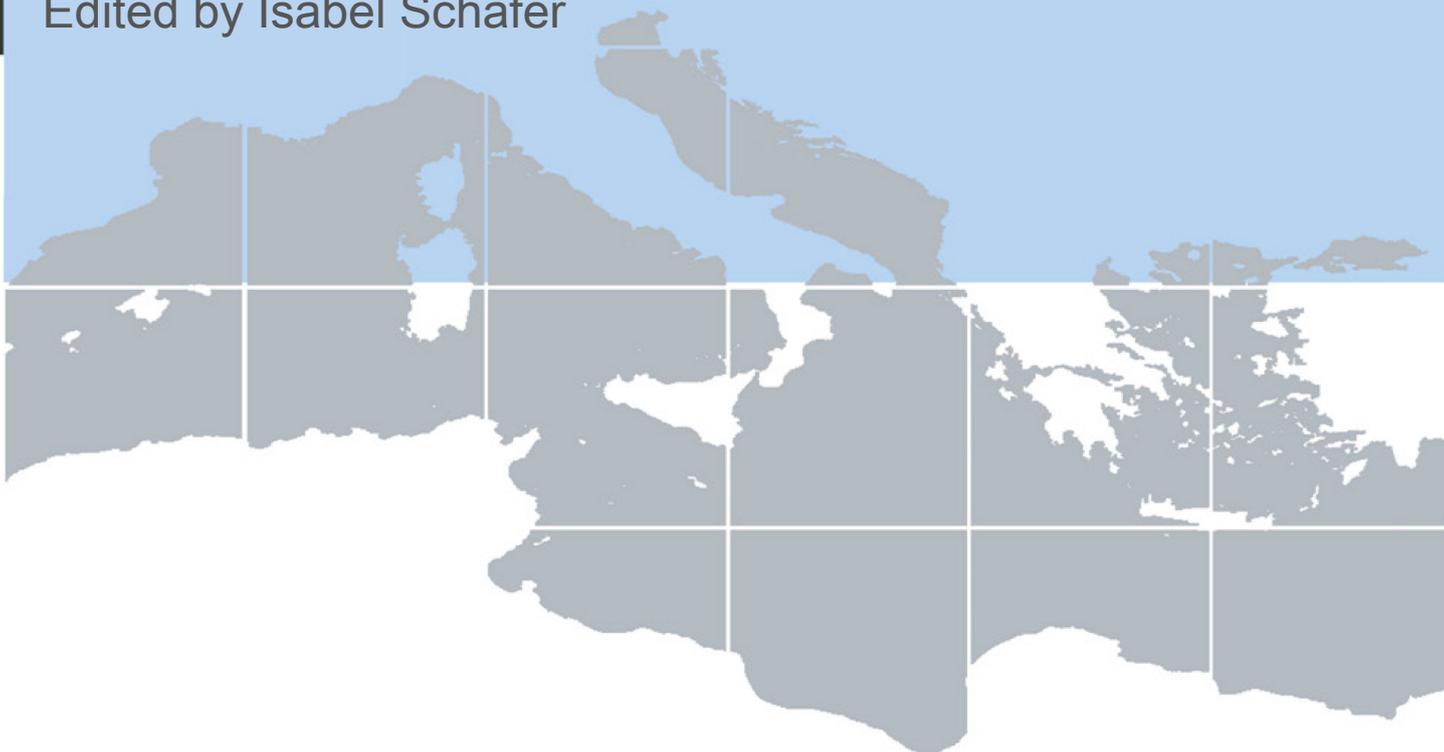


Youth, Revolt, Recognition

The Young Generation during and after the “Arab Spring”

Edited by Isabel Schäfer



Reconfiguration of Tunisian Migration Politics after the 'Arab Spring' – The Role of Young Civil Society Movements

by Inken Bartels

MIB-Edited Volume
Berlin 2015



mib
MEDITERRANEAN INSTITUTE BERLIN



Projekt „Mittelmeer Institut Berlin (MIB)“
Project „Mediterranean Institute Berlin (MIB)“

Institut für Sozialwissenschaften
Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
Unter den Linden 6, 10099 Berlin

Dr. Isabel Schäfer
Mail: i.schaefer@hu-berlin.de

The MIB publication series is available online at
<https://www.mib.hu-berlin.de/>

© 2015, MIB/HU, the author(s):

Inken Bartels
Charlotte Biegler-König
Gözde Böcu
Daniel Farrell
Bachir Hamdouch
Valeska Henze
Wai Mun Hong
Anna Lührmann
Isabel Schäfer
Carolina Silveira

Layout:
Jannis Grimm
Maher El-Zayat

Schäfer, Isabel, ed. (2015): Youth, Revolt, Recognition – The Young Generation during and after the "Arab Spring". Berlin: Mediterranean Institute Berlin (MIB)/HU Berlin.

MIB Edited Volume | March 2015
Project "Mediterranean Institute Berlin", Humboldt University Berlin; www.mib.hu-berlin.de

HU Online Publikation, Open Access Programm der HU.

To link to this article: [urn:nbn:de:koby:11-100228114](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:koby:11-100228114)
www.mib.hu-berlin.de/publikationen

Table of Contents

Introduction	
- <i>Isabel Schäfer</i>	1
Part I – Theoretical Perspectives	5
On the Concept of Youth – Some Reflections on Theory	
- <i>Valeska Henze</i>	5
Part II – Youth and Politics in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean	17
Youth as Political Actors after the “Arab Spring”: The Case of Tunisia	
- <i>Carolina Silveira</i>	17
From The Core To The Fringe? The Political Role of Libyan Youth During And After The Revolution	
- <i>Anna Lührmann</i>	27
The Attractiveness of Political Islam for Youth in North Africa	
- <i>Charlotte Biegler-König</i>	35
The Role of Artistic Protest Movements in the Egyptian Revolution	
- <i>Daniel Farrell</i>	45
The „Gezi Generation“: Youth, Polarization and the „New Turkey“	
- <i>Gözde Böcü</i>	52
Part III – Youth, Migration and the Socio-Economic Dimension	62
Reconfiguration of Tunisian Migration Politics after the 'Arab Spring' - The Role of Young Civil Society Movements	
- <i>Inken Bartels</i>	62
Migration and Youth - A Moroccan Perspective	
- <i>Bachir Hamdouch</i>	80
Youth Unemployment in the Southern Mediterranean: Demographic Pressure, Human Development and Policies	
- <i>Wai Mun Hong</i>	86
Authors	107

Part III – Youth, Migration and the Socio-Economic Dimension

Reconfiguration of Tunisian Migration Politics after the 'Arab Spring' - The Role of Young Civil Society Movements

Inken Bartels

Abstract

Based on participant observation and personal conversations conducted during the World Social Forum (WSF) 2013 in Tunisia, the article analyzes the role of new, young and independent civil society movements emerging within the field of Tunisian migration and asylum politics. It shows how the revolts in 2011 have not only opened up a temporary opportunity for young Tunisians to leave their country but also to stay and politicize the issue of migration within Tunisian society in the longer run. As a result, it argues, that Tunisian migration politics have not only been re-shaped 'from above' through the interplay of the powerful international interests and new actors within Tunisian state politics, but are also increasingly influenced 'from below' by new actors of an emerging independent Tunisian civil society. While exploring the goals, agendas and forms of organization of three young movements present at the WSF 2013, particular attention will be paid to whom their claims are made and how they advance as well as challenge existing (mostly European dominated) struggles for the freedom of movement and what potentials and problems of transnational cooperation remain in this field.

Keywords

migration politics, civil society, youth, 'Arab Spring', Tunisia, World Social Forum

Introduction

Despite considerable media coverage of Tunisian 'boat-people' arriving at the shores of Lampedusa or dying in the Mediterranean Sea and their increasing prominence in international political discourses, (em)migration remains a highly sensitive topic within Tunisian society; one that is rarely discussed openly in public. This is despite the fact that almost every family knows someone among its members, friends or neighbors who has left or even died or disappeared while attempting to leave Tunisia. Therefore, for many Tunisians the issue of migration is one associated with loss, grief and incertitude, but also fear, since 'irregular' - meaning unauthorized - emigration had been criminalized and punished under the Ben Ali regime.

The World Social Forum (WSF) which was hold in Tunisia for the first time in March 2013 was a good occasion to observe how this atmosphere has changed since the fall of the old regime in January 2011.⁵²¹ During the revolts leading to its fall, thousands of young Tunisians overcame their fears to chase out former President Ben Ali and his (border) security and police apparatus and also took the chance to leave the Tunisian coast towards Italy in the moment of political disorder (Fargues 2011;

⁵² Many of the insights presented in the article are based on observation and personal communication with young Tunisian activists during my participation at the World Social Forum 2013 in Tunisia (Bartels 2013).

Boubakri 2013). While the EU and its member states reacted quickly to (re)install their border control regime by signing (not so) new agreements with the Tunisian interim authorities, and to reinforce the FRONTEX mandate and mission to end the short-lived era of increased freedom of movement in the Mediterranean (Ben Achour/Ben Jemia 2011), Tunisians 'back home' also lost their fear to politicize and mobilize around the issue of migration and border control.

Two years later, new civil society movements, independently addressing domestic as well as international questions of border and migration politics, have emerged on Tunisia's political landscape. Three of them were especially active at the WSF 2013. Firstly, the *Association des Familles Victimes de l'Immigration Clandestine (AFVIC)* protested against the so-called 'left-to-die'-politics of the EU and its member states, demanding information and investigations into the disappearances in the Mediterranean Sea. Secondly, refugees and solidarity groups from the *Choucha camp* on the Libyan border brought their protest to the capital to confront the Tunisian government over the lack of a Tunisian asylum system and to address the UNHCR which is filling this gap. The UNHCR is therefore responsible for the camp, its closure in June 2013 and the outstanding solutions offered to the remaining refugees. Finally, *Article 13*, one of the new truly independent Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) which have been founded since 2011, critically addressed the consequences of the European border and visa regime as well as the unequal rights of migrants in Tunisia. Despite their close cooperation with European anti-racist political networks in this field, they complement their common 'No Border' and 'Freedom of Movement' slogans with their proper claim for 'the right to leave and the right to stay', based on Article 13 of the Declaration of Human Rights.

Based on participant observation and personal conversations conducted during the WSF 2013, the article shows how the revolts of 2011 have not only opened up a temporary opportunity for young Tunisians to leave their country but also to stay and politicize the issue of migration within Tunisian society in the long-term. As a result, Tunisian migration politics have not only been re-shaped 'from above'² through the interplay of powerful international interests and new actors within Tunisian state politics, but are also increasingly being challenged 'from below' by new actors of an emerging independent Tunisian civil society.³ While exploring the goals, agendas and forms of organization of three young movements present at the WSF 2013, particular attention will be paid to whom their claims are made and how they advance as well as challenge existing (mostly European-dominated) struggles for freedom of movement and what potentials and problems of transnational cooperation remain in this field.

Historical development of migration and related politics in Tunisia

Large-scale emigration from Tunisia – as from most Southern Mediterranean countries – started half a century ago. However, the period predating the revolts in 2011 saw the most intense emigration up to this point in Tunisian history, most of which was directed towards Europe (Di Bartolomeo et al. 2010, 1; Fargues/Fanderich 2012, 1).

² For the broader conceptual and empirical context of political transformations in the Mediterranean through the interplay of state and non-state actors, see also contributions to Schäfer and Henry 2009.

³ As this is a still ongoing process in the time of writing (September 2014), reflections and conclusions are necessarily only preliminary in character.

The role of Tunisian youth

Apart from the general political situation, most authors refer to the highly pressurized nature of the Tunisian labor market as the key cause of the high levels of emigration (Fargues 2004, 1351; Aubarell/Aragall 2005, 8). Un- and underemployment, especially of a growing highly educated, urban youth with high aspirations, provides a great potential for frustration among graduates as the Tunisian labor market does not provide corresponding employment opportunities for the largest generation, which was born in the 1980s and reached working age at the beginning of the 21st century (Lahlou 2006, 113)⁵. In addition to rising levels of education, more and more young women enter the local labor market and compete for the few jobs available. As the family and social constraints of earlier times are lifted, personal freedom of movement increases.

This economic as well as political frustration 'at home' is exacerbated by a strong attraction to the living standards of the population on the Northern shore of the Mediterranean Sea, as well as the development of new information technologies. For lots of Tunisian young people, Europe represents 'the best you can get in terms of living conditions, freedom, guarantees of one's rights, leisure activities, etc.' (Lahlou 2006, 110; Zekri 2008b, 5). Against this background, it is not surprising to learn that in 2005 more than 75% of young Tunisians⁶ considered emigration (Fargues 2011).

And indeed, despite the considerable impact of the financial and economic crisis on Southern European countries, their export-oriented agriculture, construction and tourism sectors have overall shown a high demand especially for seasonal, flexible and low-skilled labor over the last two decades. To some extent these sectors have never been reluctant to employ 'irregular migrants'. Furthermore, the decrease in the active population and aging across Europe leads its states to turn not only towards its Eastern but increasingly also towards its Southern neighbors in search of young, well-educated workers. At the same time however, the implementation of the visa system and the introduction of restrictive border control measures by European states has rendered emigration towards the Northern shore of the Mediterranean an increasingly difficult and dangerous task for Tunisian youth over the last 40 years.

Tunisia – from a country of emigration to a country of transit

These restrictive border and migration policies were first introduced by European states, especially in north-western Europe, only after the economic crisis of the mid-1970s. Until then, Tunisians, like most migrant workers from North Africa enjoyed easy legal access in Europe. As a consequence of the more restrictive policies, the mobility of migrant workers was replaced by permanent settlement of migrant families, since family reunification remained one of the few legal ways to enter and stay in Europe. Secondly, migrants searched for other routes and means to enter Europe such as clandestine entries, overstays after legal entries or asylum applications.

In this context, movements and practices of migration in the Mediterranean have significantly changed since the end of the 1980s. Besides economic, social and political factors within the countries of the African continent, regulatory changes in European migration politics, such as the introduction of the visa system and the implementation of the Schengen agreement, have affected

⁵ Youth unemployment rose from 22% in 1999 to 45% in 2009 (Honwana 2011).

⁶ Comparing to 22% in 1996 and 45% in 2000.

the changing quantity and quality of trans-Mediterranean migration (cf. Lahlou 2006, 109). In this context, Tunisia has experienced immigration from more distant countries in Africa and Asia, mostly of people on their way to Europe via the Mediterranean, making this traditional country of emigration also one of transit (Boubakri 2004).⁷

The changing politics of migration

In reaction, European states began to coordinate their policies towards the Southern Mediterranean. Since the mid-1990s, a number of joint Mediterranean policy initiatives have been established. In 1995, the Barcelona Process or so-called Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) addressed security, the promotion of economic exchange and the control of people's movement as interrelated issues. While enhancing the movement of certain goods and capital, it restricted the movement of people since security concerns ranked high among European priorities. Set out to combat 'irregular' migration and thus to enhance security in the Mediterranean, the EMP charged traditional emigration countries such as Tunisia and Morocco to control their external borders and introduce the differentiation between 'regular' and 'irregular' migration through visa policies (Bilgin/Bilgic 2011, 1). This securitization and externalization of European migration policies was elaborated within the 'Wider Europe Initiative' (2003) and the European Security Strategy (2003) introducing new measures for the EU's relations with its neighbors aimed at the creation of a 'safe neighborhood'. Revising the EMP, the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) made migration (control) a core issue of the Mediterranean 'partnership' in 2004. Introduced in the post-9/11 context, it remained committed to an overall security-oriented approach to migration. Focusing on bilateral rather than multilateral cooperation, however, it assigned – at least theoretically – the Southern countries a more active role in addressing their own priorities, such as co-development, enhanced mobility and 'regular' migration (Aubarell/Aragall 2005, 11; Zekri 2008a; 2011b). In sum, the ENP set out to create 'deeper levels of political and economic integration across and beyond the region, while simultaneously hardening the external borders and extending transnational institutions and practices for border regulation and management' (Casas-Cortes et al. 2013).

Regarding the implementation of European migration and border politics in the Southern Mediterranean, Tunisia was a rather 'passive witness' for a long time (Fargues 2004, 1358ff). Following the logic of EU politics, the regime of Ben Ali criminalized 'irregular' emigration⁸ and controlled its sea borders accordingly. However, it did not introduce the visa requirements for citizens from other African countries demanded by the EU. Instead, motivated by economic concerns and the will to maintain ties with its emigrant communities abroad, Tunisia developed some genuine policies in the field of 'regular' emigration. Political institutions, such as the *Office for Tunisians abroad (l'Office des Tunisiens à l'Étranger, OTE)*, founded in 1988, and the *High Council of Tunisians abroad (l'Haut Conseil des Tunisiens à l'Étranger)*, founded in 1990, were exclusively concerned with 'regular' emigration and the relations with its citizen abroad. While the early official Tunisian policy in this area was to encourage emigrants to return, it later focused on managing the economic, cultural and subsequently also political relations with the growing Tunisian diaspora (cf. Fargues 2004, 1362).

⁷ Between 1986 and 2000 Tunisia saw an average net inflow of 77 300 people, mostly coming from its neighboring region (Boubakri 2004, 7).

⁸ See for example a series of Tunisian laws adopted and published in 2004 (Law n° 1975-40 of 14 May 1975, regarding passports and travel documents, modified in 1998, 2004 and 2008).

While Tunisia at least to some extent developed policies regarding ('regular') emigration, no particular policies or institutional frameworks were designed to address the question of immigration and asylum – beyond its sheer criminalization – under the old regime (Di Bartolomeo et al. 2010, 7).⁹

In terms of its foreign policy, 'irregular' emigration and its control in particular, became a subject of growing importance as a bargaining tool and tactical resource in Tunisia's multi- and bilateral political negotiations (Cassarino/Lavenex 2012). Especially since the EU applies a more liberal rhetoric of migration management, dialogue and 'shared responsibility' under the 'Global Approach to Migration' (GAM) in 2005, emphasizing cooperation with third countries and advocating more flexible temporal and 'regular' movements between the two shores of the Mediterranean, countries like Tunisia became more interested in cooperation in migration and border politics with the EU (Aubarell/Aragall 2005, 6; Pascouau 2012, Casas-Cortes et al. 2013). However, even under the GAM, the economic and politically weaker position of the Southern Mediterranean states vis-à-vis the EU practically bound them to address migration as a security problem and to adopt its militarized and highly technologized measures. Besides its financial dependence on European 'development aid', 'cooperation with the EU has allowed access to new technological instruments and resulted in the weakening of EU criticism of acts of repression in the short term, [while] it has further alienated civil society from the regimes, thus feeding into their insecurity in the long run' (Bilgin/Bilgic 2011, 7).¹⁰

Reconfiguration of migration politics after the 'Arab Spring'

As shown above, for the second half of the 20th century young Tunisians mostly responded to their political and economic frustrations with 'exit', meaning emigration. In the early 2000s, 'voice', meaning protest¹¹, became more and more an option, providing the ground for the so-called 'Tunisian revolution' in January 2011.¹²

The Tunisian revolts in 2011

Frustration among the Tunisian youth is not only seen as a major source of emigration but also a key factor for the revolts in 2011 (Fargues 2011; Fargues/Fanderich 2012).¹³ The longstanding and widespread discontent among (not only) Tunisian youth, especially in fields where the patriarchal system concentrates political and economic power in the hands of the older generations, finally brought together a broad coalition of social and political forces against the Ben Ali regime. Starting when the 26 year old street vendor Mohammed Bouazizi burned himself in Sidi Bouzid, a small town in central Tunisia on December 17 2010 to protest against the economic conditions and mistreatment by the police, the growing protest finally overthrew the 23 year long dictatorship of Ben Ali on 14 January 2011. This revolutionary situation affected migration movements in the Southern Mediterranean and, as a consequence, challenged politics on both shores.

⁹ To some extent the UNCHR tried to fill this gap, but its role was weakened by its unauthorized position in Tunisia.

¹⁰ For the point of view of the few existing civil society organizations in Tunisia before the revolution, such as the *LTDH* and the *UGTT*, see Boubakri 2004 and Zekri 2008b.

¹¹ Using Hirschman's famous theory of response to deteriorating conditions with 'loyalty', 'exit' or 'voice' (1970) as applied i.a. by Souiah as a conceptual framework for the study of 'irregular' migration from Algeria (Souiah 2012).

¹² I am exceptionally using the prominent label 'Tunisian revolution' here to refer to the political events that took place in the beginning of 2011 in Tunisia at large. Otherwise however I prefer the notions of political revolts, uprisings or rebellions in this context in order to highlight the ongoing and uncompleted character of this revolutionary process.

¹³ For a detailed discussion of the role of the youth and the Tunisian revolts, see Honwana 2011, and the contribution of Carolina Silveira in this collective volume.

The 'Italian crisis'

In the first three months of 2011, 25,000 irregular migrants landed on the Southern Italian Island of Lampedusa. Facilitated by the reduced and disorganized policing of borders during the revolts in Tunisia, the short increase in Tunisian emigration, however, was mainly due to the strong desire to emigrate which predated the revolts (Fargues 2011; Boubakri 2013). Eventually it was mainly the war in Libya, from where migrants were fleeing violence and instability that significantly increased the transnational movement towards Europe (Fargues/Fanderich 2012, 4).

EU member states, especially Italy which had enjoyed good diplomatic relations with the Ben Ali regime¹⁴, reacted with anxiety about the 'exodus' or 'invasion' of Tunisians towards its shores.¹⁵ Declaring a state of emergency, a number of decrees and implementation measures were introduced during the first half of 2011 to deal with the migrants arriving in Italy (Maccanico 2012, 4). As a result, those who arrived between 1 January and 5 April 2011 were granted six-month temporary residence permits for humanitarian reasons. Tunisian immigrants largely used these temporary visas to move on towards France, which triggered a quarrel between the two countries and even put the Schengen agreement, which had abolished border controls between most EU states in the 1990s, under question (Martin 2012, 4). Overall however, emigration from North Africa to Europe has – with the exception of the increased movement from Tunisia in the first half of 2011 – quickly followed earlier trends as border controls in Tunisia were reinstalled or reinforced respectively (Fargues/Fanderich 2012)¹⁶.

The 'Libyan crisis'

The maxim of denying entry into the EU remained the top priority of European policies (Martin 2012). In this respect, European states also quickly responded to the 'emergency situation' at the Tunisian-Libyan border, sending humanitarian and operational support, in order to avoid 'massive migration' towards Europe predicted by European media and politicians.

Comparing to the 700,000 migrants displaced after the war in Libya within North Africa, about 345,000 of them heading to Tunisia, only a small fraction of about 5% actually tried to reach Europe at that time (Fargues 2011). In Tunisia, migrants fleeing or returning from Libya were first taken care of by the Tunisian army, the local population and NGOs providing them with basic needs.¹⁷ This spontaneous reaction showed the general potential for civil society engagement which had been suppressed by the old regime in Tunisia (Zekri 2011). While the vast majority of the migrants were repatriated with the help of International Organizations (IOs) or had left Tunisia on their own by mid-2011, about 1000 refugees remained in Tunisia's first refugee camps since the Algerian war in 1962. The *Choucha camp* run by the UNHCR quickly became the biggest and most permanent site among

¹⁴ Already 1998 Italy and Tunisia signed the first readmission agreement, started joint border patrol trainings and missions in the Mediterranean and negotiated 'regular' migration quotas for Tunisians in Italy.

¹⁵ For a detailed account of Italian, French and the EU's reaction see in particular Ben Achour and Ben Jemia 2011 as well as Schäfer 2011a.

¹⁶ The rising numbers of crossings of the Mediterranean since mid-2013 despite these enhanced security and their political and humanitarian consequences – such as the introduction of EUROSUR, the Mediterranean Task Force, the Italian 'Mare Nostrum' and most recently its European successor FRONTEX Plus/Triton – are new and important trends to analyze but must remain beyond the scope of this paper.

¹⁷ See blog entry by Boubakri, H. and Potot, S., 'Migrations tunisiennes: quand les visas se tarissent, la mer prend le relais', Mars 11, 2011 on <http://blogs.mediapart.fr/blog/swpotot/100311/exode-et-migrations-en-tunisie-quand-la-societe-civile-se-reveille>.

them (Boubakri 2013, 11). As a result, Tunisia became a host country for large-scale immigration which led the country to embark upon a – still ongoing – process to reform its insufficient asylum system (Planes-Bloissac 2012).

The reconfiguration of Tunisian migration politics 'from above'

Shortly after the Tunisian revolts, the EU tried to reestablish re-admission agreements and border control cooperation with the post-revolution transitional authorities. However, despite the remaining unequal power relations between the two shores of the Mediterranean, the new Tunisian authorities were hesitant to accept treating migration as a mere security issue at first, as they became more reluctant to implement any European-driven decision against the will of an increasingly self-confident and organized civil society (Maccanico 2012, 2; Ben Khalifa 2013, 182). As a consequence, dimensions of 'technical operational cooperation' and 'inclusive development' (Cassarino/Lavenex 2012) as well as 'extra financial assistance' of about €140 million were added as incentives to the new bilateral arrangements (Fargues/Fanderich 2012, 7). A Cooperation Agreement, signed under these conditions with Italy on 5 April 2011, stated that the EU supports reforms in Tunisia but expects 'strong and clear action by Tunisia to accept the readmission of its nationals who are irregularly in Europe' and in 'fighting irregular migration'. In a similar sense, the 'Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity' (2011) and the so-called 'Dialogues for Migration, Mobility and Security' at the center of the renewed 'Global Approach to Migration and Mobility' (GAMM) in 2011 explicitly introduced the principle of conditionality under a new 'more for more' slogan to EU-Tunisian relations (Zekri 2011, 6; Pascouau 2012, 58).

When negotiations of so-called 'Mobility Partnerships' started under this new framework in 2011, many Tunisian actors at first showed equally little enthusiasm for the European version. Instead they put forward their own priorities quite different from those envisaged by the EU, making an agreement far from certain for about three years (Fargues/Fanderich 2012, 8). According to a report by the Tunisian migration researcher Boubakri, all political parties in the new parliament agreed that Tunisia should no longer play the gatekeeper for European borders and emphasized the need for humane treatment of refugees in Tunisia (2013). Furthermore, civil society actors campaigned to be involved in the various stages of the negotiation process (Zekri 2011, 2). As a representative of Tunisia's biggest trade union *UGTT* critically summarizes, "[t]he position of the Tunisian government is never clear. I do not remember exactly, but if it is about encouraging migrants to return in exchange for a little money, then this has little to do with the dignity of the Tunisian citizen and national sovereignty in international forums" (quoted in Boubakri 2013, 18). Despite the widely articulated domestic and international skepticism¹⁸, the Tunisian government signed a 'Privileged Partnership' with the EU in November 2012, whose Action Plan for 2013-2017 called for greater participation by civil society actors in designing renewed EU-Tunisian relations but also explicitly stated the objective of concluding a 'Partnership for Mobility'.¹⁹ One and a half years later, Tunisian

¹⁸ For the critical position of Tunisian civil society actors see 'EU-Tunisia Mobility Partnership: Externalization policy in disguise', December 3, 2013 on <http://httpn-www.fidh.org/en/north-africa-middle-east/tunisia/14335-eu-tunisia-mobility-partnership-externalisation-policy-in-disguise>, 'Adresse à M. Mehdi Jomaa, nouveau chef du gouvernement intérimaire', January 5, 2014 on <http://ffm-online.org/2014/01/05/aufruf-tunesischer-migrantinnenverbaende/#more-17337> and 'Non aux accords de gestion concertée de l'immigration imposée par l'Union Européenne aux pays limitrophes de l'UE', March 10, 2014 on <http://ffm-online.org/2014/03/10/tunesien-marokko-eu-nein-zu-den-mobilitaetspartnerschaften/#more-19567>.

¹⁹ 'Relations Tunisie – Union Européenne: Un partenariat privilégié. Plan d'action 2013 – 2017' on

authorities finally agreed with the representatives of the EU and its member states to open negotiations under the framework of this 'Partnership for Mobility'. This non-binding agreement basically offers Tunisia the facility of short term legal migration for some specific groups (such as students, researchers and highly qualified Tunisians) in exchange for its readmission of 'irregular' Tunisians and other migrants who entered the EU clandestinely through Tunisia.²⁰

Criticism again came from both sides of the Mediterranean: According to the declaration of a transnational civil society network 'it offers only half-hearted commitments to promote legal avenues to access the European territory, mainly facilitation of short-term visas for the most privileged and/or qualified persons'²¹. But also former EU Home Affairs Commissioner Malström criticized the EU member states for their double standards regarding the application of democratic and human rights principles in their foreign policies on the one hand, and their migration politics on the other: 'In 2011, the EU missed a historic opportunity to demonstrate its commitment to the foundations it is built on. It is as if we'd said to them: "It is wonderful that you make a revolution and want democracy but, by all means [possible], stay where you are because we have an economic crisis to deal with here."' (quoted in de Haas/Sigona 2012, 4). In sum, despite its humanitarian and democracy-oriented rhetoric, the EU did not offer any new responses to the challenges of cross-Mediterranean migration after the 'Arab Spring' but rather continued its efforts to strengthen restrictive border controls and pressure on readmission agreements (Fargues/Fanderich 2012, 5; Ben Achour/Ben Jemia 2011; Zekri 2011; Carrera et al. 2012; Report of the UN Commissioner of Human Rights 2012). Whether and how the Tunisian government will follow the incentives given by the EU and its member states and implement the security-oriented cooperation agreements or liberate itself towards a more human rights oriented agenda remains to be seen.

After three years, it seems that migration politics have not ranked among the highest priorities during Tunisia's transition period. Observations so far remain ambivalent. First of all, the ongoing reform of existing institutions (such as *OTE*) and the creation of new ones (e.g. a *Secretary of State for Migration and Tunisians Abroad (le Secrétariat d'État des Migrations et des Tunisiens à l'Étranger-SEMTE)*, an *Agency of Migration and Development (l'Agence pour la Migration et le Développement)* and a *National Migration Observatory (l'Observateur National pour la Migration)*) has had high priority for the new Tunisian authorities, to better link Tunisians abroad to their 'home country' and thus enhance economic and political development through migration.²² In this context, the interim government also 'insists on revising migration agreements with European states in order to link actions to prevent irregular migration with measures to boost development' (Fargues/Fanderich 2012, 9). Seeking for the first time also their political participation, *Tunisians Residing Abroad* was granted a representative in the Tunisian Parliament. Another new government body, the *SEMTE*, is now focusing exclusively on migration issues (Boubakri 2013, 14ff).

²⁰ http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/tunisia/documents/press_corner/plan_action_tunisie_ue_2013_2017_fr.pdf. 'Déclaration conjointe pour le Partenariat de Mobilité entre la Tunisie, l'Union Européenne et ses États membres participants.', 3 March 2014. In: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/documents/policies/international-affairs/general/docs/declaration_conjointe_tunisia_eu_mobility_fr.pdf as well as 'EU and Tunisia establish Mobility partnership', Press Release March 3, 2014 on http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-208_fr.htm.

²¹ 'Tunisia-EU Mobility Partnership: a Forced March towards the Externalization of Borders', March 17, 2014 on <http://www.migreurop.org/article2492.html?lang=fr>.

²² As (registered) financial remittances send 'home' from Tunisians abroad account for about 5% of the Tunisian GDP.

Regarding immigration, Tunisia under transition has kept an 'open-door policy' at least towards immigrants fleeing the war in Libya and has – supported by the EU and the UNHCR – started to reform its incomplete legal framework concerning the rights of immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees in Tunisia (Planes-Boissac 2012). While the new constitution formally acknowledges under Article 26 the right to political asylum and prohibits extraditing political refugees, Tunisia has not yet adopted legislation replacing the 2004 law generally criminalizing 'irregular' migration. For the time being, no residence permits have been delivered to refugees in Tunisia, but the asylum procedure by the UNHCR in cooperation with the Red Crescent remains tolerated (Statewatch 2014). As 'the Tunisian government [is] obviously unwilling to become the de facto reception country for massive push backs at sea'²³, migrants that are returned to Tunisia or 'rescued' at sea by the Tunisian National Guard occasionally find themselves in prison or detention centers or even further deported or returned 'voluntarily' to other African countries (cf. BfdW et al. 2013, 11). In this respect, while Tunisian authorities rarely openly oppose the EU, they silently refused to participate in one of the latest European initiatives, the Seahorse network through which information about incidents and patrols in the Mediterranean could be exchanged.

Therefore it remains an open question, whether the growing demands for democratic and human rights within Tunisia, also pushes its government towards more inclusive and respectful immigration policies at home and a more critical stance towards the security-oriented European policies. Regardless, the incoming Tunisian government has already been asked to 'define its own priorities and underlying principles on migration policy and make them public' (Cassarino/Lavenex 2012). In this context, an emerging independent civil society can play a decisive role in the promotion of migration politics that are more focused on migrants' rights than European security interests (Crépeau 2012).

In sum, while both emigration and protest have been observed to increase with the rise of a new connected and informed generation of frustrated young Tunisians, these have mainly been perceived as two either-or options (namely 'voice' and 'exit') in academic literature (Fargues 2011; Fargues/Fanderich 2012). In addition, I argue for a third effect that can be observed in the current Tunisian society where by the two options are combined leading to an increasing politicization of migration issues 'from below'. In the remaining paper, I will present three examples of how young and independent civil society movements are raising their voices against the dominant national as well as international border and migration policies.

Challenging Tunisian migration politics 'from below'

Before the revolts in 2011, the topic of migration had been largely absent from the media and public debates in Tunisia (Zekri 2008a, 12; Planes-Boissac 2010, 14). There were neither civil society organizations specialized in migration and asylum politics nor any migrants' (self-)organizations in Tunisia.²⁴ And even at times of consolidation and re-organization of the Tunisian state, migration policy often took a 'backseat' in official state politics (Fargues/Fanderich 2012, 12).

²³ <http://ffm-online.org/2014/04/24/lampedusa-28-000-boat-people-nutzen-mare-nostrum-eu-militaer-nordafrikanische-haefen/>.

²⁴ For the role of the numerous associations of *Tunisians Residing Abroad* defending their rights within Tunisian politics before and after the 'revolution' which are beyond the scope of this paper, see Zekri 2009, 2011.

The emerging role of an independent civil society in Tunisian migration politics

Young people, however, were not only leading the protest against the Ben Ali regime, they were also the ones keeping migration on the Tunisian political agenda. As they remain skeptical about and widely absent from the creation of the numerous new political parties, they rather organize in civil society associations and social movements that more directly articulate 'their' problems (Howana 2011, 17). Often young people who initiated the revolution were not politically organized before, as criticism of political or social conditions was systematically repressed under the old regime. Furthermore, freedom of association was virtually non-existent (Boubakri 2013, 29). 'With few exceptions such as the Tunisian League for Human Rights, all organizations and associations that worked on political issues were denied legal registration [in Tunisia. As such, they had a] very limited margin for maneuver, since they were not allowed to hold public meetings or engage in any sort of public criticism of the regime' (Honwana 2011, 7). The funding possibilities for autonomous civil society engagement were equally precarious, as European support for example was mostly directed towards state institutions under the Ben Ali regime (BfdW et al. 2013, 9). For the field of migration politics, this meant that independent expression and political action by individuals or unauthorized associations was practically almost impossible (Boubakri 2013, 20)²⁵.

Nevertheless, two types of non-state actors addressing the issue of migration were present during this time in Tunisia. On the one hand, humanitarian organizations, such as the social service branch of the Catholic Church, *Caritas*, and the operational partner of the UNHCR, the *Tunisian Red Crescent*, were providing humanitarian and material assistance to vulnerable migrants. On the other hand, a few established organizations not specialized in migration incorporated such issues into their overall agenda on human rights (*the Tunisian League for Human Rights/la Ligue Tunisienne des Droits de l'Homme, LTDH*), on workers' rights (*l'UGTT*). Among them, the *UGTT* had the most elaborate political program on migration in Tunisia and the way it should be treated (Zekri 2008a, 11)²⁶. Furthermore, women's organizations, such as the *Tunisian Association of Democratic Women (l'Association Tunisienne des Femmes démocratiques, ATFD)* and the *Association of Tunisian Women for Development Research (l'Association des Femmes Tunisiennes pour la Recherche sur le Développement, AFTURD)* occasionally addressed the case of migrant and refugee women within the scope of their actions.

Only after the revolts has Tunisian civil society achieved a significant degree of freedom to conduct independent activities to support the rights of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers (Planes-Boissac 2012, 56). No longer bound by the hegemonic political discourse and ideologies, they quickly created new ways of engaging the state and society in these issues (Honwana 2011, 20). As the result, two years later, the creation, institutionalization and transnationalization of new independent movements and associations in the field of migration politics can be observed. I observed and interviewed three of them at the WSF 2013.

²⁵ More than 6000 associations, often so-called TROs (Truly Governmental Organizations) existed who were subject to political authorities and the Ministry of the Interior in particular. In the area of migration politics, their main mission was the (political) control of the Tunisian diaspora (Boubakri 2013, 20). For a good historical overview of the associative sector in Tunisia, see also Zekri 2009.

²⁶ The *UGTT's* Department of International Relations and Emigration for example started to organize conferences on migration issues in 2007 (Zekri 2009, 9).

„L'Association des Familles Victimes de l'Immigration Clandestine“(AFVIC) – *The Association of Families Victim of Clandestine Immigration*

According to the Council of Europe, 2000 migrants are estimated to have died in the Mediterranean Sea in 2011, at a time when it had become one of the most militarized and heavily patrolled areas of the globe (Ben Achour/Ben Jemia 2011; de Haas and Sigora 2012). The blog *Fortress Europe* has counted 1,674 deaths in the Sicilian channel in 2011, approximately 83% of all deaths in the Mediterranean Sea.²⁷ As a result, a movement of Tunisian, European and other North African associations began to protest against the gap between the EU's rhetoric and actual practices of human rights within their migration management leading to what became known as the first 'migration revolt' in Tunisia (Dünnwald/Kopp 2013, 24).

In this context families of about 350 missing migrants, who began to organize themselves in the *Association of Families Victim of Clandestine Immigration (AFVIC)* in 2011 in order to search for their relatives, became publicly known. Starting with spontaneous sit-ins, hunger strikes and attempts to burn themselves, in order to receive public attention, they quickly started to cooperate with Tunisian but also European associations (Ben Khalifa 2013; *Liberation* September 13, 2013). Since then, *Migreurop*²⁸ in France and the women's collective *Il Venticinque Undici* in Italy have been supporting their search for information about the missing migrants in Europe and continue their protest against detention, deportation and expulsion by the French and Italian authorities on the Northern shore of the Mediterranean. On the Tunisian side, the *Tunisian Forum on Economic and Social Rights (le Forum Tunisien pour les Droits Économiques et Sociaux, FTDES)*²⁹ helped the families to raise public attention, for example through jointly organizing demonstrations in the capital³⁰. Together with the *International Human Rights League*, the *LTDH* and the *ATFD*, the *FTDES* called the Tunisian prime minister to sign the United Nations Convention on the Protection of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families.³¹ Furthermore, a broader transnational movement was initiated in spring 2011 by the French associations, *la Cimade*³² and *Migreurop* together with the Moroccan association *GADEM*³³ to denounce the consequences of European migration policy towards Tunisia and reinforce the relationship with the newly established independent civil society actors (la Cimade/GADEM 2011). Due to this combined transnational pressure, the newly appointed *SEMTE* became active for the first time. Representing the Tunisian government on the issue, the new Secretary of State for migration issues met with the families concerned, re-opened files of unsolved cases and - in cooperation with Italian authorities - started a mission to collect information about the migrants who 'disappeared' between January and April 2011 and those irregularly held in detention centers in the EU (Ben Khalifa 2013, 184; Boubakri 2013, 14).

²⁷ See <http://fortresseurope.blogspot.com/search/label/CIE?updated-max=2011-07-18T17%3A05%3A00%2B02%3A00&max-results=20>.
²⁸ <http://www.migreurop.org/>.

²⁹ <http://www.ftdes.net/>.

³⁰ For example, in front of the Italian embassy when the Italian president Berlusconi visited Tunisia on April 4, 2011; see 'Manifestation anti Berlusconi devant l'Ambassade d'Italie en Tunisie', April 4, 2011 on <http://www.kapitalis.com/politique/3377-manifestation-anti-berlusconi-devant-lambassade-ditalie-en-tunisie.html>.

³¹ 'Tunisie: Appel à la ratification de la Convention international sur les travailleurs migrants', Lettre ouverte au Premier ministre, July 25, 2011 on <http://www.fidh.org/fr/maghreb-moyen-orient/tunisie/Tunisie-Appel-a-la-ratification-de>.

³² <http://www.lacimade.org/>.

³³ <http://www.gadem-asso.org/>.

Furthermore, after demonstrations and sit-ins in front of the Ministry of the Interior jointly organized by the *AFVIC* and *FTDES*, an agreement between the Tunisian government and the EU was reached to establish a board of inquiry on the shipwreck of 6 September (Planes-Boissac 2012, 54). In addition, the Tunisian and Italian governments announced plans to revise their bilateral agreements to include a 'global dimension taking into account the causes which push young Tunisians to risk their lives at sea' (Tunisian Press Agency, September 13, 2012). According to Boubakri, the political pressure of a transnational political movement put on authorities on both sides of the Mediterranean Sea explains the campaign's success 'to make the two governments redouble efforts to find survivors, to identify prisoners and to allow families to mourn whose relative are confirmed missing' (2013, 14f.). Meanwhile, Tunisian associations keep up the pressure and even harden their tone vis-à-vis their government demanding greater distance from the EU migration policies and more serious investigations into the missing migrants. In addition, traditionally influential Tunisian organizations such as the *LTDH* and the *UGTT* have joined the demand for an independent commission of inquiry including authorities, NGOs and representatives of the families concerned, which despite all expressions of good will is still rejected by the Tunisian government (Ben Khalifa 2013, 183). Protesting at the WSF 2013, a more experienced and well connected *AFVIC* was turning towards the international community and addressed directly the EU Commission as the highest instance for their demands for investigations about the disappearances in the Mediterranean Sea.

'Voices from Choucha' – The protest of refugees from the 'Choucha Camp'

After the outbreak of the war in Libya in February 2011, hundreds of thousands of people - Libyans and foreign refugees - crossed the border into Tunisia. Four camps were installed at the Tunisian side of the border to accommodate the refugees. The *Choucha camp*, opened in February 2011 about 9km from the border, was the largest of them and remained in operation the longest. It was directed by the UNHCR and managed by the Danish Refugee Council and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Intended for a few thousand refugees, there were about 20,000 people living there by 2012. The camp became overcrowded and lacked food, water and medical supplies. Tensions also existed between different communities in the camp (CeTuMa 2013).

However, the refugees living in Choucha, were not allowed to move around freely in Tunisia, but had to remain in the region around the camp. While many of them – more than 4000 according to the UNHCR official numbers³⁴ – were recognized and resettled in other countries by the UNHCR or left the country on their own, about 500 still have no legal status in Tunisia. They have not been recognized by the UNHCR as refugees and Tunisia has no law on asylum to regularize their situation (Crépeau 2012). Others, who were recognized but not accepted to the resettlement program, were offered 'local integration' within Southern Tunisia even though the institutional framework and available funding options were insufficient to do so.³⁵ Therefore, those who do not want or cannot return to Libya or their countries of origin still find themselves in a precarious situation of

³⁴ As quoted from Al-Jamai, M., 'A Refuge No More. Camp Choucha officially closed on June 30 but some refugees are refusing to go', July 1, 2013 on <http://www.correspondents.org/node/2946>.

³⁵ Those who participated in the 'local integration program' (that was co-financed by European countries) were offered 90 DT (about 45€) to rent a house somewhere near in Ben Gardène/Guerdene (Tringham 2013). Due to this impossible task and the experienced (racial) discrimination while trying to do so, more than 50% refused to participate in the program (see also 'Choucha Refugee Camp to Close, Leaving Hundreds of Residents in Limbo', June 28, 2013 on <http://www.tunisia-live.net/2013/06/28/choucha-refugee-camp-to-close-leaving-hundreds-of-residents-in.limbo/>).

lawlessness and discrimination in Tunisia. 'Officially it is as if they do not exist'³⁶. While dozens of humanitarian organizations worked in and around the camp when it opened in 2011, today only the Tunisian Army is present and it is about to turn the space into a military zone³⁷. Since October 2011, the UNHCR has continuously decreased its provision of food and medical supplies. In April 2013 they cut the electricity for the first time and reduced the amount of drinking water in order to persuade those who had not been accepted on the resettlement program to participate in the IOM's 'voluntary return program' (Tringham 2013). Despite this unsettled situation, the EU called its humanitarian management a 'successful strategy' (Lüdemann 2013) and the UNHCR closed the camp in June 2013 without offering acceptable solutions to those still remaining in the desert without food, water, money or medical supplies³⁸. Nevertheless, about 150 refugees have chosen to stay and others have even returned to the camp, which the refugees are now running by themselves. Many who had left experienced discrimination or were unable to find 'legal' jobs or affordable accommodation in the cities of Southern Tunisia. Moreover, those 'rescued' at sea by the Tunisian National Guard have found a place to stay in this tolerated 'ghost town' after leaving the city of Medenine where the UNHCR and the Red Crescent today focus their operations. For those returning to or remaining in Choucha today, the choice seems to be try to find work in Libya or take a boat towards Italy³⁹.

As a consequence of their desperate situation, the refugees who were excluded from the resettlement program or not even recognized as refugees by the UNHCR started a nationwide protest in May 2011, which increasingly raised international attention and transnational solidarity. Their major demands are to be accorded asylum and to be granted international protection in a 'safe country' (meaning one with an effective system of protection, which is absent in Tunisia) and thus a general resettlement for everyone in the *Choucha camp*.⁴⁰

Starting with peaceful demonstrations on the main streets around the camp in May 2012, a group of 50 refugees went to the Tunisian capital located 400km north of the *Choucha camp* one year later to conduct a hunger strike in front of the UNHCR head office in Tunis. At first, their protest focused mainly on the UNHCR as the responsible actor for their desperate situation (*Jungle World* April, 14 2013). Between February and April 2013, they organized sit-ins in front of the office of the EU and European embassies located in Tunis calling them to 'finish their job' and to 'stand up to their responsibilities, not turning deaf ears to the situation' but allowing the refugees admission into their countries.⁴¹ Finally, they also went to the Tunisian government to demand an end to the 'local integration program'.⁴² Since none of these actors has accepted responsibility or taken any action as a result – apart from calling the Tunisian police and sending the protesting refugees to jail⁴³ – the

³⁶ Pradilla, A., 'Libya: Refugees of Libyan War Protest at World Social Forum', March 31, 2013 on <http://allafrica.com/stories/201304010087.html>.

³⁷ See <http://blechvisa.blogspot.de/>.

³⁸ See Choucha protest solidarity blog which reports how the Tunisian military has helped emptying the remaining water tanks and tearing down the toilets on <http://chouchaprotest.noblogs.org/>.

³⁹ Report Choucha Delegation vom 18.Januar bis zum 26.Januar 2014' on http://www.borderline-europe.de/sites/default/files/features/Report_Deutsch_Endversion-3.pdf.

⁴⁰ See <http://voiceofchoucha.wordpress.com/>.

⁴¹ Protest declaration' February 2, 2013 by 'voiceofchoucha' on <http://voiceofchoucha.wordpress.com/>.

⁴² Protest für Flüchtlingsrechte vor der EU-Delegation in Tunis, Tunesien', Press Release of the Choucha Solidarity Network, April 23, 2013 on chouchaprotest.noblogs.org.

⁴³ 'La prison ou l'expulsion pour les réfugiés de Choucha?' Communiqué de presse, February 9, 2014 on <http://ffm-online.org/2014/02/09/tunis-20-protestierende-choucha-fluechtlinge-vor-eu-delegation-verhaftet/#more-18439> and 'Tunis:

refugees used the WSF 2013 as a broader platform for their demands calling Tunisian and foreign activists for support (*Jungle World* April, 14 2013).

Consequently, other newly established Tunisian associations, together with transnational networks and organizations, have put the rights of refugees of the *Choucha camp* high on their agenda. The *FTDES*, *CeTuMa*⁴⁴ and the *LTDH* have organized conferences and published press releases to raise attention on the obligations of the Tunisian government, the UNHCR and the NATO member states involved in the war in Libya. The *FTDES* carries out and coordinates activities to support refugees in the *Choucha camp*. Ironically the UNHCR uses their growing activism as an excuse: 'Tunisia has one of the most active civil society movements after their revolution. There are a lot of options; the UNHCR isn't the only actor in Tunisia.'⁴⁵

In addition, activists from Choucha and the Tunisian solidarity associations got in contact with organizations and networks from Europe who collect funds and raise awareness about the situation in Choucha.⁵³⁴⁶ Together they have organized press conferences, debates, film screenings and demonstrations not only in Tunisia but also in many European capitals, promoting an image of the refugees in Tunisia not as victims or objects of help but as actors of resistance articulating their demands for political and social rights.

'Article 13' – Fighting for the right to stay and the right to leave

Besides these rather spontaneous protest movements addressing international migration and border politics as well as the unsettled situation within Tunisia as a country of transit and immigration, a number of new independent associations have further institutionalized the political struggle for migrant rights 'from below'.

The youth association *Article 13* founded in summer 2012 in Tunis is one of them.⁵⁴⁴⁷ Inspired by the preparations for the WSF 2013, a group of young women, who had already been active in university groups and other human rights associations before, started to self-organize around questions of freedom of movement and refugee rights within Tunisia. Their aim is to enhance critical discussions within Tunisian society about these issues and about alternatives to the dangerous journeys across the Mediterranean Sea.

Well-connected within Tunisian civil society as well as abroad, they address migration from a perspective (not only) new to the Tunisian political discourse. The name *Article 13* was chosen in reference to Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (stating that everybody has the right to leave his or her own country and to come back), and to Article 14 (referring to the right to

⁴⁴ 'Choucha Protest vor EU-Delegation' March 19, 2014 on <http://ffm-online.org/2014/03/19/tunis-choucha-protest-vor-eu-delegation/>. *Tunis Centre for Migration and Asylum (Centre de Tunis pour la Migration et l'Asile, CeTuMa)*, a new NGO attached to the academic sphere aims to enhance public and scientific discussion about a new immigration policy in Tunisia.

⁴⁵ Al-Achni, D. (Regional Public Information Officer) for the UNHCR in Tunisia quoted in 'Choucha Refugee Camp to Close, Leaving Hundreds of Residents in Limbo' at TunisiaLive, June 28, 2013 on <http://www.tunisia-live.net/2013/06/28/choucha-refugee-camp-to-close-leaving-hundreds-of-residents-in-limbo/>.

⁴⁶ For example *Afrique-Europe-Interact*, *Boats for People*, *Welcome to Europe*, *borderline Europe* and *Forschungstelle für Flucht und Migration (FFM)*. For current events, such as the day of transnational protest in Tunisia in September 2013 or the protest in front of the conference of the ministries of interior in Germany in December 2013, follow <http://chouchaprotest.noblogs.org/> and www.afrique-europe-interact.net.

⁴⁷ See <http://blechvisa.blogspot.de/>.

stay there under good social conditions). The association *Article 13* connects migration issues to the fight for social rights, fair development and good working conditions. In a broader perspective, the initiative criticizes the world's unequal living conditions, which result from the global economic system and the restrictions of the global migration regime. In a practical sense, it seeks to fight against the European border regime from the Southern side of the Mediterranean and therefore demands reciprocity of visa requirements between all countries. As a first step, it has initiated protest against the visa fees required by European states. It has started information campaigns to educate the Tunisian population about the visa regime widely perceived as 'normal', though it is the result of a political decision from the 1990s. Meanwhile, *Article 13* is also fighting for the rights of people who pass through Tunisia on their way to Europe. In this context, they also try to put pressure on the Tunisian government to respect and to recognise the international conventions for the protection of human rights and freedom of movement.

Focused on these thematic axes and born out of a context of transnational engagement during the preparation of the WSF 2013, the political activism of *Article 13* is largely motivated by the wish to demonstrate that all people – whether migrants, potential migrants or non-migrants – from the Southern side of the Mediterranean are 'not only victims' but that they will also fight for their rights – to move but also to stay. In this context, their genuine concern seems to be the question of how to connect wide spread, mostly European dominated 'No border'-struggles with the Tunisian context where migration also means danger, loss and grief for many families concerned.

Conclusion

In conclusion, while emigration is socially and culturally present in almost every Tunisian family, the issue is only now being politicized within Tunisian society. After the revolts of 2011, young Tunisians have not only opted for 'voice' – meaning protest – or 'exit' – meaning emigration – but have also started to politicize and mobilize around migration issues. Therefore, today we can speak not only of a reconfiguration of Tunisian migration politics 'from above' – meaning the reorganization of official state policies on both sides of the Mediterranean in reaction to the 'Arab Spring' – but also 'from below' – meaning the increasing influence of independent civil society actors in this field. Only three years after the revolts in Tunisia new movements in more or less institutionalized forms have emerged on the Tunisian political landscape that address migration issues from an independent, self-confident and critical perspective, claiming rights instead of asking for help. Whether focusing on the rights of those who have already emigrated and are now missing (*AFVIC*), those who immigrated to Tunisia and left without an adequate framework of asylum (the *Choucha protest*) or those thinking about emigration in the future (*Article 13*), their protest not only addresses the Tunisian authorities but also directly the Italian government, the EU and the UNHCR, who are seen as responsible for the current situation in Tunisia. Furthermore, not only the direction of their protest is transnational but also their cooperation. The young movements are not only well connected within Tunisia and regularly join each other's protests, they are also closely linked with existing movements from different countries and continents in the transnational struggle for the freedom of movement. In this respect, the WSF 2013 in Tunisia, as a global meeting and exchange about struggles around migration issues, provided an important first opportunity to share and discuss particular Tunisian perspectives within a transnational forum. At the same time, however, it indicated the ambivalence between the

emerging transnational solidarity on the one side and the reproduction of global power relations even within these struggles through its forms and goals of political organization on the other – a process that demands further observation, (self-)reflection and analysis

Bibliography

Aubarell, G. and X. Aragall. 2005. *Immigration and the Euro-Mediterranean Area: Key to Policy and Trends*. EuroMeSco papers, 47. Lisbon: EuroMeSCO.

Bartels, I. 2013. "We are the youth in-between two periods." Young Tunisian activists' perspectives on the WSF 2013. Berlin: Mediterranean Institute Berlin.

Ben Achour, S. and M. Ben Jemia. 2011. *Révolution tunisienne et migration clandestine vers Europe: Réactions Européennes et Tunisiennes*. CARIM Notes d'analyse et de synthèse 2011/65. Florence: European University Institute.

Ben Khalifa, R. 2013. 'L'émigration irrégulière en Tunisie après le 14 janvier 2011. Le problème des disparus: pouvoirs publics et société civiles.' *Hommes et migrations* 1303: 182-188.

Bilgin, P. and A. Bilgiç. 2011. *Consequences of European Security Practices in the Southern Mediterranean and Policy Implications for the EU*. INEX Policy Brief. Oslo: INEX.

Boubakri, H. 2004. *Transit migration between Tunisia, Libya and Sub-Saharan Africa: study based on greater Tunis*. Paper presented at the Regional Conference on 'Migrants in transit countries: sharing responsibility for management and protection'. Istanbul.

Boubakri, H. 2013. *Revolution and International Migration in Tunisia*. MPC Research Report 2013/04. Florence: European University Institute.

Brot für die Welt [BdfW], medico international and ProAsyl. 2014. *Im Schatten der Zitadelle*. Frankfurt aM/Berlin: Brot für die Welt, medico international and ProAsyl.

Carrera, S., den Hertog, L. and J. Parkin. 2012. *EU Migration Policy in the wake of the Arab Spring. What Prospects for the EU-Southern Mediterranean Relations?* MEDPRO Technical Report 15. Brussels: MEPRO.

Casas-Cortes, M., Cobarrubias, S. and J. Pickles. 2013. 'Re-bordering the Neighbourhood: Europe's Emerging Geographies of Non-accession Integration.' *European Urban and Regional Studies* 20 (1): 37-58.

Cassarino, J.-P. and S. Lavenex. 2012. *EU-Migration Governance in the Mediterranean Region: the Promise of (a Balanced) Partnership?* Barcelona: IEMed.

CeTuMa (Tunis Centre for Migration and Asylum). 2013. *Special Feature: Report on the Rejected Asylum Seekers of Choucha Refugee Camp*. Tunis: Fahamu Refugee Legal Aid Newsletter.

Crépeau, F. 2012. *Le Rapporteur spécial des Nations Unies pour les droits de l'homme des migrants conclut sa première visite de pays dans son étude régionale des droits de l'homme des migrants aux frontières de l'Union européenne: Visite en Tunisie*. Genève: OHCHR.

de Haas, H. and N. Sigona. 2012. 'Migration and Revolution' *Forced Migration Review online* 39: 4-5.

- Di Bartolomeo, A., Fakhoury, T. and D. Perrin. 2010. *CARIM - Migration Profile Tunisia*. Florence: European University Institute.
- Dünnwald, S. and J. Kopp. 2013. 'Tunesien. Wohlstandsgrenze Mittelmeer' in *Im Schatten der Zitadelle, 24-29*. Frankfurt aM/Berlin: Brot für die Welt, medico international and ProAsyl.
- Fargues, P. 2004. 'Arab Migration to Europe: Trends and Policies' *International Migration Review* 38 (4): 1348-1371.
- Fargues, P. 2011. *Voice after Exit: Revolution and Migration in the Arab World*. Migration Information Source. Washington DC: Migration Policy Institute.
- Fargues, P. and C. Fandrich. 2012. *Migration after the Arab Spring*. MPC Research Report 2012/09. Florence: European University Institute.
- Hirschman, A. 1970. *Exit, Voice and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Honwana, A. 2011. *Youth and the Tunisian Revolution*. Paper presented at the Conflict Prevention and Peace Forum. New York.
- La Cimade and GADEM (Groupe antiraciste d'accompagnement et de défense des étrangers et migrants). 2011. *La situation d'urgence, a la frontière tuniso-libyenne: pour une solidarité Européenne dans l'accueil des réfugiés et pour un moratoire sur les renvois forces vers la Tunisie*. la Cimade: Paris.
- Lahlou, M. 2006. 'The Current State and Recent Trends in Migration Between Maghreb States and the European Union.' in *Mediterranean Transit Migration*, edited by N. Nyberg-Sørensen, 109-127. Copenhagen: Danish Institute for International Studies.
- Lüdemann, M. 2013. 'Ausgelagert. Kämpfe gegen die Perspektivlosigkeit in der tunesischen Wüste' *Hinterland* 21: 76-81.
- Maccanico, Y. 2012. *The EU's Self-interested Response to Unrest in North Africa: the Meaning of Treaties and Readmission Agreements Between Italy and North African States*. London: Statewatch.
- Martin, M. 2012. *The Arab Spring and the Death toll in the Mediterranean: the true face of Fortress Europe*. London: Statewatch.
- Pascouau, Y. 2012. *Arab Spring and Migration: Will the new Global Approach to Migration and Mobility Respond to the Challenges?* Brussels: Centre for European Policy Studies/European Policy Centre.
- Planes-Boissac, V. 2010. *Study on Migration and Asylum in Arab Countries*. Copenhagen: Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network.
- Planes-Boissac, V. 2012. *Asylum and Migration in the Maghreb. Country Fact Sheet: Tunisia*. Copenhagen: Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network.
- Schäfer, I. and J.-R. Henry (eds.). 2009. *Mediterranean Policies from Above and Below*. Baden-Baden: Nomos.
- Schäfer, I. 2011a. *Revolutions among the Southern Neighbors – Time for a new EU Policy towards the Arab World*. Policy Paper. Berlin/Washington: Heinrich Böll Stiftung.

Schäfer, I. 2011b. ‚Von der Revolution ins Reformlabor. Wer gestaltet den Übergang in Tunesien?‘ *Internationale Politik* März/April 2011: 20-25.

Schäfer, I. 2013. ‚Tunesien: Ein gespaltenes Land. Der Verfassungsprozess in Tunesien zeigt die Probleme des Übergangs‘ *Internationale Politik* Juli/August 2013: 88-94.

Souiah, F. 2012. ‚Les harraga algériens‘ *Migrations Société* 143: 105-120.

Statewatch. 2014. *Italy – Tunisia. Tunisian authorities undertake border control for Italy*. London: Statewatch.

Tringham, O. 2013. *Stuck at Choucha*. Tunis: Fahamu Refugee Legal Aid Newsletter.

Zekri, A. B. H. 2008a. *La dimension politique de la migration circulaire en Tunisie*. CARIM Notes d'analyse et de synthèse 17. Florence: European University Institute.

Zekri, A. B. H. 2008b. La dimension politique de la migration irrégulière en Tunisie. CARIM notes d'analyse et de synthèse 53. Florence: European University Institute.

Zekri, A. B. H. 2009. *Migration et société civile en Tunisie*. CARIM Notes d'analyse et de synthèse 14. Florence: European University Institute.

Zekri, A. B. H. 2011. *La dimension sociopolitique actuelle de la migration en Tunisie*. CARIM Notes d'analyse et de synthèse 48. Florence: European University Institute.