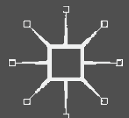
Palgrave Studies in European Political Sociology

Solidarity Mobilizations in the 'Refugee Crisis'

Contentious Moves

Edited by

Donatella della Porta



Palgrave Studies in European Political Sociology

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Donatella della Porta
Editor

Solidarity Mobilizations in the 'Refugee Crisis'

Contentious Moves

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The research on 'the long summer of migration' was prompted by both its societal relevance and the theoretical potential it offered to bridge social movement studies with studies on citizenship and migration. From the methodological point of view, in a sort of experimental natural setting, we used in-depth interviews as well as protest event analysis to analyse how that critical moment was addressed in different countries, with diverse political opportunities and movement traditions.

The research project was based at the Center on Social Movement Studies (Cosmos), first at the European University Institute and then at the Scuola Normale Superiore, in Florence. We are grateful to our colleagues there for their suggestions and help in various forms. We would also like to thank all participants in the conference on 'Beyond borders: Refugees and struggles in Europe', jointly organized by Cosmos and the Desexil Project of the Collège international de philosophie in Paris, held

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This book is dedicated to those who have committed their time and energy to acts of citizenship.

Florence
30 September 2017

Donatella della Porta

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1

Contentious Moves: Mobilising for Refugees' Rights

Donatella della Porta

Acts of Citizenship and Social Movement Studies

For many years, research on social movements has tended to disregard the origins of discontent. For different reasons, concepts like social class (and related conflicts) and grievances, once used to refer to the structural reasons for discontent, have rarely been applied, as attention has more often focused on opportunities and resources. While protest has been defined as a resource of the powerless, researchers have given the most attention to those movements endowed with endogenous organisational resources and exogenous political opportunities, which were considered in explaining their emergence, strength, forms, and outcomes.

In this volume, we aim to fill this gap, introducing some conceptual innovations that we believe are needed in order to address movements around migration, from the actions of the migrants themselves to those of their supporters. The empirical focus is on the contentious activities

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related to the so-called long summer of migration of 2015, tracing the route followed by the migrants (refugees and others exiled for various reasons), from places of first arrival to places of passage (and often attempted blockage or forced expulsion) and, then, to places of destination. While the migrants' very movements are considered as acts of citizenship, the analysis focuses mainly on the various acts of solidarity with them. Through qualitative and quantitative data, we map, within a cross-national comparative perspective, the wide set of actions and initiatives that are being created in order to support the refugees who made the journey to the European Union to seek asylum, traveling across the Mediterranean Sea or through South-Eastern Europe.

We focus on these cases from the perspective of social movement studies, which we aim to bridge with studies on migration and citizenship. While critical citizenship studies point at the importance of conceptualising citizenship as contested and processual, social movement studies contribute to an understanding of the conditions and the forms through which 'acts of citizenship' are performed.

In research on migration, critical citizenship studies have pointed at the intensification in the struggles for rights: 'From aboriginal rights, women's rights, civil rights, and sexual rights for gays and lesbians to animal rights, language rights and disability rights, we have experienced in the past few decades a major trend in Western nation-states toward the formation of new claims for inclusion and belonging' (Isin and Turner 2003, p. 1). While there are struggles to broaden citizenship rights, there are also attempts to constrain them. As Huysmans and Guillaume (2014, p. 24) summarised,

> While citizenship has been an instrument of crafting a people of equals, in which rights are universal and not a privilege, historically it has also been a vehicle for working differentiations within this universal people. On the one hand, citizens comprise a people united around a body of law and rights and/or a set of narratives about its origins. Both allow the people to recognize themselves as a collective unity with political status. On the other hand, citizenship is constituted in relation to those without rights or limited rights, those who remain outside of the narratives of the people's community of origin. In this continuum between inclusion and exclusion,

citizens are actually stratified, rather than dichotomized. Rights are often assigned differentially and citizens do have different capacities to claim rights within the citizenry body.

Within social movement studies, we look in particular at the so-called poor people's movements, a concept famously proposed by Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward (Piven and Cloward 1977) when looking at the protests of excluded and marginalised groups. The main aim of our research, which covers most of the EU and beyond, is to understand how the refugees, through their moves, activate opportunities and resources, but are also constrained by them. Focusing on the different political opportunities and threats the migrants find along their route, we also consider their capacity to transform them by their very challenging of the borders and exercising of their right to move. From the theoretical point of view, we aim at bridging the toolkit of social movement studies with critical citizenship studies addressing four interrelated topics.

First, social movement studies have pointed at the importance of *political opportunities*, broadly defined as political conditions that reduce the costs of mobilising. Research on social movements has often considered the opening up of these opportunities—in particular through the availability of channels of access to decision makers—as favouring the spreading of protest. While social movement studies have been relatively silent on the broad transformations in the interaction between the state and the market, migration studies have looked at the effects of capitalism on the struggles for citizenship, defined as 'a site and a source of struggles over what being a citizen means' (Guillaume 2014, p. 150). Bridging political opportunities to broader transformations in the capitalist societal model, we consider the protests during the 'long summer of migration' as part and parcel of what has been defined as the crisis of neoliberalism (della Porta 2015; della Porta et al. 2017). The solidarity movements (but also those opposing them) emerged in a situation in which late neoliberalism brought about a decline in citizenship rights—particularly, but not only, in social rights. Political opportunities are therefore to be located within a critical juncture, which is characterised by a fluid temporality, understructured and (more) open to agency.

Social movement studies have pointed at the role of mobilising structures, including social movement organisations, pointing at the *networked* nature of social movements as nets of individuals and organisations. Networks of supporters are particularly relevant for the mobilisations around resource-poor groups in protest campaigns often involving broad coalitions of various players, interacting in different settings, reflecting some characteristics of already mobilised social movements. Critical citizenship studies have stressed the importance of the (more or less visible) activities of migrants themselves as challengers of regimes of citizenship. Complex fields of action are produced through the interactions of actors, with a tension between inclusion and exclusion: 'The citizen stands for inclusion, membership, and belonging, but at the expense of others who are excluded, non-members, and outcasts—strangers, outsiders, and aliens. The citizen stands on one side of the political, social, and cultural borders of the polity, with non-citizens on the other' (Isin and Nyers 2014, p. 4). Prompted by the contentious moves by migrants themselves, the campaigns we analysed are embedded in mobilisation of discontents with austerity policies, which has expressed itself in different forms in different contexts. Additionally, protests mobilised first-time protestors, going beyond the already mobilised networks.

According to social movement studies, *repertoires* of protest are influenced by both the contextual opportunities and the resources available for specific movement networks. When looking at resource-poor groups, more typical forms of protest in the streets are accompanied by two modalities that have traditionally been left out of research on contentious politics: we can label them acts of resistance and acts of solidarity. As critical citizenship studies suggested, *acts of citizenship* are produced as innovative and disruptive moments by activist citizens, who act to assess their rights (Isin and Turner 2003). In this direction, critical studies on citizenship have looked at the practices through which status has been contested and subjectivities formed, through an analysis of routines and rituals but also customs, norms, and habits through which a subject becomes a citizen (Isin 2008). According to Isin and Nyers (2014, p. 3), citizenship involves both the combination of rights and duties in each polity (as it derives as the outcome of social struggle) and the performance of citizenship, as 'rights and duties that are not performed remain

as inert or passive rights and duties'. The wave of mobilisation in the 'long summer of migration' was started by what critical citizenship studies define as an act of citizenship, and then broadened to include contentious activities by a broad range of actors that challenged existing citizenship regimes. In fact, while the very moving of refugees is a defiant act of resistance against imposed constraints, acts of solidarity by supportive citizens accompany them on their way. Eventful protests then contribute to give meaning to resistance and solidarity (e.g. della Porta et al. 2017).

Social movement studies have paid attention to the *framing* of the issues at stake. A challenge for social movements lies in developing a discourse that is convincing for different players, through an identity work oriented to the internal constituency, but also resonant for outsiders. Cognitive and emotional mechanisms are connected in this activity. Primarily, the mobilisations of the 'poor people' need to reverse a negative into a positive collective identity as well as a politicisation, through shifting blame from individual to political responsibilities. According to migration studies, claims to citizenship, beyond the legal status, address issues of social and political recognition as well as economic redistribution (Isin and Turner 2003). We look at this by considering in particular processes of knowledge production, but also the mobilisation of emotions.

In what follows, we will substantiate these assumptions, looking at existing research in cognate fields of research on migrant movements and protests of the unemployed, but also at initial research on refugees' movements themselves.

Political Opportunities in Critical Junctures

> The 'event'—which the refugee crisis is—seems to occupy the 'structure'—which the village community was. (Papataxiarchis 2016, p. 7)

Thus a Greek anthropologist described the essential transformation in the island of Lesbos, where millions of refugees entered Europe in 2015. The time span we addressed in our research has in fact been broadly defined

as a 'refugee crisis'. While, as Alcalde (2016) reminds us, the crisis is not due to the sheer number of refugees, and the term 'crisis' has long been used to refer to migration waves, governments in Europe were certainly unprepared to provide humanitarian intervention. In fact, during 2016, a humanitarian crisis was triggered by the perception that the institutional structures and policies in place, at all territorial levels, were unfit to address what was presented as an emergency. Political opportunities are, therefore, to be located within a critical juncture that challenged existing institutions.

In research on what Piven and Cloward (1977) influentially defined as 'poor people's movements', political opportunities have been identified at the national level according to different domestic welfare regimes or citizenship regimes (Koopmans et al. 2005; della Porta et al. 2017). Social movements of 'poor people' are very much structured by institutions at the local level, where social services are often located (Fillieule 1993; Bourneau and Martin 1993, p. 172). Additionally, poor people's movements at times also address international governmental organisations, such as the EU, in their attempt to place pressure on domestic governments (Chabanet 2002; della Porta 2003; della Porta and Caiani 2005) and promote a social Europe (Salmon 1998).

If these are general trends, research on migration movements has also pointed at some specific sets of opportunities and threats at the national, but also the local and transnational levels. A first way to look at the contextual influences has been through the analysis of citizenship regimes (Koopmans et al. 2005). Three dimensions of citizenship regimes are considered as affecting migrants' strategies: (a) the formal access to rights, (b) the conditions for access to political representation, and (c) the belonging to a political community (Monforte and Dufour 2011). Therefore, conditions for access to the nation distinguish civic states (with citizenship awarded on the basis of birth) from ethnic states (with citizenship awarded on the basis of blood); conditions for minorities' access to collective and cultural rights distinguish assimilationist versus multicultural states. In all cases, migrants are subject to attempts not only at exclusion but also at strict controls. While 'nonpersons' in legal terms, undocumented migrants are nevertheless dependent on state institutions. As Monforte and Dufour (2011, p. 206) noted, 'Paradoxically, this

situation of legal exclusion is also a situation of great dependence on the state: the state alone has the power to legalize their situation and integrate them into the territory's political community or, conversely, to deport them. The question of citizenship is thus at the heart of the undocumented migrant's life'.

Beyond citizenship regimes, research on migrant movements has stressed broad trends in the relations between states and markets, with global turning points. Transformation in the capitalist forms of exploitation deeply affected migrants' mobilisation. A first wave of mobilisation on migrant rights called for assimilation into a quickly growing economy. The global crisis of the 1970s brought about a restriction in migration policies worldwide, with a combination of protests for citizenship and for cultural recognition of differences. After World War II, migrants aimed mainly at integration, with unions often representing their claims for material justice, if sometimes with relevant limitations (Però and Solomos 2010). The situation changed, however, with the decline of the centrality of industrial production, with a shift towards calls for ethnocultural recognition.

Neoliberal trends changed the conditions of migration. Already in the 1990s, in France, the struggle of the sans-papiers (undocumented migrants) responded in particular to the increase in irregular migrants within neoliberal regimes. In the 2000s, protests are seen especially within the specific context of neoliberal globalisation, with its selective promotion of human mobility as an instrument to reduce salaries and rights, as well as disciplining of ethnic minorities.

The contentious politics of migrations referred more and more to 'irregular' migrants targeted 'as threats to international order, labour market regulation, cultural homogeneity, social stability, welfare provision, services and infrastructure and personal security'. Border policing and restrictive policies on these migrants increased, while 'neoliberal economies have generated demand for cheap, flexible and compliant labour. Irregular migrants meet this demand in the most efficient manner as they are usually impervious to wage and condition regulations, highly mobile and easily expendable/deportable according to market fluctuation' (McNevin 2006, p. 140). As Peter Mayo (2016) summarised, among the main factors forcing people to leave their homelands are 'neoliberal struc-

tural adjustment programmes; civil wars fuelled by a Western-based arms industry, involving the sale of conventional weapons, especially during the post-Cold War period; exacerbation of tribal conflicts, often involving rape, with the female victims being disowned by their families; women's attempts to avoid female genital mutilation; evading religious fundamentalism'. All of these elements have been related to the big corporations' search for cheap labour, which is all the cheaper the more it is criminalised.

Political opportunities have closed down, especially in the last decade, as a securitisation of migration brought about not only a reduction in the legal channels of migration but also in 'the proliferation of legislation to limit, hierarchize and scale citizenship, the criminalization of "undesirable" migrants, the emergence of a global business in immigrant prisons, and the normalization of detention and deportation as instruments of governance' (Tyler and Marciniak 2013, p. 145). The neoliberal policies of migration are in fact based at the same time on the acceptance of some flux in migration, but also on repression, which deprives migrants of their rights. At the international level, EU policies imposed strong constraints through increased control at the borders as well as through the patrolling of the Mediterranean Sea. However, movement is allowed for, at least to a certain extent. As has been observed, 'European policies on migration, despite their rhetoric, do not aim to hermetically seal European borders. Their objective and their effect is the establishment of a system of dams and eventually the production of an active process of inclusion of migrant labor by means of its criminalization' (Mezzadra 2004). Deprived of their human rights by their lack of citizenship (Fassin 2005, p. 367), undocumented migrants are often constrained in their movement. Protests have claimed basic rights as well as opposed the violation of human rights in temporary detention centres, sometimes taking a transnational dimension (Però and Solomos 2010). At the same time, however, the militarisation of state and regional borders represents 'performances of political closure designed to assuage those made vulnerable by neoliberal economic trajectory' (McNevin 2007, p. 611).

At the local level, this regime of selective admission with deprivation of rights sees a fragmentation of territories, with specific constraints in localities in which migrants arrive, transit, and hope to enter. At the borders,

spaces of contestation are constituted and then displaced with the migrant moves. Within the securitarian turn, in many localities, 'the "camp" has become the rule for the management of migrants by public authorities: those arriving in a territory and facing a deportation measure or in the process of seeking asylum are often confined for indeterminate periods in confined spaces where the "normal state of law" does not apply' (Monforte and Dufour 2013, p. 90).

If protests adapt to opportunities, however, they can also react to threats. So, protests have been noted especially when there is 'a shift from (relative) tolerance to restrictiveness so that the new situation appears unfair enough both to the victims of this policy and to the rest of the population to justify a mobilization…. [M]obilization appears to be triggered more by economic imperatives than by political ones: when irregular migrants are barred from labour markets they start to mobilize' (Chimienti 2011, p. 1344). So, people in similar conditions that disrupt everyday life—rejected asylum seekers, students with expired permits to stay, or relatives of citizens—mobilise against the change in their status. In these cases, migrants 'have legitimated their claims by reminding the public of their historical link with France and their contribution to the national economy' (ibid.).

Our comparative analysis confirmed that opportunities and constraints for mobilisation are strongly influenced at the transnational level, but also differ cross-nationally as well as at the subnational level. Very closed political opportunities thwarted mobilisation in Turkey, while the left-wing government in Greece opened channels of access. In Hungary, the conservative government repressed direct action in solidarity with the refugees comparatively more than did the governments of Austria, Germany, or Sweden. Similarly, at the subnational level, opportunities opened up in municipalities governed by the Left expressing support for solidarity activities.

Beyond the cross-national perspective, research on migration has also pointed at the importance of a broad evolution in the relations between the state and the market, with particular attention to critical moments. The 'long summer of migration' was indeed embedded in the neoliberal model. Neoliberal development is said to bring about the move of migrants, people of colour, women, youth, and workers from the

periphery into the core, with an ensuing disintegration of the consensus that was at the basis of the post-World War II social pact. As the long summer of migration unfolded, sudden changes were triggered by the crisis of the neoliberal model, as processes of accumulation by dispossession (Harvey 2009) brought about large waves of migration generated by poverty and wars.

At the local level, then, sudden transformations were created by the very moving (and stopping) of migrants. Our studies pointed at the specific threats and opportunities in countries that represented different steps on the migrants' routes: from the entry point, to the countries of passage, to the countries of (desired) destination. Indeed, the very concentration of refugees, with their acts of resistance by border trespassing, transformed threats and opportunities. This is very evident in the camps at entry points in Europe, such as in Lampedusa or Lesbos. As ethnographic studies have noted, the migrants' acts of resistance rapidly and deeply transformed these spaces, creating a sense of openness. Lesbos was thus described as

> […] a zone of political liminality due to the withdrawal of the state from crucial functions—or even a 'humanitarian frontier', a kind of threshold, in between a war zone and the 'orderly world' of the Schengen Area. But these macro-political features only superficially capture the socio-geographical disturbance that has occurred. On the one hand, there is a strong sense of openness: the broken boundary has destabilized the place; the broken people (together with the rest of the visitors) who traverse it in great numbers, have invested it with a sort of indeterminacy—they have made it a broken place, but also a place of freedom. (Papataxiarchis 2016, p. 6)

The meaning of specific places thus emerges relationally, from the interaction of different actors. Here, free spaces are created in which several different actors interact:

> [T]he refugees themselves, who abandon what is not necessary on the spot (painting red the shores of the 'red island'); the trespassers from neighbouring or even distant communities, who come for *pliatsiko* (looting); the NGOs that mark the place by placing labels wherever possible (e.g. rubbish

> bins); the activists who raise their own flags on the 'occupied' ground; or the individual performers who leave imaginative traces on their way. (ibid., p. 7)

The refugees' crisis then represents a catalyser of a critical juncture, which is magnified in the area in which refugees converge in the different steps of their travels.

Networking Struggles

> [There are] No Border activists, activists of self-organised migrant groups, feminists and others who identify as part of the undogmatic or party-political left and who increasingly campaign for refugee rights. Moreover, supporters include also many NGOs, church-based charities, established migrant organisations, left-wing academics and artists, as well as some groups within trade unions and political parties. In 2015, the long summer of migration has demonstrated that many of those who are not explicitly organised in political parties, religious organisations or civil society seek to help refugees based on humanitarian or other concerns. And, not least, many refugees or those who once personally experienced flight in their past have become supporters of today's refugee and with them transversal forms of politics that do not essentialise differences but acknowledge the different experiences and realities of those encountering one another. (Ataç et al. 2015, p. 8)

Thus, researchers have described the broad and varied net mobilised in support of the refugees during the so-called long summer of migration. The difficulty in constructing resources for mobilisation of 'poor people' has often been identified as accounting for the important role played by potential allies. Social movement organisations are often formed by committed activists who take up the concerns of social constituencies to which they do not belong (McCarthy and Zald 1977), but for which they act out of a sense of solidarity (Giugni and Passy 2001). Given the lack of material and symbolic resources of the precarious constituency, protests on related issues often require the support of broad networks of different social movement organisations (Maurer 2001). The protest on

unemployment in France in the 1990s or in Italy in 2002 arose from the networking of different, heterogeneous groups (see Remondino 1998; Maurer and Pierru 2001; Petras 2003; Agrikoliansky and Sommier 2005; Baglioni et al. 2008; Baglioni 2012).

Unions have been considered as important actors in some waves of protest on unemployment (Richards 2002) as well as on migrants' rights (Barron et al. 2011)—even if with an ambivalent attitude towards unemployed or migrants, perceived as weakening the labour force, if not as potential strike-breakers (Fillieule 1993; Tartakowsky 1997; Petras 2003; Brugnot and Le Naour 2011). Immigrant rights organisations have interacted with innovative union activism, developing strategies for gaining support in working communities, not just the workplace (Simeant 1998; Nicholls and Uitermark 2017).

Non-state welfare organisations are also important allies in mobilisations about unemployment, precarious workers, or migrants' conditions. In particular, with the restructuring of the welfare state, much first-help relief to poor people has been contracted out (or simply left) to an increasingly organised third sector. Squeezed between the needs of their constituency and the frustration with cuts in budgets, these organisations have at times resorted to advocacy, even in vocal forms of protest. The contracting out of governmental functions to civil society organisations has brought about ambivalent consequences. Increasing opportunities for incorporation into the political systems, but also an incorporation through co-optation: 'the realization of the high exploitation experienced by new migrants at the workplace and the lack of adequate support and representation on this question, from both the working class organizations of the receiving society and from service-delivery ethnic or mainstream charities, has induced some migrants to organize around class and "politically"' (Però and Solomos 2010, p. 6).

Social movement organisations of the left-libertarian family have also been important (Baglioni and Giugni 2014). Although the unemployed have often been stigmatised as *lumpenproletariat* in some left-wing orthodoxy, left-wing parties offered resources and support in several waves of protest following mass dismissals and economic depression (Kerbo and Shaffer 1992; Valocchi 1990; Pugliese 1998, p. 196; Bourneau and

Martin 1993). Later on, New Left groups also focused on 'powerless' groups living at the periphery of large cities. Particularly the movements of the left-libertarian family mobilised against xenophobia, but also on various forms and degree of 'marginality' in the large cities (Pechu 1996) and for the rights of undocumented migrants (Simeant 1998). The strength of poor people's movements often comes from the networking of the various activist groups—which developed especially during cycles of protest (Tarrow 1989). Mobilisations of the unemployed were, for instance, often offshoots of various protest waves, such as the Italian urban movements in the early 1970s (Remondino 1998) or the 'mouvement de sans' in France in the early 1990s (Maurer and Pierru 2001; Agrikoliansky et al. 2005). In Argentina, the *piqueteros* allied with the Madres de la Plaza de Mayo and collectives of university students, as well as with public employees' unions (Petras 2003, p. 133). At the same time, however, these allies were often divided along ideological disputes and in competition with each other.

The importance of allies has been stressed particularly within migration studies. Migrant activists need allies that might help in generating 'large numbers of protesting immigrants who disturb the order of things; and second, they generate the levels of cultural and symbolic capital needed to cleanse stigma attached to foreigners and transform them into sympathetic and rights-deserving beings' (Nicholls 2013b, p. 92). At various times, complex networks of activists have claimed rights for migrants in global cities that provide important terrains of resistance. Cities have helped in the aggregation of discontent through dense relations, and a global sense of place facilitates the creation of activist hubs (Hmed 2008; Simeant 1998). In particular, 'proximity between diverse activists favors trusting relations, intensifies emotional solidarities, and reduces uncertainties' (Nicholls and Uitermark 2017, p. 27). Brokers and anchor organisations play an important role in connecting clusters, helping to build relations of trust (Nicholls and Uitermark 2017). In particular, areas with high concentrations of radical activists and intellectuals (e.g. around universities) have been incubators for protests.

Together with the national citizens' regimes, mobilisation forms have been influenced by social movement traditions and cycles of protest, within which mobilisations on migrant rights are addressed. In particu-

lar, migrants have mobilised in different ways in different countries—for example, as either workers or ethnic minorities. So, for instance, while in Paris the mobilisations are based on the sharing of similar categorical positions, in London the organisation forms around ethnic groups (Chimienti 2011). Similarly, in the European social forums or in the peace movements, migrants might participate mainly within non-ethnic or ethnic types of organisations (Peace 2015).

Organisational networks in support of migrant movements are not only diverse but also divided. Churches have often provided free spaces for resistance, but relations between migrant activists and religious authorities have also been tense at times. In France, informal collectives of *sans-papiers* entered in tension with larger associations, and generational conflicts developed between a first generation of migrant associations, framed as conservative and communitarian as well as irreducibly foreign, and a second generation, framed as progressive, assimilated, republican, and French. Later on, the latter was accused of being co-opted, and in the 2000s grassroots protests denounced emerging restrictive measures (Nicholls and Uitermark 2017).

Power relations emerge within pro-refugee networks, as mobilisations need cultural and social capital, which are asymmetrically distributed, with the members of support organisations better endowed than are the undocumented immigrants (Nicholls 2013b). As Nicholls (2013a, p. 615) noted, while some migrants possess protest skills, developed in their home countries, new political fields require the specific knowledge of local supporters. However,

> Native supporters who possess these scarce resources are likely to assume the position of representational broker within these mobilizations and become responsible for discursively framing and legally negotiating claims on behalf of immigrants. The asymmetric distribution of scarce and valuable social movement resources therefore produces a network structure in which natives play a dominant role in managing how the legal and cultural claims of immigrants are crafted and articulated in the public sphere.

Recent struggles have indeed presented various claims for autonomous organisations by the migrants. As support organisations act as brokers

with media and institutions (Nicholls 2013b), migrants resent what they see as attempts at patronising them: 'We are tired of our third-class status, and we are tired of the social justice elite dictating what we can and cannot do, all the while speaking on our behalf and pretending they represent our interests' (Perez et al., in Nicholls 2013b, p. 101).

In addition to allies, undocumented migrants tend to rely upon strong ties. As social movement studies have noted, the higher the risks connected with activists, the greater the importance of strong affective ties in order to maintain commitment (della Porta 1995). In particular, the undocumented activists participated in civil disobedience when they trusted the other activists and felt a moral obligation (Nicholls 2013b). These strong ties are often built among refugees during the intense moments of travelling, as the perils experienced together strengthened reciprocal solidarity (Ataç and Steinhilper 2016). Strong affective links have also proved important in protests against deportation, as protestors are often motivated by personal relations with potential deportees and the emotions that come with social proximity (Rosenberger and Winkler 2014).

In addition, in the period we have studied, multiple actors participated in solidarity campaigns with refugees. During the summer of 2015, pro-refugee groups were most varied. Besides the traditional NGOs involved in supporting migrants and horizontal networks mobilised on the left, both autonomous migrant organisations and local solidarity initiatives developed with various (but usually low) degrees of coordination. As our research shows, mobilising structures present at national and local levels varied, given different movements' cultures and strength. Experiences with previous waves of migration, as well as migrant activists from previous waves, mobilised anew; in addition, new networks developed, reflecting specific preferences for organising in different territories and for different generations. Various groups converged in common campaigns, but also adapted to the shifting needs of a constituency that was constantly on the move. While the mobilisation around the refugees on the move was per se transnational, upward scale shifts were rare.

Repertoires of Resistance

> In Austria 2,200 drivers joined a campaign to pick up refugees stranded in Budapest. In Germany, Denmark and Sweden locals have organised support for arriving refugees, donating food, water, clothes and other supplies to those in need, sometimes using civil disobedience by smuggling refugees to neighboring countries or sheltering refugees privately. In Iceland more than 11,000 Icelanders (out of a total population of approximately 323,000 people) offered to accommodate Syrian refugees in their private homes and pay their costs as a response to the government suggesting that it would accept 50 Syrian refugees. (Agustín and Jørgensen 2016)

Such is one description of action in solidarity with the refugees during the 'long summer of migration'. Protests included a variety of forms, from civil disobedience to solidarity action. The acts of citizenship performed by the migrants through their contentious moves triggered the mobilisation in solidarity with them.

Research on the protests of the powerless singled out the presence of disruptive forms of action. Protests of precarious people tend to be successful when they are disruptive, materially or symbolically. In 2002, the Italian unemployed blocked railways and highways and occupied harbours and airports, imitating the *piqueteros* of Argentina where, in August 2001, 100,000 unemployed shut down 300 highways (Petras 2003). In addition, mobilisation of the unemployed often followed the tradition of direct-action unionism (Chopart et al. 1998, p. 72): protestors chained themselves to the gates of major institutions, staged flash interventions against evictions, held demonstrations, and occupied public buildings. These forms tend to break with the tradition of modern industrial action by bringing the conflicts outside the factory and involving the community in solidarity strikes as well as boycotts (Piven and Cloward 2000; Zorn 2004, p. 6).

At the same time, however, research has pointed at the presence of acts of resistance, through less organised forms of direct action, including at the individual level—what Bayat (1997) defined as 'nonmovements'. More symbolic forms of protest tend to be quite innovative, in an effort to capture the attention of mass media, but also to build upon a long past

tradition. In various historical periods, the unemployed resorted to 'self-creation of jobs' (Reiter 2002; della Porta et al. 2015)—entering factories and firms and starting to work, following upon the tradition of land occupation by jobless peasants. In the 1990s, the 'star marches' of the French unemployed and the Euromarches, converging in Paris from the provinces, were reminiscent of the Hunger Marches of the pre-war period: processions walked long distances, symbolically representing the suffering of the unemployed and at the same time sensitising people at the local level.

Critical citizenship studies have stressed that, for migrants, protest is per se an act of citizenship, putting forward claims to insider status through which political subjects are formed and speak up, overcoming silence and illegitimacy. As Engin Isin has influentially argued, citizenship can be reclaimed as a source of political potential if understood in terms of acts of citizenship—that is, practices through which subjects transform themselves into citizens (Isin 2008, p. 18). Protests are then activities through which individual subjects and groups 'constitute themselves as … those to whom the right to have rights is due' (Isin and Nielsen 2008, p. 2). So, 'performances, enactments and events' (Walters 2008, p. 192) produce relations of citizenship.

Migrants themselves have performed acts of citizenship in pursuance of their rights. Migrants' struggles have been addressed through the lens of theories of recognition (Chimienti 2011), as the denial of recognition violates broad expectations, triggering feelings of outrage and therefore normative judgements about the legitimacy of general social arrangements (Honneth 1995). A shared experience of disrespect is at the basis of moral struggles for recognition.

In the 1980s and 1990s in France, as previously legal migrants were made illegal by new legislation voted under pressing radical right mobilisation, 'Via a strategy reminiscent of "outing" in other identity-based politics, the Sans-Papiers challenge their ascribed status by publicly identifying themselves in occupations and demonstrations as legitimately present despite the potential for seizure and sanction' (McNevin 2006, p. 143). While claiming universal rights, the sans-papiers present their oppression as part of the exploitation of other workers, embedding themselves within a broader political community in opposition to neoliberalism.

Nowadays, self-organised groups of migrants stage hunger strikes and other dramatic forms of protest in order to express moral outrage (Chimienti 2011).

Migrants' activists have used hunger strikes against deportation, but have also participated in industrial strikes, house occupations, rent strikes, and marches, but also riots. Repression and resistance have developed around specific places, such as hostels or camps (Nicholls and Uitermark 2017). The development of an alternative knowledge has included courses in the organisation and the creation of handbooks for mobilisation (i.e. *Working for Justice: The L.A. Model of Organizing and Advocacy*) (Nicholls and Uitermark 2017). The marches provide instruments of empowerment, as they allow the formulation of claims in the public sphere (Monforte and Dufour 2013). Hunger strikers are described as capable of turning their own bodies into a means of resistance and occupation, empowering migrants vis-à-vis the paternalism of supporters (Ataç 2016). Networks of undocumented migrants have used radical forms of action such as hunger strikes or lip sewing, subjecting themselves to physical suffering in order to point out the consequences of their exclusion from citizenship—as in Würzburg in 2012, during the hunger strike by a group of young Iranian refugees. Additionally, refugees have used spatial strategies to increase their visibility and create a sense of empowerment (Ataç 2016, p. 632)—as in the actions developed in the refugees' protest camp in Vienna. In another example, in 2012, 50 refugees walked for 600 km to Berlin, where they built a tent city at Oranienplatz around which solidarity action, including hunger strikes, spread (Staiger 2015). Particularly since the 1980s, forms of protest have emerged including church asylum, hunger strikes, blockades at airports, and protest camps. Trans-border activities have also developed among them the March for Freedom of sans-papiers and migrants, which started in Strasbourg in May 2014 and ended in front of the institutions of EU governance in Brussels in June, including a series of protests in several European countries. In 2011, marches and strikes were organised in various European countries under the motto 'A Day Without Us'.

Visible protests have been presented as opportunities for undocumented migrants to regain power over their own lives. Long-term marches have a performative character, as moments of rupture that empower and

create possibilities: they are 'collective or individual deeds that rupture socio-historical patterns' (Isin and Nielsen 2008, p. 2). In fact, 'a collective action is not only a protest against a specific power relation; it is a moment in which people express a potential to challenge and redefine this power relation' (Monforte and Dufour 2013, p. 88). Protests are 'acts of emancipation, challenging states of exception' (Agamben 1998). The march has cognitive effects on participants: it makes them aware that, despite their situation of legal exclusion, they can formulate claims in the public space like other social groups and can therefore act like citizens who have a legal residency status. As a result, these actions have expressed a "refusal to be invisible" (Monforte and Dufour 2013, p. 95).

Resistance also took forms of *invisible politics*, emerging out of everyday practices around border and integration regimes that 'tactically appropriate mobility and connect migration projects, thereby subverting and questioning the order and borders of nation-states, creating trans- and postnational spaces'. These practices

> are invisible as they are not captured as such by dominant regimes of visibility—they rather attempt to elude their gaze and seek to remain imperceptible. It is precisely through these less spectacular, often invisible everyday struggles, for example for employment, housing, and the freedom of movement that the status quo is called into question. As the summer of migration has made abundantly clear, people simply enact their rights to escape and to free movement. In the absence of legal pathways, they find irregular ways to cross the European border and, having entered the Schengen Area, they circumvent the Dublin Regulation in order to arrive at a desired place that allows them to live, and not merely to survive. Even if these mobilities do not constitute organised and thus visible mobilisations of protest, border crossings can be understood as acts of civil disobedience that call into question certain laws and the dominant prevailing order of migration policies. (Ataç et al. 2015, p. 7)

Forms of resistance include destroying identity documents to evade registration, performed either in private or in public, as during the Refugee Protest March. Forms of action have been linked to the degree of recognition, with the least recognised groups resorting to forms of resistance. Undocumented migrants are particularly affected by a 'borderline

citizenship regime' (Monforte and Dufour 2011, p. 205). While their mobilisation is particularly risky, exposing them to great danger of deportation, undocumented migrants develop some 'residence strategies' that help them in managing situations of exclusion. In fact,

> Nonstatus persons are not passive subjects: they live in societies, work, marry, pay taxes, consume goods and services, and send their children to school. By engaging in these day-to-day activities, they create certain spaces of inclusion for themselves and for their relatives. In the course of their daily interactions (with employers, neighbours, controlling forces, allied activists, etc.), they define strategies that allow them to *deal* with the exclusionary mechanisms they face. In doing so, they are able to move the boundaries defined by public authorities, and thus improve the conditions of mobilization. (ibid., p. 205)

The very influx of refugees into Europe is an act of resistance, with defiance of some laws that constrain movements on European soil.

Acts of citizenship are also performed by citizens of various countries, supporting the refugees. These take various forms. Collective action includes civil disobedience. Among No Borders, 'activists experimented with using their bodies to interrupt the perception of a scene and making noise to make sure that the habitual arrest of migrants could not occur unnoticed; or standing by passively, constituting an audience to whom police must also be accountable' (Millner 2011, p. 327). There are also practices of 'witnessing', such as following riot police in order to document or even to intervene in their interactions with migrants. Knowledge is produced in and about the camps. Stabilising their presence in Calais, No Border organised participatory workshops on border-related themes, in which migrants took the floor and directed the discussion towards a critique of humanitarianism. The camps acquire centrality in the action repertoires of migrants' movements, but also in the acts of citizenship of those who supported them both as sites of and forms of resistance, of contested meanings, and of political struggle. As Kim Rygiel (2011, p. 3) noted, there are different notions of camps: first, 'a territorial notion expressed in state efforts to eradicate the jungles; second, the idea of the camp as a makeshift community, mobilised by migrants and some

humanitarian associations; and third, the solidaristic topos asserted by activists as a site of exchange and political resistance'. Camps are sites in which migrants are closed, but also sites in which they choose to squat to stage protest. Similar to camps are waiting zones at international airports or hostels for asylum seekers (ibid.).

The variegated forms of protests put forward during the summer of 2015 have been summarised as follows:

> Ever since the Hungarian authorities enacted a temporary halt on international train travel from Keleti Station in Budapest and more or less abandoned thousands of stranded refugees, countless images, both impressive and deeply disturbing, reach us daily: Refugees by the hundreds making their way on foot through Hungary, Austria, Germany and Denmark, walking on motorways and train tracks because international train and bus travel has been shut down; overwhelming transnational willingness to support refugees by offering rides in private cars, by welcoming them and providing for them at train stations, or by organising aid convoys to Hungary, Croatia, Greece and Macedonia…. In the past months, through these marches and other enactments of the freedom of movement, the struggles of migration have become more dynamic every day and asserted their self-determined mobilities, thereby exposing the contradictions of the European border regime. (Ataç et al. 2015, p. 1)

Challenging Frames

Identity framing within poor people's movements is traditionally considered as particularly difficult, given low self-esteem, and therefore the challenge of building a collective identity around a condition which is perceived as stigmatised and, certainly, unpleasant (Galland and Louis 1981, p. 177). The mobilisation of such movements therefore requires the development of a collective identity that 'is based exclusively on the symbolic and cognitive work developed during the mobilization, lacking previously existing schemes' (Maurer 2001, p. 39). In order to mobilise, an injustice frame has to be created, and responsibility for the negative conditions must be assigned to a political authority. For precarious workers, precarity implies difficulties in a wide range of working conditions

but also in social life, with a constant tension between apathy and search for recognition (Chabanet 2008; Mattoni 2012). Additionally, the conditions of the unemployed, precarious workers, or migrants vary broadly, as do the experiences of the involved people—with strong tensions in the definition of a collective identity. The bureaucratic fragmentation of the category of 'poor people' on the basis of the specific policies addressed to them (women or men, young or not, ethnic specificity, previous labour experience, etc.) increases the difficulties in building a collective identity. The presence of different agencies and policies in fact facilitates splits in an already weak community with the need to connect the different claims, often through a politicised identity (Combesqua 1998; Maurer 2001; della Porta 2005). In addition, the content of claims reflects a tension between long-term perspectives of reform and the need for immediate relief (Mouchard 2000, p. 97). Claims imply strategic dilemmas as successes are particularly relevant in keeping the protest going, spreading the (mobilising) belief—all the more important for poorly endowed groups—that protesting helps in obtaining material results.[1] The need for counter-framing is particularly strong on issues related to refugees, often stigmatised as rapists or terrorists.

Migrants, as a stigmatised population, and those who support them, might aim at achieving legitimacy either by challenging mainstream definitions or by adapting their discourse in order to make it resonant with mainstream normative definitions of the nation. Adaptation has been noted at several stages of citizenship struggles, as, if migrants are 'to gain recognition as legitimate "voices" and avoid being dismissed as impossible "noises", they must construct representations of immigrants and their cause in ways that cohere with the core normative and moral values of the nation. Demonstrating national identification has therefore become the means by which this "other" reveals its humanity to the native. Once natives recognise the immigrant other as human, they are more likely to recognise that the group has been wronged because it has been denied certain "inalienable" and "human" rights' (Nicholls 2013b, p. 84).

This is, however, all the more difficult for the least recognised categories of migrants, which tend in fact to use more radical framing. In particular, 'Undocumented immigrants are viewed as the most problematic because their very existence violates national sovereignty, the rule of law,

and the value of citizenship'. As their very 'right to have rights' is challenged, 'those immigrants lacking the attributes needed to demonstrate their conformity with national norms find themselves excluded from basic rights in these countries' (Nicholls 2013b, p. 84). Framing is strongly affected by degree of recognition. So,

> Those immigrants facing fewer opportunities are less likely to embrace narrow mobilizing frames based on the particular advantages of certain groups (i.e. parents, students, etc.). The exclusive nature of these mobilizing frames encourages them to embrace discourses and claims that stress the inherent equality and rights of all people, irrespective of their cultural attributes and national backgrounds. Their inabilities to cleanse themselves of their own stigmas encourage them to embrace the argument that they deserve rights not because they conform to national values but because they are human beings with universal and inalienable rights. They have few options but to argue that all immigrants are rights-bearing human beings and, as such, national states are obliged to recognize their fundamental rights to work, raise families, and live fruitful lives in the country. The calls for a more radical, universal, and post-national citizenship are nurtured by the immigrant rights movement, with those failing to 'fit' categories of the good and deserving immigrant more likely to embrace and fuel post-national claims. (Nicholls 2013b, p. 99)

The tension between assimilationist and challenging framings of migrants seems affected by dominant citizens' regimes. Previous research thus singled out the prevalence of humanitarian frames among the isolated and unprotected undocumented migrants in Germany as well as, instead, frame bridging in France, where several organisations and groups (including unions and parties) support their struggles ('Etudiants, sans-papiers, salariés, intermittents, chômeurs, retraités, tous précaires, tous solidaires'). In fact, the undocumented migrants in France

> live in a citizenship regime that offers more leeway in their daily lives, they have more opportunities to do what full citizens do (they work, they go to school, they consume goods and services). When these conditions are threatened, they mobilize to preserve them. The rationalization of their claims centers on the argument that they are de facto members of the political com-

> munity and contribute to the society and its development. These particular conditions of mobilization facilitate the building of alliances with other actors (such as unions) included in the citizenship regime and also sustain public sympathy for their cause. (Monforte and Dufour 2011, p. 218)

Migration studies have in particular pointed at the need to contrast the definition of the others as Barbarian, as refugees react to a process of 'nullification of the "other"', to be exploited and oppressed (El Saadawi 1992, p. 137).

The need for counter-hegemonic definition has been in particular addressed with reference to Antonio Gramsci's analysis of the relations between industrial workers and peasants. As he had observed, 'in order to win the trust and consent of the peasants and of some semiproletarian urban categories—to overcome certain "prejudices and conquer certain forms of egoism, which can and do subsist within the working class as such, even when craft particularism has disappeared" (Gramsci 1978, pp. 448–9). The forging of alliances requires, as it did for the interactions of peasants and industrial workers Gramsci described, the need to

> overcome certain prejudices and conquer certain forms of egoism which can and do subsist within the working class as such, even when craft particularism has disappeared. The metalworker, the joiner, the building-worker, etc., must not only think as proletarians, and no longer as metalworker, joiner, building-worker, etc.; they must also take a further step. They must think as workers who are members of a class which aims to lead the peasants and intellectuals. (ibid., p. 448)

Building alliances also implies developing alternative visions of the Southern question, against the elitism and particularism of the workers, with processes of self-education as mutual understanding evolves slowly (Apitzsch 2016).

The struggles of the summer of 2015 in fact catalysed a change in framing, as activists rejected an exclusive categorisation of refugees based on legal status. In particular, they pointed out that 'a human's identity and subjectivity could not merely be determined by his or her legal status, but by varied and intersectional dynamics of social stratification, such as gender, social class and origin' (Ataç et al. 2015, p. 9).

This Volume

In the next chapter, Semih Çelik addresses the mobilisations in Turkey. Since the beginning of the war in Syria, Istanbul has become one of the popular stops for migrants fleeing the war. Although the city was a transitory point for crossing into the EU territories, it has transformed into a last stop for many since the end of 2015, when the Balkan route was closed and Turkey complied with the changing policies of EU countries—eventually leading to the EU-Turkey deal in March 2016. As a result, from mid-2015 until the end of 2016, the refugee population in Istanbul nearly doubled (from around 300,000 to 500,000 in less than 1.5 years—and still growing). This was also a tumultuous period for Turkish politics. Since the June 2015 elections, attacks in urban centres targeting civilians resulted in the closing down of the public space. On the other hand, the growing totalitarianism of the AKP government before and after the coup attempt in July 2016 also suppressed the political space. This chapter analyses the transformation of the map of pro-refugee social movement organisations in Istanbul in that period, through an analysis of their frames, repertoires of action, organisational structures, and composition. The research is based upon a dozen in-depth interviews conducted with pro-refugee activists and ethnographically inspired participant observation. The chapter employs 'refugeehood' as a useful category in order to understand how the precarious political space in Turkey defined the outlook of the pro-refugee social movement map of the city, by transforming empathy towards refugees into identification with them.

Chapter 3, written by Leonidas Oikonomakis, is devoted to the Greek case. The long summer of migration caught the world by surprise, even more so for the countries that had to deal with it directly. This is particularly true for Greece, which—while facing the toughest economic depression of post-WWII European history—suddenly saw almost a million people entering the country in 2015 and 2016. The case of Greece (2015–16) shows the dynamic transformations that occur in the relationship between social movements and the state, in particular in the case of mobilising around emergencies. The author argues that the Greek state was completely unprepared (and maybe even unwilling) to deal with the

populations *in transition*, at least in the first stage and until the EU-Turkey agreement was reached. It therefore left the space open for grassroots solidarity initiatives to flourish to deal with the issue. Once the neighbouring countries started closing their borders, however, and the EU-Turkey agreement was in place, the state (a) reclaimed the 'lost space', (b) tried to control the populations that were now in Greece to stay for an indefinite period of time and not just crossing through, and also (c) tried to 'regulate' solidarity by allowing only registered organisations to practise it, 'privatising' it, in a way. That fact has led the movements to change their strategies and repertoires of action, focusing now on actions directed towards the local public opinion and thus trying to force the state to implement policies that they themselves were now unable (or unwilling) to enforce. The chapter is based on ethnographic fieldwork as well as on 25 interviews with activists on the islands and in the main cities of Greece.

In Chap. 4, Lorenzo Zamponi covers activism along the Italian migrant route. Second only to Greece, Italy is the 'country of first arrival' for many refugees who come to Europe by sea: in 2015, of the one million refugees that crossed the Mediterranean, 154,000 landed in Italy. Most came from sub-Saharan Africa (in particular Nigeria and former Italian colonies of Eritrea and Somalia), Syria, and Bangladesh. Italy is a provisional stage in a longer route, since its precarious economic situation makes it less attractive for migrants than the Northern European destinations. For these reasons, the most critical points from a humanitarian point of view are the borders: the sea between Italy and Libya—in which thousands of people have died in shipwrecks over the last few years—and the borders with Austria, France, and Switzerland. This chapter reconstructs, through the analysis of 20 qualitative interviews with pro-refugee activists, the different forms of action, solidarity, and organisation that have emerged during the 'long summer of migration' along the Italian migrant route, linking them to various opportunities and threats. The analysis focuses in particular on three aspects: the role of space, and in particular of the position along the route, in determining the conditions for activism; the relationship between the nature of reaction to emergencies that characterises some of these actions and the history of pro-migrant activism in Italy; and the dynamics between claim-based protest and concrete solidarity initiatives in this particular context.

Andrea Pirro and Chiara Milan analyse, in Chap. 5, the solidarity movements along the so-called Western Balkan route. At the height of the humanitarian crisis of 2015, the countries along this route presented diverging opportunities for mobilisations in support of migrants. We interpret these opportunities as consequential and, thus, interwoven at the cross-national level. Straying from causal accounts, the chapter addresses issues of temporality. The adverse context presented by the Hungarian case triggered mobilisations in neighbouring countries such as Serbia, Croatia, and Slovenia. The turning point was intelligibly offered by the erection of fences first along the Hungarian-Serbian, and then along the Croatian-Hungarian border—ultimate displays of a long-term war against multiculturalism waged by the Hungarian Prime Minister, Viktor Orbán. Therefore, while prospects for solidarity movements have been de facto exhausted in Hungary, mobilisations went on for longer in neighbouring countries. Despite the different opportunities provided by their contexts, solidarity movements along the Western Balkan route articulated similar collective action frames: their assessment of the problem, prospective solutions, and motivations delivered comparable themes throughout migratory flows into their countries. We reconstruct these mobilisations, pointing at their similar frames as well as the differences linked to varying political opportunities by means of 40 original interviews with collective actors engaged in solidarity activities.

In Chap. 6, Javier Alcalde and Martín Portos look at the organisation of citizen contestation around the refugee issue in Spain. In spite of the government's ambiguous positioning and the small number of asylum seekers arriving inside the Spanish boundaries, a strong movement of solidarity with the refugees developed within the country. However, the strength of the movement, its features, and the citizens' reactions were uneven. They dramatically changed from town to town in a context in which new political forces, especially Podemos and their coalitions, have made their way into many city town halls. Yet, to what extent does the presence of local-level allies determine the strength of a movement and the level of popular mobilisation? In order to address this question, we studied different regions and towns (Barcelona, Andalusia, and Galicia), each of them offering a combination of municipalities run by movement-related candidacies and others by more traditional forces. Based on 25

original semi-structured in-depth interviews with key informants, we contend that movement and new institutional actors often cohabitated amidst tension, with more symbolic gestures than real measures implemented by the network of 'municipalities for change' to meet activists' demands. Beyond the presence of local allies, the analysis of the hotspots of Ceuta and Melilla (two Spanish enclaves on the southern border with Morocco) pointed at the role that broader local-level changing political opportunity structures (institutional openness, repression) and the organisational milieu play in mobilisation dynamics.

In Chap. 7, Chiara Milan analyses the emotional basis of pro-asylum seekers' activism in Austria. Between 2015 and 2016, Austria received the second largest number of asylum seekers per capita in Europe. Most entered from the Slovenian border during the opening of the Western Balkans corridor. Despite having little or no experience in supporting refugees and finding themselves in a context characterised by a rather modest protest culture, ordinary citizens gave birth to grassroots groups with the purpose of supporting migrants striving to cross the border. Following the introduction of restrictive asylum and immigration laws in the country, they also organised protests to oppose the deportation of asylum seekers from the Austrian territory. The chapter explores the emotional dimension of collective action in support of refugees in Austria, and how it influenced the dynamics of citizens' involvement in solidarity actions and protests against the deportation of asylum seekers. Specifically, it focuses on the extent to which emotions and affective ties motivated ordinary citizens to take action and advocate on behalf of refugees in a context of largely hostile political attitudes towards asylum seekers. A sense of injustice grounded in feelings of compassion and humanity, as well as affective ties binding together protestors and migrants, constituted emotional resources that drove ordinary citizens to engage in pro-refugee activism. Drawing on ten in-depth qualitative interviews with citizens involved in pro-refugee activism in Austria, the chapter emphasises that emotions and affective bonds between refugees and protestors are prominent in explaining the engagement of citizens in solidarity actions in support of refugees, notwithstanding the overall unfavourable political opportunities.

Similarly, in Chap. 8, Jochen Kleres reflects on the importance of emotions in the mobilisation for refugees in Germany and Sweden. Both Germany and Sweden have been key destinations for refugees during the so-called refugee crisis and have taken on larger numbers of refugees during that period. Civic mobilisations are similar in both cases, featuring the emergence of so-called welcome initiatives. A primary focus of these initiatives has been to provide stop-gap help to incoming refugees, that is, chiefly attending to migrants' basic needs for food, clothing, accommodation, transportation, legal advice, language, and so on. In both countries, these are new entries into the field of pro-immigrant civic initiatives, adding to pre-existing interest associations, church-related, leftist, and—in Germany—refugees' self-organised organisations and mobilisations. Based on 36 in-depth interviews, this chapter charts these novel, welcome mobilisations in order to analyse their emotional bases in a comparative perspective that links emotional repertoires to political opportunities. Fundamental to this framework is the distinction of pity, compassion, and (political) solidarity as emotions of apprehending others' suffering. With Arendt, it can be argued that compassion and pity tend to depoliticise civic action, while solidarity may politicise activists. Applying this analytical lens brings into relief the extent to which welcome initiatives are politicised or depoliticised, operating more as political activism or humanitarianism. Both countries share a dominant subscription to the discourse of a 'refugee crisis'. This was a crucial context for many activists' and volunteers' experience and emotional response to the influx of refugees, triggering their civic action. Despite commonalities, Sweden and Germany differ with regard to the degree of politicisation. Comparing the two countries particularly highlights some of the social factors that give shape to the emotional bases of welcome civic action. For instance, a relative emphasis on nationalism in Germany fostered pity, while alliances with pre-existing left-leaning organisations in Sweden introduced an element of political solidarity into some welcome initiatives.

In Chap. 9, Javier Alcalde and Martin Portos discuss the scale shift within refugees' solidarity activism: from the mobilisation in Calais to the European level. The European states and institutions have proved unable—and even unwilling—to respond to the humanitarian crisis that

unfolded in relation to the figures of forcibly displaced people trying to enter the European boundaries. However, citizen mobilisations have emerged to fill this void, providing aid and putting forward alternative conceptions of 'Europe as solidarity', as opposed to the 'Europe as fortress' ideal. At the centre of this chapter is the research on Calais, a particular microcosm, which concentrates most of the contradictions of current migration and asylum policies. Part of the Schengen frontier, and with experience in receiving waves of asylum seekers in transit to the United Kingdom, this border town has since the spring of 2015 witnessed the development of a solidarity network of international (and local) activists. In the mobilisation, two groups played a crucial role in a process of scale shift: while the British activists contributed to the transnationalisation of the protests, the Belgian activists helped in bridging the domestic with the European level. To assess how conflict shifted from general to local settings and vice versa, we have conducted fieldwork in two different poles of tension, interviewing more than 30 activists in Calais and Brussels. In spite of their differences, we have observed recurrent patterns, processes, and dynamics: while many activists are highly committed, they face institutional closure at the local level. Paradoxically, while many local inhabitants are not sympathetic towards the demands of activists and the needs of displaced migrants, they in turn tend to be sensitive to the aggregate, humanitarian drama of forced migration. From a comparative perspective, the chapter links national and transnational opportunities to different aspects of the mobilisation, including its organisational dynamics, its repertoire of contention, and interactions with other relevant (either institutional or not) actors, as well as several framing issues. It concludes by exploring the challenges and prospects of some cross-national endeavours that aim at coordinated, locally spread initiatives.

In Chap. 10, Pietro Castelli Gattinara analyses the political discourse and grassroots mobilisation against migrants in Italy and France. The refugee solidarity movement took place at a time of widespread right-wing opposition to migrant arrivals. Waves of anti-refugee sentiment spread throughout Europe as the long summer of migration catalysed not only solidarity initiatives but also anti-immigrant politics by far-right parties, nationalist organisations, as well as local citizen committees against refu-

gees and refugee camps. To assess how the conflict escalated, this chapter provides a comparative empirical analysis of the rationale, nature, and form of grassroots mobilisation against migrants in Italy and France, two countries characterised not only by very different histories of migration but also by distinct conceptions of citizenship and national identity. We draw on 20 face-to-face interviews with key activists from Forza Nuova and Lega Nord in Italy; Réponse Laique, Les Identitaires, and Civitas in France; as well as several collectives and local committees that mobilised in opposition to the settlement of refugee camps in the two countries. Exploring anti-refugee mobilisation in terms of repertoires of contention and motivations for action, our analysis indicates that the crisis changed anti-immigration protest in both quantitative and qualitative terms. In both Italy and France, there was not only unprecedented mobilisation on the issue of migration but also a remarkable differentiation in the type of actors involved in the protests. If until recently far-right politics had been primarily a party phenomenon, the anti-refugee campaign today is also rooted in street mobilisation, as grassroots committees engaged in various forms of direct intervention in situations perceived as critical. Despite this diversity of actors, however, cross-national and cross-group convergence prevails with regard to the main mobilising messages, configuring the emergence of a wide-ranging anti-refugee movement that might influence the European public debate and attitudes towards migrants far beyond the current conjuncture.

If many civil society organisations and social movements have dealt with this issue by helping and supporting refugees and migrants in general, other political actors and counter-movements have jumped on the crisis to politically exploit what has often been publicly portrayed as an uncontrollable siege at the European borders. Andretta and Pavan's Chap. 11 draws on a protest event analysis conducted through Google News to detect the contentious dynamics triggered by the refugee crisis in Greece, Spain, and Italy. The data analysis shows differences and similarities in the protest fields in the three countries, mainly due to the level of exposure to migration trajectories filtered by domestic political opportunities: if in Spain, a very peculiar geopolitical situation minimising the migration trajectories resulted in few and basically pro-immigrant-oriented protests, in Italy the country's exposure to the migration trajectories during

the refugee crisis and the politicisation of the issue by right-wing parties and organisations combined to shape a highly contentious interaction between pro- and anti-immigration protest actors, both mainly targeting domestic institutions. The Greek protest field is found in between these two opposite situations, but a bit closer to Spain: on the one hand, the anti-immigration frame received little support from the protest field actors; on the other hand, EU institutions were the main target of the protests, especially after the EU-Turkey agreement.

The concluding chapter by Donatella della Porta summarises the empirical results presented in the previous chapters within a comparative perspective, with particular attention to locating them within previous research on migrants' movements. In light of the theoretical questions presented in the introduction, it first addresses the analysis of the political context, going beyond citizenship regimes and locating the protests within the transformation in capitalism in general and in late neoliberalism in particular. Second, it summarises the results related to the organisational structures of the campaigns, stressing the attempt to develop inclusive networks, but also the fragmentation of the mobilisations. Third, repertoires of action are presented, with particular attention to resistance and solidarity as acts of citizenship and therefore to their emergent capacity of empowering participants. With regard to the framing, the elaboration of specific meanings of solidarity is addressed. Finally, the chapter singles out some perspectives for further analysis.

Notes

1. In Naples, for instance, the mobilising slogan of the protest has long been 'The struggle pays off' (Baglioni 2012, p. 8).

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2

'We Have Become Refugees in Our Own Country': Mobilising for Refugees in Istanbul

Semih Çelik

Introduction

Since the beginning of the Syrian war in early 2011, Turkey has become one of the most popular departure points for Syrians who were forced to migrate—due not only to the relatively easy access to the border but also to the so-called open door policy practised by the Turkish authorities across the border. Until mid-2016, copious numbers of migrants entered the country and either stayed, or found ways to reach one of the Greek islands after a long and risky journey—although many perished. While the varying sentiments and reactions created by the movement of millions of migrants into Europe are well known, the story of Turkey and other non-European countries that in fact host larger migrant populations remained marginal.

In this chapter, I will analyse how the so-called refugee crisis, or the long summer of migration, affected pro-refugee activism in Istanbul. I will try

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not to overgeneralise my commentaries to the whole country, as thorough research on pro-refugee civic movements in Turkey, or even in Istanbul, requires longer and more detailed and comparative field research.

My arguments in this chapter are based on structured in-depth and non-structured interviews with a dozen activists and on my field observations in Istanbul over a five-month period from September 2016 to January 2017. Despite the relative openness of my interviewees, working on civic movements that support refugees in Turkey proved to be a challenge—not only due to the complexity of the pro-refugee movement map but also because of recent political developments in the country. The limitation of political space and suppression of all sorts of political activism after the June 2015 elections constantly intensified. The state of emergency declared after the coup attempt of 15 July 2016 has made access to activists in the field even more difficult. Under the state of emergency rule, even interviews with activists who clearly had a political agenda different from that of the government could easily become a document for further political criminalisation. Since the declaration of the state of emergency, (I)NGOs are under threat of being shut down by the government, and activists risk being criminalised from one day to the next (Heller 2017).

This is where the theoretical backbone of this chapter becomes a reality: as scholars of political opportunity structure have traditionally argued, political opportunities, meaning 'consistent but not necessarily formal, permanent, or national signals to social or political actors which either encourage or discourage them to use their internal resources to form social movements' (Tarrow 1996, p. 54), defined the possibilities for challenging groups to mobilise effectively (Goodwin and Jasper 2004). Under the conditions imposed by the state of emergency in Turkey, which can be defined as the disappearance of formal institutional structure in favour of informal procedures and strategies (Jenkins and Klandermans 1995), political opportunities were closed down, hindering political mobilisation, and those involved with unrecognised activism were 'criminalised'.

However, as critics of the literature on political opportunity structure suggest, opportunities are not homogenous, nor are activists devoid of agency. Activists and social movements, even under authoritarian regimes,

have space for manoeuvre in positioning themselves vis-à-vis the regime and other challengers. In other words, in the determination of the degree and scale of mobilisation, 'what matters is not only the extent to which social movements face an open or closed institutional setting, but also the extent to which their claims and identities relate to prevailing discourses in the public domain' (Giugni 2009, p. 364). Discursive opportunities allow activists to employ strategies within an institutional cultural context, even under highly limited political space. Furthermore, these discursive opportunities always have the potential to transform into 'specific opportunities', giving more agency to the activists in challenging specific characteristics of the existing regime. As Koopmans et al. (2005) argued, 'the specific opportunities for claim-making in the field of immigration and ethnic relations politics stem from the prevailing conceptions of citizenship and their crystallization in incorporation regimes'. Therefore, the cases here demonstrate that the relevance of discourses around refugeehood not only provided 'discursive opportunities', as they replaced previous discourses around identity formation and citizenship, but also related to specific opportunities, particularly around sociopolitical and economic status shared with the refugees.

Furthermore, I argue here for a more dialectic understanding of political power and structures. Indeed, the increasing repression of the Turkish state especially in the post-15 July period negatively affected opportunity structures. However, at the same time, it strengthened the bonds of solidarity among activists, triggering further mobilisation. As della Porta and Kriesi (1999) suggest, with globalisation, the inclusion of actors beyond national borders complicates how political structures affect social movements. Different movement organisations interact within these political institutions and with each other in a transnational space, within a heterogeneous 'relational field' (Goldstone 2004).

In this article, I argue that the complexity of the political opportunity structure affected pro-refugee social movement organisations in Istanbul. From the onset of the Syrian civil war until early 2017, short-term changes in the capacity and extent of democracy in Turkey affected political opportunities. In the first period, from 2011 to mid-2013—at a time when the refugee flow had not yet become a public concern—Turkish political structures were challenged through a wave of large-scale street

protests, mass hunger strikes in prisons, and critical discourses in various public spaces. In the second period, from mid-2013 until late 2015—during which most refugees entered the country—the political space in the country opened up, mostly thanks to the ceasefire between the Turkish army and the Kurdish guerrilla movement (PKK) and the feeling of empowerment fuelled by the Gezi protests. The third period, from late 2015 to early 2017, saw instead the closing down of the political space and the crushing of contentious politics led mostly by the Kurdish political movement. The state of emergency declared right after the attempted coup d'état on 15 July 2016 criminalised all political contention and allowed the government to repress political opposition. Focusing on the last period, however, I argue here that the political opportunity structures in the country were not the only determinant for the conceiving of new forms of claim making and mobilisation. In the coming sections, I argue that the pro-refugee movement organisations in Istanbul challenged the existing refugee regime and that they tried to employ transgressive contention strategies in spite of increasing political oppression. This was made possible through the framing of contention within a shared experience of refugeehood.

Framing Contention: Refugees and/or Refugeehood?

One issue to tackle when talking about 'refugees' in Turkey is who the refugee really is in the Turkish context—a question also addressed within the pro-refugee movements. Due to the geographical limitations put on the Geneva Convention of 1951 and the 1967 protocol by the Turkish authorities, full refugee status can only be granted to asylum seekers coming from European countries. Therefore, in its history, Turkey had granted refugee status to only around 60 people. The ambiguity of the category creates not only legal issues for the movements but also an issue of scale. Many pro-refugee movement organisations, and especially NGOs working in the field, define their activities in a larger framework of migration, some focusing on forced migration. That ambiguity was further complicated in 2013 with the granting of special protection status to migrants coming from Syria (Kutlu 2015). The majority of the

movements working for forced migrants/refugees since the 1980s, including those under scrutiny here, had to negotiate with the Turkish government to withdraw the geographical limitations and extend the ability to apply for refugee status to all asylum seekers regardless of their country of origin.

Beyond the legal context, the spatial distribution of migrants plays a key role in defining who the refugee is. Due to the lack of a coherent and applicable migration/refugee policy in the country, the state's initial plan to keep migrants within the confines of state-sponsored refugee camps failed. Although most of the Syrian migrants who crossed the border were settled in refugee camps in the first years of the crisis, the unfavourable conditions there resulted in the passage of refugees to urban centres in search of better accommodations, jobs, and educational opportunities. The concentration of around 400,000 (Fig. 2.1) refugees in certain neighbourhoods of the city that hosted mostly urban underclasses and working classes altered the functioning of these neighbourhoods and blurred the line between refugees and locals.

The question of who the refugee is becomes all the more relevant given the relatively long history of refugee flows into the country (the 1980s

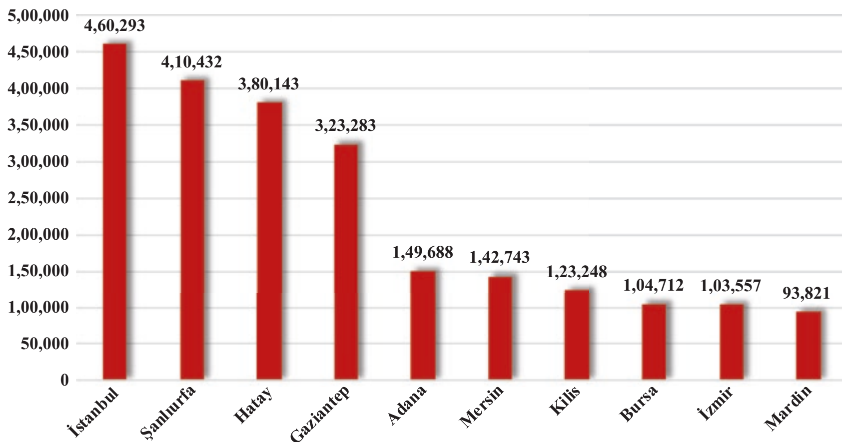

Fig. 2.1 Distribution of refugees in ten cities (02.02.2017—Source: Ministry of Interior—Directorate General of Migration Management website—www.goc.gov.tr)

experienced at least two major waves—from Iraq and Bulgaria) (Kirişçi and Ferris 2015). In addition, the internally forced migrations of a considerable number of Kurds since the 1990s from Turkish Kurdistan into the urban centres in the West of the country essentially made internally displaced Kurds into refugees. Against this background, the pro-refugee movement organisations under scrutiny here frame their field of contention more around 'refugeehood' than around a refugee status defined in legal terms. Refugeehood is understood here as 'the loss of an entire social texture into which [the rightless] is born and in which they established for themselves a distinct place in the world' (Arendt 2001, p. 267). Although many social theorists developed a concept of refugee equal to the 'scum of the earth' (see Owens 2009; Bradley 2014), refugeehood in the Istanbul context is not downgraded to mere powerlessness, to silence, or to a 'bare life' (Agamben 1999). Rather, it refers to a new political state through which political subjects that are otherwise separate social units (Rellstab and Schlote 2015) interconnect and renegotiate the conditions of citizenship, identity building, the right to have rights, and the relationship between state institutions and citizens.

The pro-refugee grassroots activist scene in Istanbul represents a shared political space in which refugeehood has become a unifying category, displaced and local alike. Instead of thinking of the refugee as a legal category, the activists in Istanbul identified themselves with the refugees (Ataç et al. 2016). The state of refugeehood has in the process become a reliable frame for building a movement identity and political contention under the political structures in Turkey. More specifically, the contentious politics of citizenship and identity formation that was long dominated by the Kurdish political movement is reallocated within the contention triggered by the politics of refugeehood.

The struggle for democratisation and extended citizenship rights was framed within the Kurdish movement between 2011 and 2015. In other words, the contentious politics of citizenship was 'Kurdified'. However, in the period under scrutiny here, a distinct identity and form of resistance through identification with the refugees was born. In addition to the impossibility of finding another 'distinct place in the world', the amount of rightlessness—or to put it differently, 'illegality'—defined through the state of refugeehood that the pro-refugee activists in Istanbul

shared with refugees challenged notions of nation-state, citizenship, borders, free movement, and globalisation at the same time. In the short fieldwork period, I witnessed the emergence of a new political space whereby new political subjects were born, negotiating 'citizenship in motion' (Mezzadra 2004). The activists suggest that they framed their activism within a space defined by motion, precarity, instability, but at the same time political resistance and contention—in other words, refugeehood as political struggle (Ataç et al. 2016).

Despite the ambiguities of the legal category of refugee and the focus on a state of refugeehood on the activists' side, it is a fact that 'refugee' as a concept has become much more widely used—part of the daily language of common Istanbulites and the citizens of Turkey—as the numbers of Syrian migrants increased dramatically (Fig. 2.1). The flow of refugees into Turkey started in September 2011. The relatively less intense state of the war lasted for around a year, triggering an influx of Syrian refugees into Turkish territories. As the Turkish government employed an 'open door' policy regarding the Syrian refugees, their numbers grew in a short period, from around 14,000 in 2012 to 1,500,000 at the end of 2013 (see Fig. 2.2). The intensification of the war in Syria—especially the

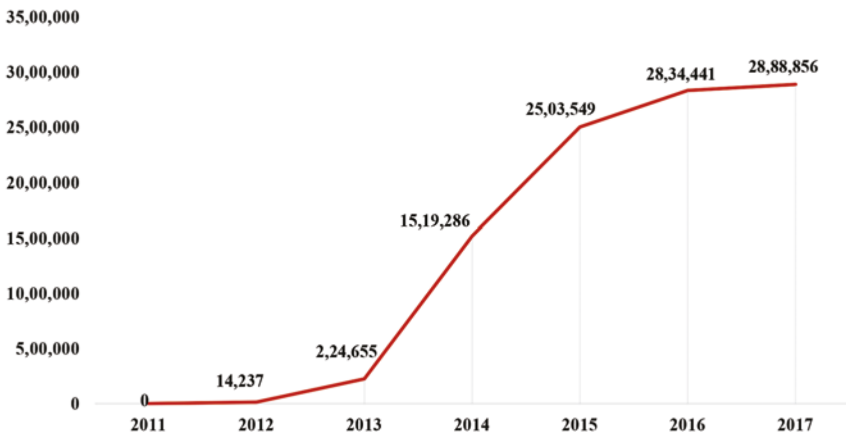

Fig. 2.2 Syrians under 'temporary protection' (02.02.2017—Source: Ministry of Interior—Directorate General of Migration Management website—www.goc.gov.tr)

massacres of Kurdish and Ezidi populations by ISIS—and the siege of Kobane in late 2014 created the main push for the influx of more than two million refugees into Turkish territories between 2013 and 2015.

The negotiations between the EU and Turkey started around late August 2015, eventually resulting in a refugee 'deal' aimed at preventing the flow of refugees into Europe, marking a period of change limiting and regulating the entry of Syrians into Turkey and their movement in and out of the country. During this period, sympathy towards the refugees peaked. After the approval of the 'deal' in March 2016, the dramatic increase in the numbers of refugees into the country came to a halt. This period (from mid-2015 to early 2016)—referred to as 'the long summer of migration' by the pro-refugee groups in Turkey—has become a milestone in the shaping of public opinion for and against the refugees, like their counterparts in Europe.

For or Against Refugees/Migrants?

Despite the 'welcoming' approach of the government in Turkey, the social reaction to the influx of migrants into the country was not homogenous. Nearly all my interviewees stated that the hundreds of refugees, who at times changed the ethnic and class composition of a whole neighbourhood, were not initially welcomed. Especially in certain neighbourhoods of Istanbul, the refugees were suspiciously contained. True, collective anti-refugee sentiments did not rise; but conflicts were widespread, moved by concerns for employment and by ethnic stereotypes (Kutlu 2015). According to a 'Refugees Welcome Index' compiled by Amnesty International, Turkish society was among the six least welcoming.[1]

Although discrimination and physical violence against Syrian migrants—especially in urban centres—are rarely highlighted in the media, xenophobia and anti-refugee sentiments have taken place publicly in discursive forms. Analyses of newspapers and other media prior to the 'refugee crisis' found language that was pejorative and based on depictions of refugees as sources of threat, criminality, economic burden, and sexual abuse. This language was commonly shared by the mainstream media (Yaylacı and Karakuş 2015). Furthermore, especially in its first

phases, the refugee flow was considered by the mainstream media as a flow of jihadists (Hurriyet Daily News 2013). Besides the anti-refugee sentiments expressed on a more discursive level, an online platform that observed and mapped human rights violations against refugees in Turkey has demonstrated that it was not uncommon to find labour exploitation, physical assault, sexual abuse, and other kinds of human rights violations against refugees, especially in the smaller urban centres.[2] Furthermore, a few NGOs have also reported on the discriminatory discourses in the field (İHD 2013; MAZLUMDER 2015).

However, the complexity of the political antagonism that has developed since the June 2015 elections makes it harder to distinguish human rights violations against refugees from those against the internally displaced Kurds and citizens from other ethnic and religious backgrounds. Looking at the newspapers and reports of human rights supporters, one may conclude that the problems related to the refugees have in fact been related to the state of refugeehood. As a report published by Human Rights Association (İHD) suggests, discrimination against Kurds was not limited to those who had come from Syria (İHD 2013). Similarly, in a letter to Ban Ki-moon, General Secretary of the United Nations, Co-Chairs Selahattin Demirtaş and Filiz Kerestecioğlu of the pro-Kurdish People's Democracy Party (HDP) stated that 'millions of Kurdish citizens of Turkey and more than a million Syrian refugees are living [...] under the conditions of conflict with chronic needs and constant fear' (HDP 2016).[3]

In this context, determining the activities, motivations, aims, and actors of pro-refugee movements becomes harder due to the fluidity of the political space within the almost yearlong period labelled as 'refugee crisis' in Europe. Not only the increasing numbers of refugees but also the formation of public opinion through conventional media and new media channels resulted in the transformation of the activist scene in the country, especially in Istanbul. However, feelings of enmity and fear towards refugees transformed into sympathy and 'neighbourship' [*komşuculuk*] within a year of their settlement in various neighbourhoods (Interview TU4). While sharing similar quotidian concerns strengthened the bonds between the locals and the newcomers, religion (Islam) and ethnicity (in the case of the Kurds) seem to have played a further role

(Kaya 2016). Beyond the cultural identification, sharing the same problems imposed by the state of refugeehood made it easier to join the struggle.

Despite the relatively sympathetic attitude towards refugees, not all such energy transformed into a movement organisation. A general glance at pro-refugee civic action in Istanbul suggests a complex and crowded map of social movement organisations and NGOs already existing prior to the long summer of migration—as well as new ones, although the actors usually remained isolated. Most of the NGOs and a few movement organisations were active in providing legal support to refugees in addition to psychosocial support, focusing on addressing immediate needs rather than actively challenging the existing migration regime. Most of these NGOs had weak ties with the formal national and transnational institutions and with each other—with the exception of İKGV, SGDD supported by UNHCR, and faith-based NGOs, which collaborated with the government offices (Kutlu 2015). These NGOs were already active before the 'crisis' and employed mostly contained contention (Tilly and Tarrow 2007).

Mobilising for Refugees in Istanbul: The Migrant Solidarity Network (MSN) and Mülteciyim Hemşerim!

The research conducted for this project focused on two main groups that were/are active in the network of solidarity initiatives with refugees. The relatively small number of groups under scrutiny is due to the difficulties in conducting structured interviews as a result of the closing down of the political space in Turkey, especially after the 15 July coup attempt and the following state of emergency, now in its second year. Not only the 'fear' of leaving a 'record' of one's political history behind but also the idea of 'betraying' the cause by objectifying it as part of an academic study seems to play an important role in the hesitancy of potential interviewees.[4] The two groups chosen (the Migrant Solidarity Network [Göçmen Dayanışma Ağı] and Mülteciyim Hemşerim! Network[5]) represent two different types

of groups present in Istanbul. However, in comparison to the pre-crisis organisations, they both aimed at employing transgressive repertoires of contention (Tilly and Tarrow 2007).

Several movement organisations that had existed prior to the crisis are criticised by activists of the two organisations for failing to create opportunities for contentious politics, as they 'lack the independent spirit' and their actions were limited by the political agenda of the funding authorities (Interview TU2). The most important effect of the long summer of migration has been the emergence of the actors that first and foremost aimed at challenging the existing migration regime in Turkey. Indeed, the value of action changed from an NGO-oriented one towards a more social movement-oriented perspective, from containing contention to transgressive contention. Given the political opportunity structures in the country, humanitarian intervention was monopolised by the state and by hierarchically organised groups with close ties to the state/government. The scepticism towards NGOs with links to the Turkish state pushed activists towards more independent, grassroots organisations. An example of this emerged during a forum on 24 August 2016 in a park in the Beşiktaş district, with actual and potential refugee activists. Most of the 60 or more individual activists participating in the forum expressed their need to find accountable movement organisations, with transparent structures, easy access, and participatory structures.

This need was filled mainly by the two movement organisations under scrutiny here. Founded in 2006 to follow a trial related to the killing of Nigerian refugee Festus Okey while he was under arrest in Istanbul, the Migrant Solidarity Network was one of the oldest pro-immigrant/refugee groups, not only in Istanbul but in the whole country as well. The movement is defined by its members as once the centre of all migrant activism: whether pro-establishment, Islamist, or opposition, anyone who dealt with migration issues in Turkey knew of MSN. By the time of this research, the movement was undergoing changes. Mülteciyim Hemşerim!, on the other hand, was a product of the refugee crisis and founded in late 2015 by activists previously active in urban movements. Both movements are organised horizontally, with decisions taken in weekly meetings open to everyone.

Why Act? Motivations for Mobilisation

As mentioned, the political space in Turkey became highly polarised after the June 2015 elections. Pro-refugee movements within that space did not work in full co-operation with each other, and conflict and competition defined the network. While the increase in the number of refugees during the 'long summer of migration' forced new actors to enter the field, the polarisation of the political space in Turkey, the need to take sides quickly, and the non-existence of hybrid spaces affected the formation of the pro-refugee activist space too. Pro-refugee grassroots movements developed in an antagonistic fashion, competing for survival in a rather competitive field (Kutlu 2015).

The motivations for activists choosing to be outside of such professional groups and NGOs were various. However, activists from both movements expressed their beliefs regarding the importance of the values attached to freedom of movement and to the political ideal of a borderless world. The main turning point for most of my interviewees and the activists who shared their opinions with me in an unstructured form was the prohibition for the refugees to move from Turkey to Greece in September 2015. On 14 September 2015, about 3000 refugees started walking, mainly from Istanbul to the Pazarkule entry point at the border with Greece. After a four-day struggle with police forces, the refugees reached Edirne, the border city with Greece, on 19 September. However, Turkish security forces blocked their passage into Greece, and the refugees were contained in parks and stadiums in Edirne. The refugees rejected humanitarian aid provided by various state-sponsored charity organisations and demanded their safe passage into Greece. During this event, the act of walking had become a way to challenge and protest the system; the refugees/protestors therefore called themselves Abiroun la Aksar/Bare Walkers.

As one activist explained, he decided to join the so-called Bare Walkers (*yalın yürüyenler*) to the border between Turkey and Greece upon seeing the refugees stuck in the main coach station of Istanbul (Interview TU1). The motivation for his decision was first and foremost an emotional state. Others expressed similar narratives regarding their sudden decision to join the struggle for refugees (Interviews TU2, TU3, and TU4). Most of

the activists who worked in the field had been involved with other forms of activism prior to the 'long summer of migration', but the scenes they encountered in various public spaces in Istanbul, and the stories they heard about refugees around the country, made them turn to the struggle for refugee rights.[6]

Other narratives hint at the further role of such chance encounters to be recruited in one organisation or another (della Porta 2006, p. 202). One activist (active in almost all groups in the field, whose only motivation to stay in Turkey despite the 'terrible' political situation is to bring all the competing pro-refugee movement organisations together) explained that she became active in the pro-refugee mobilisation after encountering Kurdish refugees in the border zone with Syria. Others also explained their commitment as triggered by their physical encounters with refugees in various parts of the country. One activist mentioned that 'seeing refugees and homeless people sleeping in front of train stations in the streets' in Italy was a critical experience in his mobilisation (Interview TU1). Similarly, a primary school teacher of Kurdish origins became an activist in the Migrant Solidarity Network/Kitchen out of—partially political—curiosity. He happened to go to the kitchen in his neighbourhood 'just to see what was going on there'. After that, he became one of the key activists of the Kitchen, known as a committed playmate for the refugee children.

Beyond the chance encounters, at a more strategic level, the activists shared the claim for a borderless world. However, the rising emotions towards refugees since late 2015 resulted in various contradictions in that regard. Although the majority of the movements in Istanbul criticise and campaign against the lack of a legal refugee status in the country, like the official ideology, they seem to consider Turkey as a country of transit, from which refugees were supposed to cross into Europe. In a comparative sense, this has become an important difference with pro-refugee movements in Spain, Germany, and Sweden that aimed at better integrating the refugee population into the society. Therefore, the pro-refugee mobilisation in Istanbul (and in Turkey to a certain extent) had a different motivation from many of the 'welcome' initiatives in Europe: namely, to facilitate the refugees' safe passage into Europe and to help their refugee

neighbours to survive until they could move elsewhere, while trying to force the Turkish state to accept all the points of the Geneva Convention.

However, and more importantly, pro-refugee mobilisation was not only related to the concrete problems of the refugees. The dynamics of Turkish politics prior to and during the refugee crisis has been equally influential in the direction of the mobilisation of activists. The closing down of the political space in Turkey after the 7 June elections in 2015, due to the escalating violence coming from ISIS and the Turkish state/army, has hindered the pace of mobilisation and the channels of participation in refugee politics in general. However, it has also created suitable grounds not only for the construction of alternative spaces in which the concrete needs of refugees are addressed but also for the creation of those that allowed for politics of refugeehood to be negotiated between the refugees and citizens. Activists have expressed their opinion on how their movement organisation (Mülteciyim Hemşerim!) attempted to join forces with their 'fellow neighbours' (i.e. refugees) to solve the problems they shared in the same neighbourhood. Therefore, the above-mentioned contradiction is overcome by integrating refugees or making them 'comrades' in an ongoing political struggle at the local level. In that sense, the border between activist and refugee is blurred. As one activist has noted:

> Many activists within the pro-refugee movement consider themselves as refugees. Due to their precarious and uneasy place within the society, they want to flee; flee with the same passion and hope [as a refugee would]. Well, we have become refugees in our own country! (Interview TU1)

While his comment on 'becoming refugees' is used in a metaphorical sense, the total closing down of the political space in Turkey due to the attempted coup on 15 July 2016—and the following state of emergency that remains in place today—spatially confined the political opposition, limiting its members' movements not only outside of the country but at times even more inside it. The limitations on movement from one city to another for political purposes anchored the activists to their own cities, and made it impossible even to imagine political protest or action in another city.[7] As an activist says, 'the movement *had to* remain native to *this place*' (Interview TU1).

Although the coup attempt on 15 July 2016 gave the Justice and Development Party (AKP) regime an excuse to suppress contentious movements and resulted in the closing down of the political space, the coup contradictorily gave activists motivation for further mobilisation too. For example, a group of about 20 people who defined themselves as active members of the Migrant Solidarity Network called for a forum on 24 August 2016 to gather all those who wanted to get involved with refugee activism, acting in solidarity thanks to the coup attempt. Although those 20 activists had gone as individuals to the No Border camp in Thessalonica in July 2016, the fear of not being able to return to Turkey because of the coup created stronger emotional bonds and solidarity between them. This feeling of solidarity within the groups expanded into broader solidarity with the refugees in Turkey once they returned. Thus, once again, the increasingly repressive and authoritarian political structures in Turkey played an indirect and dialectic role, hindering and fostering activism at the same time.

Therefore, the mobilisation of bottom-up initiatives in Istanbul was motivated by something that went beyond mere empathy towards refugees. The *experience* of refugeehood—of forcefully leaving one's own country, or not being able to go back, or having one's movements limited by force—seems to have played a crucial role in the establishment and strengthening of solidarity networks, in the way the contention is framed and repertoires of contention were set.

How to Act? Humanitarianism vs. Political Solidarity Action

An important characteristic of the pro-refugee activist field in Istanbul was the tension between humanitarian charity and political solidarity. This had already been a critical issue of conflict among the NGOs during the pre-crisis period. As the AMER (Association for Monitoring Equal Rights) representatives had complained in a forum, the aid groups and the NGOs working with or close to the government dominated the field and at times prevented the rights-oriented groups from actively participating in support work.[8] This was in line with the migration policies of

the AKP regime, which employed a cultural discourse built around the religious bonds between the refugees and the Turkish state. As Gürhanlı suggests, the humanitarian aid discourse was 'suggestive of the charity-based—rather than right-based—understanding of social support mechanisms that have come to define the social policies of the AKP regime' (Gürhanlı 2014). This split of the field has become a defining factor for the post-refugee crisis period. The cleavage between movement organisations that employed an Islamic discourse and those that took on a rather secular discourse towards the refugees was reflected in the conflict between humanitarian charity and political solidarity discourses. The separation is strengthened by the social and political fault lines imposed by the governing party in Turkey.

This dichotomy arises from the commercialised aspect of the humanitarian work. As one activist explains (Interview TU2), groups with humanitarian tendencies had to establish ties with professional organisations or corporations to find funding for their projects, and therefore lost the possibility of conducting independent work in the field. According to this interviewee, providing education, healthcare, and accommodation to refugees are the main objectives that defined this sphere of refugee support: he defines movements that focus on such issues as 'movements of goodness, of conscience'. Notwithstanding his professional activism in Amnesty International, he criticised the NGOs and 'humanitarian' groups for overlooking the fact that the rights to education, healthcare, and accommodation are part of a larger human rights struggle and that this is where the disconnect between the refugees and the activists/volunteers takes shape.

The same discourse was shared by activists of the Migrant Solidarity Network, when discussing where the network positions itself within the map of pro-refugee movements. The network was defined as a non-humanitarian movement, aiming at politicising migration through the politics of refugeehood. While only a few groups in Istanbul focused on refugee issues that go beyond mere humanitarian aid—implicitly defined as satisfying the immediate needs of the refugees—the distinction between humanitarianism and political activity, or the reasons why humanitarian aid is not political, is never explained clearly by the activists.

The fact that humanitarian aid is viewed in a negative light within the two movement organisations is reflected in many of the internal discussions. In one internal meeting of the Migrant Solidarity Network in late September 2015, one activist explained his position in a discussion regarding registering refugee children in the public education system—the main focus of Mülteciyim Hemşerim!, which was openly against humanitarian aid—as he stated: 'I don't want to be involved with such charity work! Besides, why should refugee children be educated in a colonizing language like Turkish!?'

Although both groups under scrutiny have expressed similar and strong opinions regarding humanitarianism and charity, it is not very clear what makes them claim that their activism is more political than others. During the four-month period of observation, the Migrant Solidarity Network organised workshops on how to use new media in protecting the human rights of the refugees as well as internal discussions on how to mobilise local resources towards a transnational mobilisation against the EU-Turkey refugee deal—while Mülteciyim Hemşerim! focused on a local level, providing toys, education, and immediate necessities to the refugees residing in four neighbourhoods of Istanbul. It can be argued that the impossibility of organising street protests and public demonstrations, especially under the state of emergency, confined the political activism that these groups sought in their discourse but not in their practices. The Migrant Solidarity Network's attempts at organising street protests against the exploitation of migrant child labour by multinational textile companies in the city centre, and the initiative of the Mülteciyim Hemşerim! of organising a workshop/forum on the same subject, failed due to security concerns.

The few occasions on which the shared discourse of rights-based political activism was transformed into concrete action occurred in late November 2016, after a group of refugees started a fire in the infamous deportation centre in the Kumkapı district of Istanbul. Then, 123 migrants fled the centre thanks to the fire—20 of whom were later caught by the police. MSN issued an online statement against the deportation centres, emphasising their position against the EU-Turkey refugee deal that increased the criminalisation of migration and demanded the closure of the deportation centres.[9] Similarly, the forum against child labour by

Mülteciyim Hemşerim! never took place—except in the form of a book that narrates the individual stories of children and adult refugee workers.[10]

How to Act? 'Touching' the Refugees

Ayhan Kaya argues that the possibility of interacting with locals has discouraged Syrian refugees in Istanbul from leaving for Europe, as they feared that they would not be able to maintain a 'cultural intimacy' there (Kaya 2016). This 'cultural intimacy' was valued on the activists' side as well, as they seem to have established 'intimate' connections with refugees from similar sociocultural backgrounds. Indeed, the issue of 'disconnection' from refugees formed yet another point of conflict and competition among the movement organisations. 'Touching' the refugees set the border between professional groups and grassroots, bottom-up initiatives. For some activists, work that 'does not touch' refugees is seen as less valuable in comparison to work that does.

The *yalın yürüyenler* [Bare Walkers] movement, which played a key role in the mobilisation of the movement organisations under scrutiny here, is defined by one activist as a critical moment that gave activists the opportunity to politicise refugeehood, as it allowed them to touch the refugees (Interview TU3). It was a moment that challenged the dominant conceptions of citizenship and national identities and borders. As another activist claimed, his choice of walking with refugees was first aimed at becoming part of the same experience, struggling together, and touching the refugees. In his view, a forum on the ongoing problems of refugees organised by activists and academics working in the field during the Bare Walkers' protest proved useless. For him, these people did not intend to 'touch' the refugees. Therefore, he decided to act on his own and join the walk (Interview TU1). Later, in one of the internal meetings of the Migrant Solidarity Network, one activist who was formerly active in the network but did not join the meetings for a long time stressed that she was surprised by the fact that the network 'does not touch' the refugees anymore.

Emphasising the contact between activists and refugees is indicative of the way in which the actors located themselves vis-à-vis refugees and other activists. 'Touching' as an act of solidarity had a lot to do with the social class and space formation of the movements. Acting in contact with the refugees, or as an activist has put it 'coming together with the refugees and doing something *with* them' (TU4), cannot be possible without working in the local neighbourhoods that host mostly lower-class/underclass residents of the city. Therefore, the choice of location and scale for the movements is understood in relation to their class formation. In this context, the MSN was openly criticised by various neighbourhood groups for its 'sterile' politics and for employing an abstract and rather top-down politics. Composed of activists living in the middle-class neighbourhoods of the city, and others coming from various countries, the MSN plays the role of a transnational movement organisation in which activists can easily become part of cross-border solidarity initiatives thanks to the social capital provided by their social class.

In contrast, the Mülteciyim Hemşerim! activists stated that they had no ties abroad and no non-Turkish citizen activists; in fact, the majority of the most active members did not speak English or any other European languages. The transnational space in which the MSN positions itself was criticised by the latter as being alien to realities at the neighbourhood level. The hierarchy between the local and the transnational was therefore related not only to responding to the problems of the refugees but also to the general characteristics of alternative political space in Turkey.

Turkey Becomes Syria: Refugees and Turkish Politics—Activists and Syrian Politics

The juxtaposition of refugee issues with the domestic politics of Turkey is based on a long history and social memory around refugees and forced migrants that flowed into urban centres, especially throughout the late 1980s and 1990s. However, pro-refugee activists in Istanbul were confused as to the Syrian refugees' position vis-à-vis Turkish politics. To put it differently, the political agency of refugees regarding Turkey's domestic politics was ambivalent. Activists on the one hand wanted to see an ideal

type of refugee that 'struggles' against injustices and inequalities with their fellow Turkish, Kurdish, Afghan, and Persian neighbours; on the other, they tended to treat the refugees as passive receivers without much political agency.

President Erdogan's declaration prior to the coup attempt in July 2016 that the government had been working on a proposal to give citizenship to Syrians suggested that in general the role of refugees in Turkish politics was controversial. Erdogan's declaration received a negative response even from among his supporters. The anti-refugee, xenophobic sentiments disappeared after the coup attempt on 15 July, and the discussion around what the status of refugees would be if they were to become Turkish citizens was put aside. However, the extent to and means through which Syrian refugees would participate in active political struggle in Turkey has remained an issue of debate in the movement organisations. The idea of including refugees in a 'No' campaign on the constitutional referendum on 16 April 2017, suggested by one of the most active members of the Migrant Solidarity Network, was criticised by another activist from the organisation as 'objectifying' refugees and putting their precarious state into an even more risky situation.

While the activists almost never mentioned Syrian politics as a determining factor in how the movement organisations are structured, debates around the reasons for the refugee flow and the war in Syria created conflicts among activists and movements at times. As an activist has suggested, one of the reasons that pro-refugee grassroots action in Turkey lost ground as of 2013 was the conflict within the Migrant Solidarity Network around the position of Assad in the civil war in Syria (Interview TU1). Those who viewed the Kobane resistance as a social revolution considered the civil war as 'the Syrian revolution'. Although seemingly more complex, the perception of the politics in Syria caused a break-up within the Migrant Solidarity Network and led to the formation of the Migrant Solidarity Kitchen in the same year. The divide between the 'Syrian revolution' supporters and those with anti-war positions continues today.

Conclusion: Constituting a New Political Space?

What can be said after this brief overview of the pro-refugee activist scene in Istanbul based mostly on two social movements? As an interviewee stated:

> I can say that the opposition movements in Turkey failed in supporting refugees and the refugee movement. Yet, we might need to read this keeping in mind the subjective conditions that the whole country is in. Opposition movements in Turkey have already been destroyed. That is a great obstacle for further mobilization. (Interview TU1)

One is tempted to take his argument as a fully satisfactory explanation. However, as I have tried to explain in this article, the political opportunity structure approach that he is hinting at does not suffice to grasp the story fully. The politics of pro-refugee mobilisation was not only determined by the numbers—as the flowering of pro-refugee grassroots movements does not coincide with the period of highest refugee flows—nor solely by the level of political repression. To the contrary, the period from mid-2013 to late 2015, which was characterised by an unprecedentedly high flow of refugees and low level of political pressure, saw less pro-refugee grassroots mobilisation than the period before and after. Starting in 2013, the map of pro-refugee movements was dominated by state-oriented NGOs and state institutions. It can be argued that the mobilisation of pro-refugee activists was instead related to the developments in domestic politics in Turkey and to the conceiving of new discursive opportunities. The period from 2013 to 2015 has been a relatively peaceful one thanks to the ceasefire between the Turkish army and the PKK. The particular focus of that period for activists was the destruction of ecologically sensitive zones in the country by the dam-building projects of the state and the Kurdish politics pioneered by HDP. Despite the dramatic increase in the number of refugees coming into the country and into Istanbul, neither the Gezi Park protests, nor the initiatives formed as a result, prioritised refugees.

The siege of Kobane at the end of 2014 and the consequent influx of predominantly Kurdish refugees into the country have not become the defining moments for the pro-refugee mobilisation either. The fact that new forms of claims making and contention developed especially during the second half of 2015 can be related to the delegitimisation of the Kurdish movement in Turkey following the break of the ceasefire with the PKK after the elections on 7 June 2015. The role of the HDP and Kurdish movement in general, in terms of deconstructing the existing citizenship regime, has been partially taken over by pro-refugee activism.

Pro-refugee activism allows to a certain extent for less antagonistic encounters with state and local governments, if not co-operation. Therefore, the transformation and reactivation of various pro-refugee groups in Istanbul since late 2015 are on the one hand related to the public visibility of refugees in the city, but on the other hand to the possibilities of channelling the energy arising out of the closing down of political opportunity structures, into a new discursive and political space. The need for both movements under scrutiny here to relocate themselves within that new space is representative of this trend. In this space, the politics of sympathy towards refugees transformed into identification with them, assimilating the refugees with the hosts in their state of refugeehood—and therefore employing specific opportunities. The need to 'touch' or establish cultural intimacy with the refugees or to reconstruct the refugee as a political subject was also part of the building up of a new political space: a space in which concepts of citizenship, nationality, and nation-states are renegotiated and challenged.

Interviews

TU1: Activist in the Migrant Solidarity Network. 28 September 2016, Istanbul.
TU2: Activist in Mülteciyim Hemşerim! 13 October 2016, Istanbul.
TU3: Activist in Mülteciyim Hemşerim! 13 October 2016, Istanbul.
TU4: Activist in Mülteciyim Hemşerim! 13 October 2016, Istanbul.

Notes

1. Amnesty International 2016. The index was prepared with a mixed methodology and an unequal selection of samples. While interviewees were selected from educated classes with access at least to higher education in most cases, the sample from Turkey was chosen among groups of less-educated individuals over 15 years of age.
2. Observatory for Human Rights and Forced Migrants in Turkey, www.ohrfmt.org
3. https://www.hdp.org.tr/en/news/from-hdp/letter-by-hdps-co-chairs-to-un-secretary-general-ban-ki-moon/8862
4. Members of the Migrant Solidarity Network openly stated their 'allergy' towards academics on various occasions.
5. The name Mülteciyim Hemşerim! is almost untranslatable. The movement's website translates it as the 'Refugees, We Are, Neighbours' Solidarity Network. The choice of such a vernacular name is not coincidental, as the movement's emphasis on the 'local' plays a significant role.
6. TU1 has been involved in activism since high school. He explains that before he joined the *yalın yürüyenler* and later became more active in refugee support, he was involved with environmental civic movements against the building of dams in various parts of the country. TU2 was an active member of Amnesty International's branch in Van (a city near the border between Turkey and Armenia). Although his professional work there was to a certain extent related to migrant Kurds and Afghan refugees, his transition to full-time refugee activist was due to the developments in late 2015. TU3 and TU4 were involved with anti-urban transformation movements in Istanbul before becoming actively involved in pro-refugee action.
7. The code of the state of emergency of 1983 and the statutory decrees issued during the state of emergency give the government and the mayors of each city the authority to prevent entry to or exit from any city. Although no example of prevention of pro-refugee activism exists, activists in other examples were prevented from entering cities and gathering in certain locations. For the example of Northern Forests' Defence, see http://www.kuzeyormanlari.org/2016/08/07/kuzey-ormanlari-savunmasi-ohal-engeline-ragmen-safaalan-koyu-sakinleriyle-bulustu/
8. See http://mavikalem.org/wp-content/uploads/Suriyeli-Mülteciler-Alanında-STÖler-Çalıştayı-Raporu_28.05.2014.pdf/, last accessed 31 July 2017.

9. 'About the Kumkapı Migrant Riot', http://gocmendayanisma.org/2016/11/20/kumkapi-gocmen-isyanina-dair/, last accessed 31 July 2017. Similar political action took place throughout 2016 and in the first months of 2017. For the statement signed not only by pro-refugee groups but also by a range of social movements from animal rights movements to children's rights groups and LGBTI groups in May 2016, see 'Do not Touch my Neighbour Press Statement', http://gocmendayanisma.org/2016/05/23/komsuma-dokunma-basin-aciklamasi-do-not-touch-my-neighbour-press-statement/, last accessed 31 July 2017. Another statement in March 2017 sharing the same political discourse over freedom of movement was issued and signed by MSN and Mülteciyim Hemşerim!. See 'Basına ve Kamuoyuna: #KOŞULSUZ HAREKET ÖZGÜRLÜĞÜ!', https://multeciyimhemserim.org/2017/03/07/basina-ve-kamuoyuna-kosulsuz-hareket-ozgurlugu/, last accessed 31 July 2017.
10. The report was part of the 2016 issue of the annual report of Adalet Arayana Destek Grubu [Support Group for Justice-Seekers], published since 2012. *İş Cinayetleri Almanağı 2016*, Istanbul, 2017.

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3

Solidarity in Transition: The Case of Greece

Leonidas Oikonomakis

Introduction

Between 2015 and 2016, about one million people (856,000 in 2015 and 95,000 in 2016 according to the UNHCR) passed through Greece on their way to Northern Europe. The vast majority did not intend to stay in the country but used it as an entry point to Europe; after a short period, they continued their journey. Most of them entered the country from its coastal border with Turkey, via the islands of the North Aegean Sea. Since December 2016, between 60,000 and 70,000 have been trapped in Greece as a result of the EU–Turkey agreement (19 March 2016) and the gradual closing of the borders; one-sixth of them are staying at camps—official and unofficial, open and closed—on those islands. At the same time, a very dynamic solidarity[1] movement (Refugee Solidarity Movement, or RSM) has developed, with 58 per cent of Greeks

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responding to a February 2016 public opinion poll that they had actively expressed their solidarity with the refugees in one way or another (Public Issue 2016).

In parallel, due to its intensity and scale, the influx of migrants became a key issue both for the European Union and for Greece, led at the time by a self-proclaimed left-wing government and also facing the largest financial and social crisis in its modern history. In this chapter, I argue that the reactions of both the European Union and the Greek government hugely affected how the populations moved around the country, and eventually how the solidarity initiatives developed. Due to the emergent nature of the issue at stake, those initiatives were heavily dependent on the Greek government's actions, which shaped the necessities to which they had to respond. The government, on the other hand, was heavily dependent on its immediate political environment and especially on the EU policies and priorities regarding the issue. As a result, the RSM did not have time to articulate a comprehensive strategy of its own.

During the first phase of the long summer of migration (spring–summer 2015 through 19 March 2016), the state (and the EU) was completely unprepared, thus leaving the space open for the RSM to 'take charge'. During that period, the solidarity initiatives attempted to facilitate the journey of the populations moving through the Balkan corridor. Once that corridor started closing (gradually from September 2015 and definitively on 8 March 2016) and especially after the EU–Turkey agreement was reached (19 March 2016), the people who until then had been *in transit* were immediately transformed into people who were there *to stay*. The state then also changed its stance, deciding to intervene and 'control' the field, reoccupying the 'lost space', and subcontracting NGOs to perform the actions previously covered by the solidarity initiatives.

During what I call the *second phase* of the long summer of migration (from 19 May 2015 onwards), the solidarity movements, in turn, adapted their interventions to the changing political environment. In the first phase, the geographical focus was the islands, the ports of Piraeus and Thessaloniki, and the Idomeni crossing; once the hot-spots were established and the majority of the refugees and migrants trapped in Greece were on the mainland, that focus shifted accordingly. Since the RSM was now excluded from 'reception' duties (Frontex took over) and the

provision of first aid on the islands (now covered by NGOs), its repertoires of action also shifted towards the promotion of a rights-based approach for people who were now *here to stay.* The RSM thus started to occupy abandoned buildings to provide housing and to highlight the need for an integrating policy, in contrast to the exclusionary approach represented by the hot-spots. It also focused on the issue of education for the refugees' and migrants' children.

I argue, therefore, that the Refugee Solidarity Movement (RSM) that evolved in Greece as a response to the long summer of migration was—like the people fleeing the war and the poverty it focused on—'in transition' and heavily dependent on the political opportunities available (or not). In the first phase, the Greek state (and the EU) left the space open for the refugees and migrants to move through the country; the RSM organisations tried to facilitate their journey, 'accompanying' the moving populations from the islands to the ports of Piraeus and Thessaloniki, until they could see them off at the crossing of Idomeni. With the closure of the Balkan corridor and the signing of the EU–Turkey agreement, however, political space was restricted for the Greek government, the moving populations, and the RSM. These migrant populations were now 'trapped' in Greece, while the RSM organisations were unable to access them due to the takeover by official organisations (state, EU, or NGOs). Therefore, the RSM shifted its actions towards a more rights-based, integrating approach focusing mostly on the issues of housing and education.

This chapter is based on ethnographic fieldwork on four islands of the North Aegean (Chios, Lesvos, Kos, and Samos), Crete, and three main cities of Greece (Athens, Thessaloniki, and Patra). Apart from numerous informal conversations with RSM activists, state officials, NGO workers, inhabitants of the North Aegean islands, and refugees and migrants, the research included 26 semi-structured interviews of between one and three hours each. The full list of interviewees is available at the end of this chapter (pseudonyms have been used). The chapter starts with an overview of the issue at stake and a presentation of the micro-dynamics that evolved at the entry points to Greece and the EU: the islands of the North Aegean Sea. It then introduces the issue of *memory* and how it was activated by the RSM, especially in regard to the 1922–1923 exchange of populations between Greece and Turkey. Further on, I present the organisations that

constitute the RSM, their decision-making mechanisms, their organisational structures, their repertoires of action, and how they evolved over time. Lastly, I present the main argument of this chapter: the fact that the solidarity that the Greek people and the RSM showed with the moving populations was subject to a triple transition and that it depended heavily on the changing political context.

Solidarity in Transition: An Overview

It is widely acknowledged amongst the activists I interviewed that the Greek society reacted largely in solidarity towards the moving populations, at least during the first phase of the long summer of migration. I argue that this solidarity has been—just like the populations it concerned—a solidarity in transition. Affected by several factors, structural and otherwise, it changed forms and geographies over the course of 2015–2016, depending on the changing political circumstances.

We can distinguish two phases in the evolution of the solidarity initiatives with their own temporal, geographical, and thematic characteristics. The first phase is from—roughly—May 2015 until the EU–Turkey agreement of 19 March 2016; the second phase is the one from the agreement onwards. The agreement itself played a central role in the evolution of the refugee issue, the movement of the populations, and the repertoires of action of the solidarity initiatives because it created two types of refugees/migrants with different kinds of rights: those who entered Greece *before* the agreement and those who entered *after* it.

The former would either manage to cross the borders before their eventual closure, or apply for asylum in Greece. Most had gradually succeeded in leaving the islands, and those who had not yet managed to leave the country found themselves in the major cities of mainland Greece waiting for their cases to be processed. The latter were mostly placed in camps, registered there, and trapped on the islands. Their cases are more complicated since, according to the agreement, they were supposed to be gradually deported to Turkey (European Commission 2016a). In addition, after the agreement, the estimated number of arrivals actually making it to Greece dropped massively, as we can clearly see in the graph below (Fig. 3.1).

Fig. 3.1 Daily arrivals to Greece. Source: UNHCR

At the same time, since February 2016, a number of *hot-spots* were established on the islands under EU pressure in order to process the registration and fingerprinting of the incoming refugees and immigrants. Established on the islands of Leros, Kos, Lesvos, Chios, and Samos, they have a capacity of 5450 people (European Commission 2016b). In December 2016, there were more than 12,000 people on the islands—more than double the hot-spot capacity. Most of the migrants, having no way to leave Greece, applied for asylum there. It is indicative to see the rise of asylum applications just after the agreement with Turkey (March 2016) (Fig. 3.2):

What is more, the EU–Turkey agreement also changed the government's position. Before then, and until the borders of the Balkan route started closing down, the Greek government had a rather open stance towards the solidarity initiatives, allowing them to substitute for it without obstacles. Several of the activists I interviewed also highlighted the fact that some of the new government officers had been their comrades in the struggles for migrant and refugee rights. They had even protested together outside the camps, asking for their immediate closure. Even before SYRIZA entered the government, during the first phase of the 'refugee crisis', the government entered a truce, a 'honeymoon period' with the RSM and other movements in Greece. The government did not obstruct the work of the RSM in this phase, and the movement did the work that the government was not able—or willing—to do: it facilitated the reception of the immigrants and refugees in the country, and their journey outside of it. As noted by Poseidon, from Steki Metanaston of Chania:

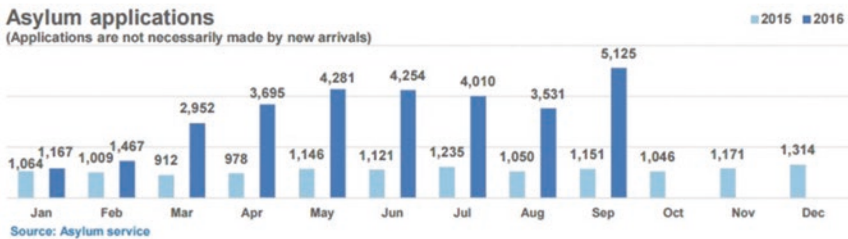

Fig. 3.2 Number of asylum applications to Greece. Source: UNHCR

> You can say a lot about the government. On the other hand though, the political discourse changed … there was a completely new discourse and it was diffused to the society. It was incredible, I mean, two boats arrived here in February, and the treatment of the Coastal Guard towards us was completely different. In the past they would not even let us approach, they were saying *You are from Steki? You have nothing to do here. Go to the lawyers' Union.* Now they welcomed us with 'open arms', together with a friend of mine we were taken by surprise. It shows that from one day to another things can change, if something changes centrally. (Interview GR15)

Of course the government also took advantage of the *refugee issue*[2] in its mediatic game. Aphrodite, who works in the government relocation office, cited the example of the first relocation from Greece, to Luxemburg. It was the first and last time that Luxemburg had opened up spots, but the Greek government rushed to exploit the fact mediatically:

> [Luxemburg offered] thirty spots! In short: *zero [compared to the number of people on the lists].* However, it was all done in a very festive manner, with Tsipras going to the airport etc. Those refugees who went there contacted us later to complain that [in Luxemburg] they are keeping them under horrible conditions, with chemical toilets, under bridges etc. (Interview GR5)

However, Themis—a lawyer–activist who now works for the government—emphasises that this was also part of the government's political game:

> What was going on in Samos is very characteristic. They were opening the door [of the hotspot]; the refugees would go out to eat pizza in the city and then after they would return to the camp to sleep. That is *illegal* and *informal* [interviewee's emphasis]. Or they were allowing the *solidarians*[3] to enter in order to distribute food. When the money started flowing in, what did they do? They locked up the doors and kicked out the *solidarians*. *They* decide how flexible to be. If we consider that we belong to the general solidarity movement, we have not managed to do any major crack, to enter somewhere and take it. We have substituted for the state, for as long as the state allowed us to, and for as long as it served its interests. (Interview GR2)

After the EU–Turkey agreement, however, the state took matters into its own hands and excluded the RSM from any access to the moving populations. The reception on the coasts was now being covered by Frontex and the Greek police, while only NGOs and official organisations could provide services in the camps. Most of the solidarity initiatives—being informal organisations and collectives—faced the dilemma of becoming official in order to have access to the hot-spots. Many decided to not enter officialdom, perceiving that they would thus legitimise the government's policies of closed detention centres. Themis noted:

> What Mouzalas (the then Minister of Immigration Policy) is doing now is very obvious. They follow deterring policies in order to move the people where the Ministry wants, cutting the access to information to everybody. [It is so] because it is not working for them otherwise, they need to implement right-wing policy, and in order to do that you need to do it silently, since you have criticised it so much in the past. (Interview GR2)

Small Islands, Huge Issues[4]

No matter how we decide to view the issue, we cannot fail to notice the central role of the places where people on the move would arrive first: the North Aegean islands. Due to their proximity to the Turkish coast, in some cases only a few naval miles away, Lesvos, Chios, Samos, Leros, Kos, Kastelorizo, and Kalymnos played a huge part during the long summer of migration. These islands became *borderlands*: liminal zones between countries and continents with their own peculiar dynamics (Agier 2016). However, the role they and their inhabitants played and keep playing has been very disproportionate to their size and capabilities: they are very small places, with their own particular, equally small local communities, in which the long summer of migration 'changed everything' (Papataxiarchis 2016a, b). To put things in perspective: according to the official data of the UNHCR, the biggest of those islands, Lesvos, with a population of roughly 86,000 people, saw 504,000 people arriving at its coast in 2015 and 95,000 more in 2016. The smallest,

Kastelorizo, with a population of roughly 500 people, had 3000 arrivals in 2016 alone.

As expressed by Ekavi, a local at Skala Sykamias in Lesvos:

> I dread the possibility that the same thing could happen again. How did we manage? Of course, later on the solidarity structures joined, but it was extremely difficult. … At first we started at the village level when the arrivals were few in May. To begin with, we all emptied our cupboards, our drawers, there were no clothes left. (Interview GR1)

In fact, until June 2015, when the solidarity initiatives and the national and international NGOs started arriving on the islands, the few inhabitants with their extremely limited resources and spontaneous improvisations became the (otherwise non-existent) 'welcome policy' for Greece and the European Union. Themis, a lawyer involved with the RSM for many years, told me:

> For me that was the most surprising thing. There was no structure, no network on behalf of the Government, even though it is supposed that there is some kind of continuity—ok in the structures at least—because policies change. Well, there was nothing! All this was set up on the islands in record-time. It is incredible to think that they [the RSM] substituted the Coastal guard, the hospitals, the food provision, it is unbelievable! And for me, it is also unbelievable to see how manipulatively the state acts towards the *solidarians*. We have seen that before on the islands: it uses you to cover its own voids and then there comes a moment when it turns against you. (Interview GR2)

Hector, an activist from Steki Metanaston (Migrants' Club) of Chania, Crete, also criticised the government's actions, characterising them as inadequate for the seriousness of the situation:

> Personally … I find the government's stance unacceptable, for a self-proclaimed government of the Left. Organizationally speaking it was incapable of meeting the basic needs of the people. For example, there were babies being born in the mud … you cannot escape your own responsibilities saying *we are in crisis—there's nothing we can do!* […] I also notice an effort

> by the government to use the issue of the refugees' arrival (*prosfygiko*) in its wider political game … so, the government does not drown them which is important—we should recognize that—but it is far from what you would expect from a government with a minimum sense of seriousness. (Interview GR3)

Apollo, a photographer studying in Lesvos at the time, believes that the government did not react at all, in an attempt to signal to the European Union that Greece could not handle the situation alone:

> Well … at first the state was not doing anything. The police were there when the boats were arriving and were doing nothing. They were saying: *We have orders not to do anything.* I think Tsipras was playing a game … to have a better bargaining card, to ask for money. Just like Erdogan did. (Interview GR4)

Other activists, while remaining extremely critical of the government, recognised that it was a new government without any experience in dealing with this issue, in the midst of a catastrophic financial crisis. Aphrodite, who works for the Relocation Programme, an EU initiative that started in September 2013 with the intention of distributing the refugees requesting asylum equally all over Europe, mentioned the inability of the few workers to examine all the applications, as well as the ineffectiveness of the programme which—being dependent on the (non-existent) goodwill of the member states—has failed to meet the demand for asylum:

> I joined in November 2015. We started with 13 people … I mean, we couldn't meet the needs. [The maximum we could do was] 30 cases a day! Then after they hired more people and now we are around 100 people and more are expected to join. But I still feel lost, even though more people came, because the workflow is increasing. (Interview GR5)

In any case, and for whatever reason, the state was considered absent from the handling of the 'refugee crisis', at least during its first phase. Stahler-Sholk (2001) notes that the retreat of the state—especially under neoliberal regimes—sometimes opens up 'new spaces' that can be

contested from below. This is exactly what happened with the refugee issue: having retreated, the state left a new space for action for the solidarity initiatives and the *solidarians* (*allileggyoi*), as they are called in Greece. Orion, an activist from Diktyo (Network for the Protection of Political and Social Rights), noted that the refugee issue became the field for activists who were disappointed with SYRIZA—which they considered as having betrayed the results of the bailout referendum of July 2015[5]—to reactivate themselves:

> Half of the ex-SYRIZA-youth branch who left the party after the referendum and were for some time demobilized, eventually joined City Plaza—an occupied hotel that emerged in Athens in order to host refugee and migrant families—and assist here now. (Interview GR6)

Talos, from AK Athens (Antiracist–Antiauthoritarian Movement), agrees that the grassroots movements in Greece were also reactivated thanks to the occupation of a number of buildings that were squatted in order to host refugees and migrants:

> I want to mention something here. The movement was at a moment of *low-tide*, and the squats brought a *high-tide*. The movement was weakened, and the squats put the people back into a political process …. (Interview GR10)

The solidarity initiatives (and some NGOs) took on the responsibility to save the refugees and migrants from drowning, bringing them safely on land, receiving them on the coasts, providing them with clothes and sanitation services, sheltering them for as long as necessary, and providing them with information. In addition, the RSM activists accompanied them to the registration offices and provided translation services, ran a huge solidarity campaign all over the country in order to attract human and other resources, and activated their already existing national and international networks, or initiated new ones for the needs of the campaign. They also organised events (festivals, public talks) in order to acquire resources and propagate their positions.

The Ghosts of Smyrna

> I'll tell you a story, an incident during which I said: *Panayia mou* (Mother of Jesus) *this is what Smyrna (must have) looked like!* […] I went to the tavern and on the tables I saw children ranging from months to 5–6 year-olds. Cries, shouts … I went mad, I said: *What's going on? A boat full of children only?* […] Nobody had an answer. After a while, I saw … mothers, only mothers. Shouting, crying … and rushing to the kids! I went to a corner and I burst into tears. I said *Oh my God! Smyrna! Smyrna! The refugees of Smyrna!* (Interview GR1)

The above story was narrated to me by Ekavi,[6] a local woman from Skala Sykamias—'the informal gate into Europe' as Papataxiarchis calls it (2016a, 5)—during my fieldwork in Lesvos in the summer of 2016. She was referring to the influx of Greek refugees from Turkey to Greece that took place in 1922 and 1923, and was marked—at least in the Greek historiography—by the pushback of the Greek army by Kemal Ataturk's troops and the burning and looting of the city of Izmir on 13 September 1922. A great number of Orthodox Christians who had lived in what was until then the Ottoman Empire urgently fled to Greece, mainly through the islands of the North Aegean. The event is known in the Greek collective memory and historiography as the 'Asia Minor Catastrophe', or *Mikrasiatiki Katastrofi*, with the Catastrophe of Smyrna being an emblematic incident. In total, in the subsequent exchange of populations, more than two million people shifted from Greece to Turkey and vice versa, based on their religious identities: the Orthodox Christians of Turkey were deported to Greece and the Muslims of Greece to Turkey (Clark 2006).

According to the activists' perceptions, today's solidarity is partially rooted in the collective memory of refugee experiences of the Greek people, mostly with regard to the above events. The routes used by the refugees at that time were the same as the routes their modern counterparts now use, central amongst them the passage to the islands of the North Aegean. As a result, many of the modern-day inhabitants of the islands (and of course of mainland Greece as well) are first- or second-generation descendants of those refugees. Their own family history became a big emotional incentive that impelled them to express their solidarity with

today's refugees. For example, Ekavi's Skala Sykamias (in contrast to Sykamia itself, higher up on the mountain) is a refugee settlement. She emphasised that the people of Skala all helped the refugees in one way or another: 'In the shops that didn't help, nobody is from Skala. They are from above (Sykamia). From Skala the majority helped' (Interview GR1).

Plato, an activist from *Allileggyi Samos*, also emphasised the refugee origins of the locals and its role in the modern 'refugee crisis':

> These people are being hunted, just like our forefathers, and you know the forefathers of a number of today's inhabitants of Samos (Samiotes) came from Asia Minor. There is a sensibility in the Greek people for historical reasons, which is expressed when it comes to today's refugee issue. We can easily relate ourselves to it, because we know that our grandfathers were in the same position. (Interview GR13)

An activist–lawyer involved with the refugee issue in Patra also related that he went to help in Idomeni on the Greek–Macedonian border; when they made a call for food, a truck full of provisions arrived within a few hours. When he asked, astonished, how that had happened, he was told that the nearby villages were *prosfygika* (refugee villages) whose residents know what *prosfygia* (the state of being a refugee) means.

The same is true for Crete which, given its geographical position, did not receive refugees; activists there mostly focused on the collection of goods and money to be sent to the islands, Piraeus, and Idomeni, where they were needed most. These activists also activated *memory* in their campaigns. In 1897, as a result of the Greco–Ottoman War, Crete ceased being an Ottoman province and became an autonomous one. As a result, many Cretan Muslims had to abandon the island, seeking refuge in Al-Hamidiye in Syria, where the Cretan dialect still survives. In an ironic twist of fate, descendants of those Cretans were now leaving Syria. Activists from the Steki Metanaston in Chania emphasised that fact in their campaign:

> We were using a lot a small video that we made. People from Crete had gone to Syria as refugees. … We are talking about two generations ago. I mean, there are vivid memories inside the families. (Interview GR7)

The activation of memory was therefore crucial in producing empathy amongst the Greek people towards the refugees and immigrants; for as long as they were just crossing through Greece, at least, solidarity was hegemonic in the public discourse.

Solidarity

Like everywhere else in Greece, *solidarity* was the hegemonic frame on the islands of North Aegean. It is indicative that on at least three of the islands where I conducted fieldwork (Kos, Samos, and Chios), there was at least one solidarity initiative called *Allileggyi* (solidarity). Orpheus, an activist from Chania, Crete—a city very far from the refugee route—remembers:

> In Chania we were surprised; we saw the same processes like in the rest of Greece. We did not see any racism, any enmity—neither from the side of the state right?—at the local level, which was very beautiful. We were astonished. It was solidarity, it wasn't '*get out of here you stinky bastards*', it was not fear. Of course, considering that the refugees did not want to stay, just to pass through Greece. … In the political dialogue in the city, the battle had been won. The fascists had disappeared—even though Golden Dawn is present in the city. (Interview GR7)

This spirit of solidarity was dominant on all islands with the exception of Kos, where the mayor was very negative towards the refugees from the beginning, sabotaging the efforts of the local RSM organisations.

Economic Exploitation

Nevertheless, during my fieldwork I also heard stories of economic exploitation of the people on the move by the local businesspeople and other intermediaries. Musaferat, an anarchist collective from Mytilene, Lesvos, published a booklet describing how the shops on the portside of the city started selling camping equipment, kiosks began selling halal food, and at least 5–6 new travel agencies suddenly appeared with signs

in Arabic, selling complete travel packages all the way to the crossing of Idomeni (Musaferat and Πρωτοβουλία για την ολική άρνηση στράτευσης 2016). Dionysos, a coffee shop owner in Mytilene, told me:

> Here new bars have opened up, great financial investments were made. But now that the refugees are gone, these places cannot be sustained. Now they use racist terms openly in Molyvos,[7] and say that the immigrants stare at the female tourists and scare them. But on the other hand the same people say that Lesvos needs to be promoted as the island of solidarity. [That is] hypocrisy! (Interview GR8)

I also heard stories of locals charging ridiculous prices for bottles of water, or in exchange for transportation from the coasts to the main cities. In Samos, Hera, a member of Allileggyi Samos, remembers:

> Then, people were going out a lot and were consuming a lot. All the *menus* were in Arabic and there were always new arrivals. The hotels were full … and that had brought new life to the local market. Vathy[8] was very lively! (laughter) They were making money, there was exploitation. (Interview GR9)

In general, according to the activists' accounts, the refugees 'extended the tourist season', which normally lasts from April to August and, especially in the beginning of the first phase of the refugee issue, brought a heavily needed financial injection to the crisis-ridden islands. The locals were showing their solidarity in any possible way; however, there were cases of exploitation of migrant needs in order to make profits. Apollo narrates:

> There was lots of exploitation. For example, I remember a family arrived to our house and offered us 300 euros just in order to sleep over for one night. Of course I didn't accept the money, because I have some kind of [ethical] consciousness but if they offered that money to me, they certainly did so to others too. And I am not sure those others wouldn't take it. Not to mention the locals with their motorbikes, they would charge 50 euros for a ride to the city. Or the motors of the boats they took, or the petrol, loads of petrol. … Here there is a Chinese shop. They brought camping tents. Well … the gypsies would buy one tent for ten euros and sell it for thirty, or fifty. (Interview GR4)

Time and Containment: When the Island Becomes the Camp

With time however, everything changed. The wealthiest refugees and immigrants, and the lucky ones who had arrived in Greece before the EU–Turkey agreement, managed in one way or another to leave the islands and the country, continuing their journey to Northern Europe. The unlucky ones, those arriving after the agreement, were trapped in Greece. As if this was not enough, specific government policies[9] delayed their transfer to Athens and other cities on the mainland and obliged them to stay on the islands for an indefinite period. First, they were kept in *hot-spots*, prohibited from leaving, for up to 25 days. Afterwards they were allowed to leave the hot-spot, but not the island, until they could get an appointment in Athens to be interviewed and their asylum/relocation application examined. During the period of my fieldwork, the shortest waiting time for an appointment in Athens was four months. Thus, even after being released from the hot-spots, the refugees/immigrants continued to be contained on the island: *the island itself became a big camp*.

Even if those people had some savings, they slowly spent them, while the insecurity of their condition had negative counter-effects both for them and for the local communities. As I was told by Dionysos, an activist of Musaferat in Mytilene, Lesvos:

> Now the people are tired. They've been here for more than two months, since March. The money is running up, whatever was left of it. Because you see, before, the Syrians those who came first had money. (Interview GR8)

Hera remembers that in Samos as well, refugees were very welcome in the beginning because they were also perceived as *consumers*:

> When they put the containers that they brought in order to shelter the people in the port, the Commercial Union protested because they would be away from the commercial center [and they could not consume]. And now they think that it is unacceptable if the refugees walk where the tourists do or if they swim in the same sea. (Interview GR9)

Pericles, an activist of Lathra in Chios, draws a similar picture, arguing that now that the refugees' savings have been exhausted, things have become much more complicated on the islands:

> Things were going smoothly up until the (EU-Turkey) agreement. By 19–20 April the island was empty, there were only 30–50 people left, just because they had financial issues and could not leave. … Today there are more than 2500 people trapped here. There is financial and psychological exhaustion and that has implications for the local community: … lately criminality has increased, they are exhausted financially and they are forced to steal. I am talking about the Souda area (an open camp in Chios) where they open up cars, they look for money … these phenomena are to be expected when people are packed up for a long period of time without knowing what to do. (Interview GR11)

Movement–Countermovement Antagonism

With time, and as it became obvious that there was no specific policy plan for the refugees and migrants on the islands, insecurity led to refugee protests. Often they would riot inside the camps, occasionally burning documents and desks, just to make some noise and attract attention to their condition. Giovanni, an Italian NGO worker in the camp of Moria in Lesvos, told me regarding the camp:

> It is horrible in Moria. You hear many stories, even of sexual harassment. There's the army, the police. … They [the refugees] will rebel and they will burn it and they will be right! Also, the cops are *administrative cops [meaning bureaucrats]*, and they are scared. When something happens they are the first to disappear together with the NGOs. (Interview GR12)

Sometimes they also organised protest marches in the main cities, and in some cases they also occupied the main ports for days, in an effort to attract attention to their condition and demand a solution—in Chios, even forcing the ferry to change port for the duration of the occupation.

For an island, the port is what connects it with the outside world and allows the flow of people and goods. Its occupation is therefore a major

disturbance for the locals. The same is true for the presence of thousands of people on the island without any prospect of a solution. Therefore, the locals also complain and protest. The usual repertoires of protest include gatherings around the municipal buildings and petitions demanding that the newcomers go away. There have also been attacks in the open camps, with Souda in Chios being burnt at least twice. In addition, there is an effort by right-wing and *neo-nazi* organisations to take advantage of the situation. Golden Dawn has started building nuclei both in Lesvos and in Chios, and it is not unusual for Golden Dawn deputies to visit the islands. In Leros in July 2016, patrol groups formed on behalf of the locals who were patrolling the island attacked and threatened to enter the local hot-spot. Some attacks and beatings of refugees were also reported, while verbal fights between pro-refugee activists and anti-refugee locals have also now become regular phenomena.

The 'Solidarians'

Katerina Rozakou (2016, p. 187) writes that in Greece in recent years, we have witnessed an interesting grammatical–ontological shift: the word *alliléggios* (solidarian) has changed 'from an adjective to a noun', meaning a *person* (not just the *action*) who is in solidarity with somebody else. For Rozakou, this grammatical shift signifies the radicalisation of solidarity in the social spaces where it is being practised. The movements that were activated during the 2015–2016 long summer of migration in Greece predominantly used the concept of s*olidarity* in describing their actions, and their activists are called *solidarians* (*allileggyoi*)—in contrast to the *Mikiades*,[10] the professional NGO workers who also became key actors in the field. The activists of the RSM can be divided into two categories: the *older actors*, who have been part of the Greek antiracist movement for years, and the *new actors*, groups that were formed in response to the 2015–2016 'refugee crisis'. They all are rainbow coalitions of several groups of the institutional and extra-parliamentarian Left and the anarchist spaces of Greece, who agree on the *minimum* of acting in favour of refugee/migrant rights and against racism.

The largest of those coalitions, Diktyo (Network for Social and Political Rights), has a countrywide presence and included a strong contingent of SYRIZA activists in its ranks until SYRIZA came into government and gave in to the Troika's demands. Others, like Steki Metanaston Chanion (Immigrant's Club of Chania), Antiratsistiki Kinisi Thessalonikis (Antiracist Movement of Thessaloniki), or Lathra (Chios), have a more local character and focus on actions in their immediate environments/cities. Over the course of the long summer of migration, new organisations were formed, mostly on the spot by the local communities themselves; there was also the case of Platanos, again a coalition organisation that was formed in the summer of 2015 at Pedio tou Areos Park in Athens in order to be sent to Lesvos and assist the locals in their reception efforts. It is interesting to note here that most of the new groups that were formed on the islands were called Allileggyi (solidarity) which is indicative of the dominant, hegemonic position of solidarity within the Greek society with regard to the issue: just a few examples are Alilieggioi (Solidarians) Chios, Allileggyi Samos, and Allileggyi Kos, while Lathra's sub-name is Coalition of Solidarity of Chios.

In a way, the presence of the refugees in their local communities and spaces is what gave birth to the majority of these organisations—not so much on ideological terms, but rather as a matter of addressing pressing needs. However, along the way, their participation in the groups' actions did politicise and radicalise the activists as well. As clarified by Patroclos, an activist of Prosfygi, a group that used to be active in Lesvos but no longer exists:

> Look, I could tell you two versions [of why I got involved] and then you choose which one to keep. The first has to do with the injustice of all this. Why do they keep these people in camps? Detained? I never understood this! It is extremely unfair! But that's *not* how I got involved. On the other hand, when I came here to study, I found the people I could be on the same line with. And, in my friends' circles, the refugee issue [*prosfygiko*] was central. It was all around me. In a way it found me, and it was impossible not to get involved. […] Through the *refugee issue*, I was formed as a person, I formed my discourse, I could now stand in wider audiences and defend my positions. (Interview GR19)

Activists from pre-existing organisations pointed in a similar direction: what motivated them to join the RSM was necessity. In a way, the 'issue of the refugees and migrants' found them, not vice versa: they felt that they had to do something about it. Both Lathra and Allileggyi Samos were formed when the locals noticed the presence of immigrants and refugees, locked up in buildings on their islands, and felt the need to address it. Pericles emphasises that when Lathra was formed in 2001, the refugees it was dealing with were mostly from Palestine, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq, and events always escalated when there was a war in the region (Interview GR11). Diktyo also got involved with the issue of protecting the rights of the—mostly Albanian—migrants who started entering Greece in the early 1990s and faced social exclusion, racism, and exploitation. Other organisations, like Steki Metanaston Chania, were formed as a by-product of the Greek Social Forum by activists who saw the need to do something about the immigrants and refugees in Greece at the time.

The new organisations have a more diverse activist background, with people from different political spaces who felt the need to act. Especially on the islands on which refugee arrivals were a new occurrence, there had been no previous need for such organisations; they were established in response to the 2015–2016 refugee crisis. In Kos, for example, as noted by Socrates, a local teacher and member of Allileggyi Kos:

> We did not have any previous experience. It is difficult to have such experience living in Kos so we tried very hard to organize everything. The people stayed long here, because the identification was a long process, we would get to know these people, we would be with them for 15–20 days or more. Minimum there were 200 people, we also got to feed 500–600 even 1000. Slowly the populations started increasing in the city, officially they were talking of 7000. (Interview GR20)

Decision-Making and Organisational Structure

In terms of structure, all of the organisations I studied are horizontally organised: they are coalitions of various actors, and the ultimate decision-making body is the assembly. The assembly is typically made

up of activists, although in organisations like City Plaza Hotel and Notara 26, the refugees and immigrants also participate and are politicised in the process. In the case of Platanos in Lesvos, some locals also participated in the assemblies, an experience that they found life-changing. Ekavi, a member of SYRIZA Lesvos who was used to more top-down decision-making structures, was impressed by her participation in Platanos' self-organised initiative:

> Open assemblies! Clear and transparent things, the finances, everything! At some point I told them: *So aren't we going to vote?* And they said: *We don't vote here.*
>
> —So, how are you taking decisions? Directly democratically? But too much democracy harms, I was saying. We would gather making a circle, of course it is a slow process, many people, there were times that we were 50–60 people. *A 60 people assembly*! [interviewee's emphasis]. (Interview GR1)

Clearly affected by her first self-organised experience, she told me later, during the last days of Platanos in Skala Sykamias:

> Platanos came in October. I went for a walk to see. *That's where I got to know solidarity. What solidarity (really) means* [her emphasis] Platanos for me was what I was looking for. The volunteerism I wanted … what solidarity *really* means. To help each other. (Interview GR1)

In the squats that were hosting refugees, the same decision-making model was used: all issues were discussed in a horizontal and directly democratic assembly, and all the decisions were taken there. An activist from Notara 26 squat told me that at first, it was difficult for the refugees and immigrants to get used to this new decision-making process: 'they were used to more authoritarian regimes, especially for the women it was difficult to break the logic of patriarchy'. However, with time they adapted and participated in the common assemblies, also forming their own.

During the second phase of the long summer of migration, the government demanded that the solidarity groups register themselves officially, requiring them to be institutionalised and formalised in order to act in the camps, for example. Until then, most of them had been informal

organisations. There was internal disagreement within many of the organisations regarding whether or not they would do so. Most of them did not, unwilling to 'legitimise' the government's closed camp policy. Others did, thinking that they would thereby be able to continue helping, despite their disagreement with the government's policies. However, despite their officially hierarchical structure, even those who became formal organisations maintained the horizontal, assembly logic in their decision-making processes.

Actions

With regard to repertoires of action, again we must make two distinctions: one between the pre-existing organisations and those that were set up in 2015–2016 and the other between the first and the second phases of the current 2015–2016 'refugee crisis'. The pre-existing organisations were mostly focused on organising events and performing actions of a political nature that would highlight the political dimensions of the refugees and migrants. They challenged the concept of the border, advocated for human rights, and highlighted the reasons behind the refugee influx. They would organise antiracist festivals in their cities, produce leaflets and press releases, and mobilise to assist refugees and migrants whenever they had issues with the authorities. Some would also maintain their own spaces, *Stekia* as they are called, which are multifunctioning self-administered places where they could organise activities from social events to English and Greek classes. Protests and marches were also organised, especially in response to racist incidents against immigrants and refugees. In short, their actions were mostly focused on intervening in the public discourse.

With the intensification of the arrivals, both pre-existing and new organisations had to focus mainly on meeting the needs of the refugees and immigrants. With the domination of solidarity in the public discourse, the solidarity initiatives could leave aside the sensitisation of the public and focus on the most pressing necessities of the incoming flows of people. After the EU–Turkey agreement, when both the local communities and the refugees and migrants started being exhausted with the

situation, solidarity started to fade away as a dominant frame, and the movements realised that they had to get back to advocacy work. At the same time, the more humanitarian aspects were now taken over by the NGOs, or the 'professionals of the story', as one of my interviewees described them.

The Privatisation and Institutionalisation of Solidarity

> At some point there were so many volunteers that if you would go to *Bobiras* (a local café) and say *I need volunteers*, for sure 3–4 would raise their hands. It was like Erasmus!

This is how Giovanni, an Italian NGO worker, remembered the influx of volunteers in Lesvos during 2015. 'They all came with crowdfunding', he said:

> When I first came here there was one from Canada I think who would leave in two days. So he took out 300 euros just like that and gave them to me, and he said go offer them wherever they are needed. He had crowd-funded them. Or some American—if I am not mistaken—ladies, who were distributing toys at the port to everyone! It was crazy! (Interview GR12)

Since the intensity of the arrivals took everyone by surprise, the locals were the first to organise themselves to deal with them. They came together around the pre-existing organisations that had some kind of expertise on the issue, and where those did not exist they formed new ones. They slowly entered the relevant networks and asked for help from the mainland and abroad. The first volunteers did not take long to arrive. Socrates, from Allileggyi Kos, remembers:

> During that time the NGOs and others arrived. … At some point however, they were distributing so much food to each refugee that you needed two days to eat it. 4–5 fruits, three sandwiches etc., and there were so many volunteers from the NGOs that in the end every refugee would have a butler! […] Here, there were 22 organizations. (Interview GR20)

In Lesvos, there were more than 80 NGOs. Themis, who has long been involved with the issue, emphasises that while some of the organisations were known to the Refugee Solidarity Movement, many of them came for the money, since Lesvos and the other islands of North Aegean were now on the 'humanitarian crises map':

> If you exclude a couple of NGOs that we knew from before, who had a stable presence … did not just smell the money and come … some appeared out of nowhere! Even though I have worked for NGOs for years, I am very cautious regarding the role they play. (Interview GR2)

In general, while the activists I spoke to recognised that one should not generalise about the NGOs, many of them emphasised the distinction between the *solidarians* and the *professionals*: those who do not get paid for their assistance and those who do. Arundhati Roy makes a similar argument when she talks about the *NGOisation of resistance* (Roy 2014):

> NGOs have funds that can employ local people who might otherwise be activists in resistance movements, but now can feel they are doing some immediate, creative good (and earning a living while they're at it). Real political resistance offers no such short cuts. The NGO-ization of politics threatens to turn resistance into a well-mannered, reasonable, salaried, 9-to-5 job. With a few perks thrown in. Real resistance has real consequences. And no salary.

Many of the locals on the islands found jobs with NGOs. Employment is scarce on these islands especially during winter, and even more so during the financial crisis. Numerous activists of the solidarity movements also accepted NGO jobs, a fact that was criticised by some other activists and some of the locals as well.

In February 2015, the Greek government started asking the solidarity organisations to register themselves officially in order to legalise their work. Some of them were even taken to court on charges of human trafficking, for helping refugees to cross the many kilometres from the coasts to the main cities.[11] Especially after the camps were established, the solidarity movements were slowly excluded from the expression of solidarity,

replaced by the NGOs that were subcontracted by the government or the UNHCR, in what I call *the privatisation of solidarity*. We should also note, however, that many of the activists who were employed by NGOs also provided sensitive information to the movement organisations regarding what was going on in the camps.

Solidarity in Triple Transition

Space: Geographies of Solidarity

The solidarity initiatives of 2015–2016 have necessarily followed the movement of refugees and migrants from one place to another. As mentioned, at first, they were active on the islands, taking responsibility for the reception, feeding, provision of information, and sheltering of refugees. Most of the solidarity organisations were active on the islands of the North Aegean; those who were not—like Steki Metanaston in Chania—gathered provisions and money to be sent to the islands where there was need. In addition, as the next stopover once the refugees left the islands, the port of Piraeus became the focus of action. Some central parks in Athens—for example, Pedio tou Areos and Viktoria—became temporary camps as well, while Idomeni was the next stopping place, where the refugees would wait until they could cross into Macedonia and continue their journey. There, the job of the solidarity initiatives would end.

With the signing of the agreement, the spatial character of the solidarity initiatives changed, along with the movement of the refugees and migrants themselves. The populations that until then had just been crossing through the country were now here to stay for an indefinite period. As they ceased being populations on the move, the solidarity initiatives adapted to the new reality and needs. Now the RSM had no access on the coasts, while in the camps the services were provided by NGOs, leading to 'privatisation of solidarity': the government was now subcontracting NGOs to offer that service. Since access to the camps was now seriously limited, the solidarity initiatives shifted their attention to the populations that had made it to the cities of the mainland, were not in the camps, and

were now here to stay for an indefinite period. The solidarity initiatives focused on a number of squats that emerged. At that point, the truce between the movements and the government broke as well. Themis remembered:

> The movement started putting public pressure on the government for the violations it was responsible for. For me the truce of the movement with the authorities was broken because the RSM said *ok, you have no funds but* … and it started criticizing the irregularities. And that annoyed the government. Because if you are on the field you have a clear picture of what's going on, whether pushbacks are taking place, whether boats arrive. … The government thinks it is being washed clean because it was imposed to it by the EU and Turkey (but) they informally brought back the detentions, and they deny access to the *solidarians*. (Interview GR2)

Burnout

Another very important factor in the evolution of the 'refugee crisis' in Greece that affected all the relevant actors is *time*. The influx of populations has been ongoing for almost two years now, and it has undergone different phases; however, the actors involved in the issue remain the same and—with the exception of the refuges and migrants themselves—are becoming fewer and fewer. At first there was excitement, and the locals rushed to assist the newcomers in any possible way. The newcomers themselves were staying on the islands, the port of Piraeus, and the border of Idomeni for a limited period, and then they would continue their journey. Once the EU–Turkey agreement was in place, though, the refugees started overstaying on the islands and the open camps, and the local *solidarians*—those who kept mobilising for the cause, as many abandoned it—started getting tired and becoming frustrated. The perception I got from all the activists I interviewed is that the longer the situation endured without a sustainable solution on the horizon, the more tired they became. 'Look, we are tired, personally I am really tired', related Hephaestus from the Chios Solidarity Kitchen, adding that the solidarity actions they had undertaken with pleasure in the beginning were now an additional burden on their shoulders, adding more hours of work for

them. However, with no solution in sight, they cannot stop providing assistance to the moving populations in need:

> We finish our jobs and on top of everything else you have to … dedicate three more hours to this (cooking and distributing), and three more to do something else, and you end up working for 15 hours. … Now it is a routine. It is not as spontaneous as it was in the beginning. You also freak out with the situation but what can you do? Not distribute food? There would be riots. And until when? (Interview GR16)

Activists from Allileggyi Samos drew a similar picture. They spoke of passing into a period of limited activity, especially because many activists are gone, particularly during the summer. Themis, who has been involved in migrant rights struggles for years, notes that the same phenomenon had existed in the past:

> The movement 'got tired', it is humanly impossible to function for a whole year at such rhythms. You can't be somewhere, on a beach, and offer the same service every day. We saw that in Athens as well (in 2011) for example the hunger strike of the 300 refugees lasted for two months. When it was over, we [the solidarians] threw a party, because we could not take it anymore. We had abandoned jobs … it is an issue of quantity, finances, and physical endurance. (Interview GR2)

There was also the effect of the involvement of NGOs, which left some solidarity initiatives, especially those that had focused only on the provision of food and clothing, without a field. At the same time, especially after the introduction of the hot-spots, the activists and local communities lost direct contact with the refugees and migrants. That produced alienation, according to Circe, an activist involved with both Lathra and the Social Kitchen in Chios:

> In general, the humanitarian part is now covered by the professionals of this story that's why all the (solidarity) groups have a downward trend. I don't know whether the climate has changed in the local community or whether there's a general impasse, I mean, what do we do now? There's also the psychological factor. At first you are enthusiastic but as time goes by

> and it becomes a routine this thing tires you. … Right now you have a different reality, with people being trapped on the island who do nothing, other than wander around waiting for our charity, because the food you give them is just that—nothing else. They have been ghettoized, some groups took the responsibility to feed and clothe them, and you see them from afar [the direct contact has been lost]. (Interview GR17)

If the activists are tired, the same is true for the migrants and the local communities. The refugees have been stuck on the islands and camps on the mainland for more than ten months without knowing what will happen to them, whether their sacrifices will have a positive outcome or whether they will simply be returned to Turkey—as the RSM activists I spoke to believe it is the intention of the government.

Solidarity Actions: From Safe Passage to Integration

Prior to the EU–Turkey agreement, the solidarity movement was dealing with people who were not planning to stay in Greece; they were just using it as a stopover in their journey. Therefore, the movement focused on facilitating that journey: it received them on the coasts; provided them with food, clothing, healthcare, temporary shelter, and information; 'accompanied them' in their journey to the border; and saw them off at Idomeni. The agreement changed both the realities and the needs of the refugees and immigrants, as well as the focus of the RSM's actions. The government gradually pushed the RSM out of the field, allowed only authorised NGOs and organisations to provide services and have access to the refugees, and in general showed that it had no intention of integrating the migrants. The perception of the activists, judging from the government's policies, is that it is preparing the ground for deportations. Hephaestus, from Solidarity Kitchen of Chios, summarised:

> They could very easily integrate those people. There are abandoned villages, I am not saying to keep all the 3000 that are here, but for example you could keep 500–600. To give them a parcel of land to cultivate, or a house at a symbolic price, so that they can feel that they are something. They

> didn't commit any crime, they escaped war—and if it wasn't war it was on the search for a better life. You don't take a boat, risk your life otherwise …. (Interview GR16)

Themis agreed, expressing the belief that the government fears the political cost of admitting that these 70,000 refugees currently in Greece are here to stay:

> Let's say the refugees say *ok, I'll stay*. Stay *where* and do *what*? There are no opportunities, nothing, for example for their kids to learn the language etc. That has an unbearable cost. It is a political decision, I mean SYRIZA should come out and say that these people are here to stay. We are gonna keep these people. (Interview GR2)

The activists I spoke to also believed that the choice of the SYRIZA government not to integrate was a deterrence measure: to send the message that Greece is not welcoming, so that no newcomers would try to make the crossing. In addition, they believe that the government is preparing the ground for deportations and therefore has chosen the road of 'exclusion' instead of integration: it keeps the refugees and immigrants in camps, where it can control them, away from the local community. This approach produces an alienation effect: Even when camps are near local communities, the vast numbers of people inside them tend to frighten and upset the locals.

Therefore, the RSM shifted towards integrating actions. It started putting pressure on the government for the children of the refugees and immigrants to be incorporated into the educational system. There has also appeared a network of squats, mostly abandoned hotels and public buildings, where refugee and immigrant families are hosted. In Athens alone, more than ten such projects exist, with City Plaza Hotel and Notara 26 being the most prominent examples. These occupied projects perform a dual function:

(a) They constitute the movement's tangible 'proposals' for an integrating policy, in sharp contrast with the government's 'closed camp' exclusionary one; and

(b) They provide shelter, food, and medical assistance to families that are trapped in Athens.

In Thessaloniki there were three similar occupations, which at the time of my fieldwork were evacuated—and one of them demolished—by the government.

At the same time, the movement activists seem to have realised the impasse they reached with the service provision they were absorbed into, as well as the fact that the climate of solidarity within the local communities is now slowly losing ground. As a result, the movement is now recognising the need to get involved in the 'battle' for ideological hegemony once again. Activists from Allileggyi Samos (Solidarity Samos) summarise the situation:

> We need to reach out to the local community once again. To start talking about racism again but we don't have big strength. We are not so many. We are now considering doing things for the people that are here, because they are permanently here. It's been five months now. To involve in our actions both the kids and the adults.

Antigone, from the Antiracist Movement of Thessaloniki, agreed:

> There has been a shift, after Idomeni was over we were discussing that we need to stop it [the humanitarian work]. We have to put emphasis on the protests and the political dimension of the *refugee issue*, the demands of the refugees themselves. To support them, to help them be heard. (Interview GR18)

Activists who have been involved with the RSM long enough—since before the refugee crisis of 2015–2016—and who consider themselves part of the wider antiracist movement (and some of the anti-capitalist movement as well) are also worried that they have fallen into the trap of just responding to the government's actions, a fact that has deprived them of forming concrete proposals. From the perspective of Antigone:

> That's what we are doing I think. Ever since 2012, when the Squares were over, we are permanently in defense. We don't have time to discuss, to pro-

duce our own rhetoric, and not to say *The state is doing this and that and we have to respond*. We don't have that time. And that is obvious, the lack of an alternative rhetoric on our part. You don't have the time to discuss, because there's always something happening so we lack that. On the other hand though you cannot avoid reacting to the developments either. (Interview GR18)

Conclusion (If Any Can Be Made)

This chapter focuses on the Refugee Solidarity Initiatives that evolved in Greece throughout 2015–2016, which form what I call the Refugee Solidarity Movement. It consists of both new and pre-existing organisations, most of them of local character, that form a loose nationwide network. The 'refugee crisis' that evolved in this period can also be separated into two phases, divided by the EU–Turkey agreement, which changed the political context tremendously. Each of them had its own characteristics: the government, the movements, and the refugees and migrants had to change their strategies as a result of the changing political context. Before the agreement, the EU and the government had left the space open for the moving populations to transit the country and leave, causing the RSM organisations to focus on people who were just crossing through Greece. After the agreement, the moving populations would now stay in Greece for an indefinite period, since the EU and the Greek government had now restricted the political space, closing down the borders and taking control of the situation. Therefore, the movements also changed their repertoires and strategies towards both the refugees/migrants and the state.

In addition, until the closure of the Balkan corridor, solidarity with refugees and migrants was widespread, and the RSM could focus on the humanitarian work around the issue. With time, and when it became obvious that those refugees and migrants were now here to stay, solidarity started fading away and the RSM had to address the task of sensitising the public and countering xenophobic reactions. During the first phase of the refugee issue, we also note a 'truce', a honeymoon period, in which the state left the space open for the movements to flourish. After February

2016, however, the state moved to reoccupy the lost space, excluding the movements from expressing their solidarity, and 'privatising' it in a way, allowing NGOs to provide the relevant services. The movements, in turn, now once again saw the state as an enemy and shifted their focus to integrating actions, like the occupation of buildings and the political pressure regarding the education of migrant children.

List of Interviews (Pseudonyms Have Been Used)

GR1: Ekavi, local of Skala Sykamias Lesvos, activist with Platanos, Lesvos.
GR2: Themis, lawyer, active in the RSM, Athens.
GR3: Hector, doctor, member of Steki Metanaston Chania, Crete.
GR4: Apollo, student and photographer, Lesvos.
GR5: Aphrodite, worker in the Refugee Relocation Programme, Athens.
GR6: Orion, activist with Diktyo, member of City Plaza assembly, Athens.
GR7: Orpheus, activist member of Steki Metanaston Chania, Crete.
GR8: Dionysos, activist, member of Musaferat assembly, Lesvos.
GR9: Hera, activist member of Solidarity Samos, Samos.
GR10: Talos, activist member of AK Athens and Notara 26 squat.
GR11: Pericles, member of Lathra, Chios.
GR12: Giovanni, NGO worker, Lesvos.
GR13: Plato, activist with Solidarity Samos, Samos.
GR14: Phaethon, lawyer active in the RSM, Patra.
GR15: Poseidon, activist with Steki Metanaston, Chania.
GR16: Hephaestus, activist with Chios Solidarity Kitchen, Chios.
GR17: Circe, activist with Lathra, Chios.
GR18: Antigone, activist with Thessaloniki Antiracist Initiative, Thessaloniki.
GR19: Patroclos, activist with ex-Prosfygi, Lesvos.
GR20: Socrates, activist with Solidarity Chios, Chios.
GR21: Hippocrates, doctor, activist with City Plaza, Athens and Chios.

GR22: Aiolos, activist with Solidarity Chios and Rescue Team Chios, Chios.
GR23: Chiron, activist with Solidarity Kos, Kos.
GR24: Xerxes, activist with Platanos, Athens and Lesvos.
GR25: Arktos, activist in the antiracist movement, Lesvos.
GR26: Andromeda, activist with PikPa, Lesvos.

Notes

1. Solidarity for this chapter is understood in the Freirian sense of 'entering in the situation of those with whom one is in solidarity … fighting at their side to transform the objective reality' (Freire 1970, p. 49). For more details on the use of the term, see Karkus Kip's relevant chapter in Fritsch et al. (2016).
2. In the Greek public discourse the issue is known as *prosfygiko*, meaning 'the refugee issue'. In this chapter I also use the term in that sense.
3. In Greece, the term *solidarians* is used to describe the activists of the RSM, in contrast to the term *mikiades* which is used for the NGO (MKO in Greek) workers.
4. A reference to Hylland Eriksen's (2001) work, *Small Places, Large Issues.*
5. In July 2015, the SYRIZA–ANEL government organised a referendum regarding the conditions the Troika (European Commission, the ECB, and the IMF) were requiring from Greece in order for a bailout package to be approved. The conditions were rejected by a 61 per cent majority; however the government later on practically ignored the referendum and accepted the bailout conditions.
6. All of the names of my interviewees have been changed.
7. A touristic city in Lesvos.
8. The main city of Samos.
9. According to a law that SYRIZA government (Ministry of the Interior) passed in February, the immigrants and refugees entering Greece can be detained in the hot-spots from three to 25 days, until their registration process is complete.
10. In the Greek alphabet, the acronym NGO is MKO (*MiKiO*).
11. Later on, under pressure from the RSM, the government passed an exception to the law. People who were helping the refugees/migrants for 'humanitarian purposes' were now immune from human trafficking accusations.

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4

From Border to Border: Refugee Solidarity Activism in Italy Across Space, Time, and Practices

Lorenzo Zamponi

Introduction

Second only to Greece, Italy is the 'country of first arrival' for many refugees who come to Europe by sea: in 2015, of the one million refugees who crossed the Mediterranean, 154,000 landed in Italy. Most of them came from sub-Saharan Africa (in particular Nigeria and the former Italian colonies of Eritrea and Somalia), Syria, and Bangladesh. This chapter reconstructs, through the analysis of 21 qualitative interviews with activists in solidarity with refugees, the different forms of action, including both protest and solidarity initiatives, that have emerged during the 'long summer of migration' along the Italian migrant route, linking them to various opportunities and threats.

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I use three keys to address the issue of refugee solidarity activism: space, time, and practices. After reviewing the literature on the issue (Sect. "Background: Social Movements and Asylum") and the Italian context (Sect. "Case and Methods"), quickly mapping the actors and actions under analysis (Sect. "Refugee Solidarity Activism in Italy"), the chapter focuses (Sect. "Practices: Protest and Direct Social Action") on practices, pointing out the relevance of direct social action (Bosi and Zamponi 2015), concrete solidarity initiatives in an emergency context, and their relationship with politics-oriented episodes of mobilisation. The following Sects. analyse how these practices diverge across space and time. With regard to space (Sect. "Space: Borders and Opportunities"), the analysis shows that different places, independently of their position along the route relative to the border, took on the role of borders, due to the expression of state power in blocking the migrants' path. This dynamic shapes the political opportunities for collective action, implying the centrality of the state as the movement's counterpart, creating or removing the emergency situations to which the movement answers and the related political opportunities. Finally, the chapter addresses the visible transition from emergency-based direct social actions to politics-oriented episodes of contention (Sect. "Time: The Politicisation of Solidarity"), both as a development of previous solidarity action and as a response to initiatives taken by the state and by anti-refugee actors.

Background: Social Movements and Asylum

Social movement studies have produced a limited amount of research on the issue of asylum seekers' and migrants' struggles. As Menjivar stated, the relationship between social movements and immigration 'has remained underdeveloped and thus could stand to benefit from a more active dialog' (Menjívar 2010). The protests against the anti-immigration bill of 2006 provided a chance to develop a new wave of research on the issue in the United States (Pantoja et al. 2008; Voss and Bloemraad 2011), while in Europe researchers have focused mainly on anti-immigration

action (Giugni et al. 2005; Koopmans and Statham 2000), although with significant exceptions (Giugni and Passy 2004; Koopmans et al. 2005). The recent increase of immigration and asylum requests in Europe has favoured the development of some works both on pro-migrant activism (Monforte 2016; Tazreiter 2010; Mudu and Chattopadhyay 2016) and on migrants' and refugees' struggles (Ataç 2016), but much still needs to be done. In particular, episodes of protest against the deportation of asylum seekers and migrants have been analysed in various European countries such as the United Kingdom (Anderson et al. 2011), Germany (Ellermann 2009), France (Freedman 2009), Austria (Rosenberger and Winkler 2014), and the Netherlands (Versteegt and Maussen 2012).

A different point of view was proposed by Florence Passy (2001) in her essay on the 'solidarity movement', which she defined as a movement in which 'individuals [...] defend the interests, rights, and identities of others' (Passy 2001, p. 5). Among these 'others', she mentioned as the most common examples 'asylum seekers, political refugees, immigrant workers, peoples whose human rights are being infringed, victims of racist acts or sentiments, and populations of Third World countries' (Passy 2001, p. 5). Furthermore, Passy listed 'immigration/asylum and antiracism' as two of the four main areas of intervention by the solidarity movement since the 1980s (Passy 2001, p. 11–12).

A challenging occasion to review, update, and improve this corpus of research is provided by the processes that are taking place in Europe in this historical phase. Since 2015, a rising number of refugees have made the journey to the European Union to seek asylum, travelling across the Mediterranean Sea or through South-Eastern Europe. According to Eurostat, EU member states received over 1.2 million first-time asylum applications in 2015, a number more than double that of the previous year. This phenomenon triggered a series of events and processes in different domains: at the EU level, policies shifted from attempts to address the humanitarian crisis and the dramatic number of deaths at sea to measures aiming to fight human smuggling and to negotiate with Turkey to reduce the inflow; some countries proposed suspending the Schengen Treaty and re-establishing internal border controls; radical right forces

proposed emergency measures to 'defend the borders' throughout the continent, sometimes gaining hegemony on the whole political field and dramatically influencing the policies of mainstream parties. In particular, various episodes of collective action took place in different countries: grassroots actions and initiatives in solidarity with refugees, self-organised protests led by the same refugees at the borders and in camps, transnational campaigns demanding changes in European policies, radical right and nationalist protests against the presence of refugees in some communities, and so on.

To address this issue from the point of view of contentious politics means to aim at 'highlighting the concrete strategies, campaigns, demonstrations, and struggles of refugees and migrants, and those citizens mobilising in solidarity with them [...] in order to make visible the politics of these social movements and inquire into the potentiality of such political struggle' (Ataç et al. 2016).

Case and Methods

A significant number of asylum seekers arrive in Italy either from Libya, to the small island of Lampedusa or to the Sicilian coast—previously on boats owned by themselves or by smugglers, but now mostly on ships belonging to the Italian government or to international NGOs, which intercept their route—or from Greece, to the coast of Puglia in the Italian Southeast. For most refugees, Italy is a provisional stage in a longer route, since its precarious economic situation makes it less attractive for migrants than the Northern European destinations. For these reasons, the most critical points from a humanitarian point of view are the borders. This includes the sea between Italy and Libya, in which thousands of people have died in shipwrecks over the last few years—the largest of which, on 3 October 2013, triggered the Italian Navy's 'Operation Mare Nostrum', followed by Frontex's 'Operation Triton' in 2014. Also significant are the borders with Austria (particularly the Brenner Pass), France (particularly in Ventimiglia), and Switzerland (particularly between Como and Chiasso).

The choice of neighbouring countries to strengthen the controls at their borders, together with the lack of appropriate structures to accom-

modate asylum seekers, has increased pressures in these critical areas. The situation is exacerbated by EU governments' requirements to strictly comply with the Dublin regulation, which forces governments to identify refugees as soon as they land and requires refugees to stay in the country in which they arrived. These changes have generated a series of informale refugee camps in various areas of Italy, particularly at the borders (especially in Lampedusa, Ventimiglia, and Como) and around the train stations of the most important cities (especially Rome and Milan).

The reception of refugees and asylum seekers in Italy is handled by three different systems: CARA (Centres of Reception for Asylum Seekers), CAS (Centres of Extraordinary Reception), and SPRAR (System of Protection for Asylum Seekers and Refugees), which answer to the Ministry of the Interior. The local representatives of the Ministry of the Interior, the prefects, are in charge of the structures and camps in which asylum seekers are hosted. These structures are often owned by NGOs or private citizens, who receive government funds.

The situation described above requires methodological choices designed to capture its complexity. This chapter is based on 21 qualitative interviews with activists engaged in different forms of collective action in solidarity with refugees and on participant observation in protests and assemblies. The sampling strategy that was chosen aimed at covering as much as possible the broad and scattered field of activism in solidarity with refugees in Italy.

The main idea was to collect information from people who had been active in different areas of the country, and particularly at different stages along the route: from the refugees' place of arrival, through the big cities, to the borders with the destination countries. Furthermore, the sampling strategy took into account the need to cover a plurality of voices and to interview both people who had started their experience of activism on this particular occasion and those who had been working on the issue for years. Interviewees have been active both at the borders (in the island on Lampedusa, in Ventimiglia, in Como, and at the Brenner Pass) and in Italian cities (Rome, Florence, Bologna, Milan and Padua), belonging both to formal organisations and NGOs and to local collectives.

Refugee Solidarity Activism in Italy

Italy has been a country of destination for foreign migrants since the 1970s. In the last few decades, it has seen a significant presence of migrants' and migration-related political activism, both in the institutional realm and in street politics, as testified by a broad literature (Pilati 2010; Danese 2001; Caponio 2005; Campomori 2008; Mantovan 2007; Mezzadra and Ricciardi 2013; Mantovan 2013; Ambrosini 2013; Marino 2010; Oliveri 2012; Cappiali 2016, 2017, 2015). Nevertheless, the episodes of collective action analysed in this chapter are only partially rooted in this tradition. There is the presence of some structured national organisations that have been active in the mobilisation for migrants' rights for decades, such as ARCI, and of political areas that have been historically part of this field, such as the radical left and post-autonomous social centres, and there are also visible continuities at the discursive and at the biographical level. However, the vast majority of initiatives are situated in a rather limited spatial and temporal context.

Actors involved in actions and initiatives on this issue are rather diverse from the organisational point of view: the sample includes social movement collectives and social centres, local networks of social and political organisations (such as Como Senza Frontiere and Forum Lampedusa Solidale, two social forum-like local networks), ad hoc local initiatives and campaigns, formal associations, and even some religious organisations.

Some projects see the presence of established actors in the Italian social movement landscape, while in some cases, particularly in the actions and initiatives around informal refugee camps, most activists were new to this kind of experience. These informal camps represented a contingent situation of emergency that triggered a response from activists who tended not to belong to established organisations or networks. Nevertheless, most come from a certain political background, either in the Italian social movement landscape or the Left in general, or in the progressive areas of the Catholic Church. In other cases, those not connected with refugee camps, but with the organisation of protests, ad hoc campaigns, and initiatives, were created by pre-existing actors of the Italian social movement scene.

The organisational structures tend to be strongly localised: given the reactive nature of this kind of action, the response tends to be provided

by local groups and volunteers, depending on the existing infrastructure of the local civil society, and not by political organisations with a national agenda. As already noted, national organisations and networks like ARCI and LasciateCIEntrare are more present in the proactive component of action. A peculiar case is that of the NGO created by the Italian Evangelical Church in Lampedusa, which sent people from the mainland to live on the island and create a new humanitarian initiative from scratch.

Initiatives generally lack national co-ordination: there is no broad and encompassing national campaign for solidarity with refugees. This condition resonates with the scattered nature of the Italian social movement landscape (Zamponi and González 2017), after a few years without common mobilisations able to create a common space (i.e. social forums, student mobilisations 2008–2011, etc.). The 'no border' area (mainly composed of anarchist and radical post-autonomous activists)—with assemblies in different cities and activists moving between camps—is, from this point of view, a partial exception. In other cases, relations between different camps have been established during the action, to coordinate activities, notify in advance new arrivals from one city to another, and so on. In some cases, these relationships were established through refugees themselves, who often go back and forth many times, every time they try to cross the border.

The form and nature of links between groups in different cities is well explained by two activists of Accoglienza Degna, a collective created by activists of post-autonomous social centres in Bologna:

> There is not a proper network at the national level. There are relationships among different realities, for example at the regional level we are strongly linked to Rimini, with an experience similar to ours, thus very often we work together. Then, the Baobab is another reality with which we had meetings, occasions of dialogue, for example we went to some of their meetings in Rome, they came here for meetings to discuss some issues, to compare the different ways in which we work, and so on. Then, we moved, we went to Como, we went to the Brenner Pass when there was the matter of the border, but there is no established network of non-institutional realities engaged in *accoglienza* in Italy, now. (Interview I15)

A similar account is provided by an activist of Baobab Experience, the leading actor of this attempt at national co-ordination, due to the visibility provided by its role as the main collective providing shelter and aid to asylum seekers in Rome:

> We exploited the winter to try and make an assembly of all the realities who are working on immigration in an informal way, to create on our own, since the institutions are not succeeding in doing it, sort of a humanitarian corridor at least inside the Italian borders, to make so that if someone disappears, if someone falls in the wrong hands, if someone needs particular assistance, there is a passage of tasks. (Interview I6)

As both quotes show, there is no national co-ordination at the political level, but there are growing attempts to establish links among volunteers active in different cities. The pragmatic nature of these links is coherent with the practice-oriented spirit that characterises many of the actors, as the next section will show.

Practices: Protest and Direct Social Action

The actions and initiatives analysed in this chapter can be roughly divided into two categories: some were actions of protest, thus primarily expressing political claims related to the issue of immigration, while others were direct social actions, primarily offering concrete help to refugees in need. Direct social actions are 'actions that do not primarily focus upon claiming something from the state or other power holders [...] but that instead focus upon directly transforming some specific aspects of society by means of the very action itself' (Bosi and Zamponi 2015, p. 369). These are forms of collective action that aim at directly changing, by means of the very action itself, some specific aspects of society without being primarily oriented towards securing the mediation of public authorities or the intervention of other actors. They are 'direct—that is, aimed at having a non-mediated impact on their object—and they are social—that is, they address society, or at least some parts of it, rather than state authorities or other power-holders' (Bosi and Zamponi 2015, p. 374).

Groups like the Baobab Experience in Rome, or the volunteers active in the train station in Como, had to spend most of their time and energy addressing emergency situations and providing refugees with food and shelter; other experiences, like the protest at the Brenner Pass, were from the beginning the expression of precise political claims and demands.

With regard to protest, the repertoire includes four main types of action: local protests to denounce the conditions of migrants and demand changes in the reception system (as in the cases of Rome, Como, and Ventimiglia, for example); symbolic actions at the border with other European countries, to denounce the obstacles to the freedom of movement of asylum seekers (as in the cases of the three marches at the Brenner Pass, between Italy and Austria); opinion campaigns to ask for changes in the management of the governmental reception system (as in the case of LasciateCIEntrare); and solidarity marches as a response to anti-migrant action (as in the case of the first rally of Padova Accoglie in 2015, the demonstration in Giavera del Montello in January 2017, and the marches in Milan and Bologna in May 2017). These forms show different levels of contentiousness, often reflecting the different political backgrounds of the groups that organise them, with the different goals they pursue and with the different constituencies they address. In general, there seems to be a rather pragmatic attitude towards the choice of repertoires: some of the same social movement actors that participated in clashes with police at Brenner Pass—where the march was almost completely populated by militants and the main goal was to raise public attention on the issue of the border—also participated in the peaceful rally of Padova Accoglie, which involved thousands of unpoliticised individuals and a wide coalition of social actors, including Catholic groups, with the goal of shaping public opinion on migrants at the city level.

The groups and organisations analysed in this chapter enacted a variety of direct social actions: emergency provision of food, clothes, and blankets to migrants who had been blocked; help with communication, including translation services as well as material infrastructure (i.e. working SIM cards and Wi-Fi connections to connect with families at home and contacts in their destination country); management of informal refugee camps (including the provision of tents or other structures); administration of officially recognised reception structures (included in the

SPRAR or CAS systems, in co-operation with the government); hosting of migrants who are outside the official reception system; provision of legal information at different stages of the migrant route (e.g. arrival in Italy, entry into the governmental reception system, expulsion or voluntary exit from the system or country); professional training (both inside and outside official reception channels); organisation of cultural activities (such as meetings with local migrant and indigenous communities, festivals, etc.); missions to help refugees abroad (as in the case of the trip to Idomeni organised by Overthefortress); and creation of officially recognised humanitarian corridors.

It should be noted that this distinction among forms of action does not automatically translate into a distinction among organisations. On the contrary, there are many instances of overlap between the two fields. Protest groups sometimes end up enacting solidarity initiatives, as in the case of Accoglienza Degna, in which activists of a social centre began hosting migrants excluded by the official reception system, or in the cases of Como and Ventimiglia, in which political activists were strongly committed to solidarity actions. Alternatively, people and organisations initially involved only in solidarity initiatives may ultimately engage in protest actions. Examples include the case of Baobab Experience, whose activists started protesting only when public authorities tried to shut down their solidarity initiative; Padova Accoglie, a protest group whose spokespersons had been managing reception structures; and the demonstration in Giavera del Montello, called by organisers of a cultural festival who had never organised a protest before.

An activist from ARCI interprets this overlap between solidarity and protest as part of a more general trend:

> The anti-racist movement is a movement that now is scattered. From my point of view this is linked with the general barbarisation of our society, from which the anti-racist movement is not immune. […] On this issue, but not only on this issue, we try to fight a feeling of loneliness of people, that hit also the anti-racist movement. […] Now the good examples are more on 'doing' than on mobilising. But this does not happen only on immigration. I come from Genoa, where there are often floods. Every time that there is a flood, you see boys and girls with shovels come out and help.

> They are called 'the angels of mud'. When you see it happening, once, twice, always, you are not surprised any more. This is an example of the fact that in this country there is still activism on the level on 'doing'. Maybe we should ask ourselves how to allow people to 'do', to make themselves useful for their community. Probably we have passed from a more political mobilisation to a mobilisation of 'doing'. (Interview I14)

Space: Borders and Opportunities

The opportunities for mobilisation are created in most cases by the interaction between a specific spatial setting (an island in the middle of the Mediterranean, a train station in the centre of a big city, a border town) and some initiative taken by a specific actor, most often a government (closing a border, opening a detention centre, dismantling an informal camp).

Most of the actions and initiatives addressed in the research are characterised by a reactive and contingent nature. A significant part of the activists that were interviewed mobilised in response to some 'emergency', some humanitarian crisis involving a number of refugees in need of food and shelter due to the obstacles on the migrant route and the lack of action on the part of the Italian government. Most of the actions by the interviewees were the direct answer to an unprecedented number of refugees being stopped along their route by authorities and, due to the inaction of the government, forming spontaneous camps, usually close to train stations. The experience of these informal camps is the context of some of the most interesting initiatives. The following quotes provide clear examples of this mechanism: the creation of an obstacle on the migrant route generates a humanitarian emergency in a certain place, the news spreads, and people gather to help.

During the summer of 2016, after the Swiss government's decision to intensify controls at the border, hundreds of migrants were sent back to the closest Italian city, Como, where the train station was soon crowded with people. The informal camp quickly started to draw activists and volunteers, triggering a phase of collective action—including both direct social action and protest—that lasted several weeks, until the opening of

an official governmental camp. A similar story had taken place one year earlier in Rome, when an informal camp set up by migrants who had not succeeded in leaving the country was dismantled by the police: migrants moved close to the Tiburtina train station and started camping in the area, and activists and volunteers started showing up, giving birth to the so-called Baobab Experience. Activists from both groups tend to tell their story in a rather similar way:

> In July we were told by people we know that there were some migrants in the train station that had been blocked there for a few days, mostly Ethiopian and Eritrean, because Switzerland had closed the border. Before, the flux was constant, people passed, then when Switzerland decided to close, people were stopped in Como, and thus we started to bring them food, blankets, clothes, and we did it for the whole July. (Interview I8)

> On 11 May 2015 they dismantled the camp in Ponte Mammolo without having an alternative. There were 400 people, mainly migrants in transit, with a big Eritrean component, but not only them, there were caregivers from Eastern Europe that, given that they could not afford a place to stay, they stayed there. The camp was destroyed without involving no social organisation. Many migrants came here, close to the train station, and some time later, for security reasons linked to the G7 summit in Germany, Schengen was suspended. Thus, people remained blocked here. The people of the neighbourhood complain, the police send away the people and send them in this direction. […] Then, a 'solidarity machine' starts, mainly through social media. The first to get active are the people of the San Lorenzo neighbourhood, and the social centres there, organising collection points and bringing here food and clothes. And then volunteers start to arrive. (Interview I6)

The reactive nature of many of these initiatives is also made clear by the time references activists use. When asked about periodisation, activists tend to refer to stages that were dictated by governmental programmes and governmental decisions: in Lampedusa, they say 'when Mare Nostrum ended' (Interview I2) or 'then Triton started' (Interview I3), referring to the navy operations in the Mediterranean Sea, while in Como

they say 'when Switzerland closed to border' (Interview I10). An activist interviewed in Como had previously been in Ventimiglia, moving from one border town to another following the evolution of a migration flow related to state decisions to close the border:

> In the moment in which on the Brenner Pass some controls were introduced, in Ventimiglia the situation was what it was, with a total militarisation and a new deportation every day, people started moving here [to Como]. We had already been seeing it since the Spring. (Interview I10)

In both cases mentioned in the three quotes, Como and Rome, a state decision influences a specific spatial setting, creating an 'emergency' situation that triggers mobilisation. People are drawn towards that emergency situation: they start to help, and this individual help gradually becomes collective action, as we will see later. The state's decision to close a border or to dismantle an informal camp creates in a certain area a situation of 'emergency', which makes visible what was already happening without people noticing it. As an activist in Como noted, before the Swiss government closed the border and migrants started camping in the train station, 'probably their numbers were even higher, but nobody was noticing it' (Interview I8). The flow of migrants is not an emergency *in se*, and it does not imply collective action in itself: people realise that there is an emergency and that their action is required when something happens that breaks the status quo.

These situations of 'emergency' are situated at different stages of the migrant route. Lampedusa is the place of the *accoglienza* (a very common word in the Italian public discourse on the issue; interestingly enough, it means both a warm 'welcoming' and a neutral 'reception') where for years the primary task has been to keep migrants alive. Rome and the other Italian cities are mainly places of passage, where migrants are stopped for some reason (mainly, they have been identified and thus sent back when they reach the border) and from which they try to leave as soon as they can. From Como, Ventimiglia, and the other borders with European countries, migrants are trying to depart towards their destination country. Nevertheless, an observably similar dynamic takes place in all these different stages: a governmental decision blocks the migrant route and

creates an 'emergency situation'. From this point of view, not only Lampedusa, Como, and Ventimiglia but also Rome is on a 'border'. As Pierre Monforte noted, '[t]he border is now extended across the territory, creating multiple zones of vulnerability' for migrants (Monforte 2016, p. 424). 'This means that the binary demarcation between the inside and the outside is blurred and that the specific governmental practices and technologies that were once situated at the edges of territories can now be encountered all over the territories' (Monforte 2016, p. 416). State decisions make certain geographical spaces into borders, thus creating, through the dynamics of 'emergency' and the appearance of informal camps, spaces for collective action, particularly for direct social action. Responding to the 'emergency' is so urgent that anything else must be postponed, as we will see in following section.

On the other hand, in spaces that do not have the characteristics of a 'border', actions are not directly shaped by the urgent needs of migrants and indirectly by the state decisions that created the emergency. Instead, they tend to be more directly political and claim-oriented, either reacting to anti-migrant actions or being proactive. In fact, emergency situations are not the only phenomena to which activists react: some actions, especially in the case of protest, are organised in reaction to anti-migrant initiatives. The Padova Accoglie rally, on 15 May 2015—from which the network with the same name was born—was organised explicitly in response to the anti-refugee demonstration called by then mayor Massimo Bitonci (Lega Nord). The same was true at the Montello, a hill in the Province of Treviso, in the north-east of the country: a local committee of citizens, with the support of the Lega Nord and the far-right party Forza Nuova, organised an anti-refugee demonstration in December in the small town of Volpago to protest the hosting of refugees in a former military barracks. In response, the organisers of a local multi-cultural festival planned a counter-demonstration in January in the small town of Giavera. The decision to organise the march as a reaction is explained well by the spokesperson of the association Ritmi e danze dal mondo:

> We heard of this march in a small town here in the area, and we immediately realised that the style was worrying. Then, reading the newspaper, I said 'No, I can't accept something like this. It is circulating all over the

> country, in the newspapers, on TV. Montello is also something else.' I agree on the fact that it is not fair to put people like this in a barrack, but I can't bear hearing people saying 'We have to burn everything', if you tolerate words like these, someone will act, and this can't be accepted. So, we decided to do a march. (Interview I19)

A more *proactive* approach can be seen in the initiatives of actors like ARCI or the national campaign LasciateCIEntrare, which were active on the topic much before the latest wave of arrival of refugees. These groups tend to bring a more long-term perspective to the issue and to focus more on structural solutions for the reform of the Italian immigration system than on the need for immediate relief in a particular emergency situation.

Time: The Politicisation of Solidarity

In her essay on the 'solidarity movement', Florence Passy observed that, in the context of the emergence of the new social movements since the 1970s, the solidarity movement has undergone a deep transformation:

> The movement organizations gave the disadvantaged material and moral assistance, providing them with food, clothes, legal advice, and so forth. While most of the organizations of the new solidarity movement still provide this kind of assistance, now their actions also include political claim-making addressed to power holders. In other words, their traditional assistance-oriented praxis is now paralleled by a political praxis based on the same political cleavage in which the other new social movements are anchored. (Passy 2001, p. 2011)

To say that this observation accurately depicts all the actors involved in solidarity with refugees in Italy would be an overstatement. However, the relationship between the solidarity-oriented component (what we have called 'direct social action') and the political component of collective action is interesting to analyse, in particular from the diachronic point of view.

In fact, if many episodes of collective action are triggered by emergency situations, their nature will change with the development of the emergency. Many activists interviewed describe an initial situation in which they were too overwhelmed by the everyday tasks of direct social action required by the emergency to think about politics and the political needs of their initiative. An activist of Baobab Experience testifies that weeks had passed from the beginning of their action to their first assembly:

> Then, when the Ponte Mammolo camp was dismantled, in mid-May, and then more when the Tiburtina station camp was dismantled, a few people start showing up, Roman citizens, including me, people that did not know each other. There was no organised collective, no social centre that took charge of handling this, it was a melting pot of people of different backgrounds, from the old lady of Piazza Bologna to the high school kid. People showed up here and started organising the best they could, in a situation of emergency. So I arrived in mid-June and we did our first assembly and the end of June, because it the beginning we had to provide for the urgent needs rather than organising in a structured way, because if you have 600 people outside for breakfast and you do not have milk, the first thing you say is: 'Ok, let us think about the milk, and then we will do the assembly and decide the programmatic stuff'. (Interview I6)

This condition, in which the urgency of direct social action becomes an obstacle for politics, is described with visible frustration by activists with longer-term involvement. Particularly in Lampedusa, where taking care of the urgent needs of refugees has been part of the daily lives of activists for years, some participants have developed a rather critical view of direct social action. Thus a Lampedusa-based activist, after many years of engagement in solidarity-oriented actions, developed the idea that only political protest can really make a difference and that handling emergencies is a trap that weakens the political capacity of civil society:

> There are many movements that deal mainly with emergency. This is something we did many years ago, before others, with situations that have not taken place in [the rest of] Italy yet, because in 2011 here there were 6000 Tunisians in a 6000-inhabitants island. […] We lived this phase in complete

loneliness, not for someone's fault but because being on an island means being alone, and this is something that, in hindsight, we did not face properly. In a situation of emergency, if you don't have a somewhat political view, you end up not building nothing. In hindsight, with a clear mind, that nobody among us had in those two months in 2011, you realise that we should have done something different. Giving food to the guys, giving them blankets, letting them charge their phones, getting them the money that arrived from Tunisia, etc., kept us busy, in terms of time and energy, and kept us from reflecting on the need to denounce and from inventing solutions. I do not know what are the solutions, but I know that if something like this happened again, I would not go there to distribute clothes, but I would stay at home thinking about doing something different. We should have convinced the fishermen to bring them all to Sicily, a mass action that would have been difficult to frame in terms of 'abetment of clandestine immigration'. I said this because I have the feeling that this reflexion, to which we arrived on the base of the experience we lived, is what is lacking in other places now. Not everywhere: for example, No Borders at least are protesting, are denouncing the situation, the demonstrations at the borders, and so on. For me this is fundamental. I got to think that emergency is the best way to neutralise civil society: you keep it busy in cooking pasta and cous-cous, bringing people to the hospital, etc., and you get rid of it, you get rid of a problem. (Interview I4)

A radical collective on the same island has developed an even more critical attitude to direct social action and, more in general, to everything related to what they call the 'humanitarian' approach to the issue of immigration. In their recollection, they were too busy trying to directly help migrants to really understand the migratory phenomenon. Since the government has taken over the tasks of rescuing and assisting migrants on the island, activists have been able to reflect and to elaborate. As a result, they have changed their attitude, from a 'humanitarian' to a more critical anti-capitalist approach.

We started with a humanitarian approach, for this reason we have to make an effort to understand those that, in good faith, have those positions. But with the experience we lived and with studying, we have developed a more advanced position on the issue of immigration. [...] We link the growth of the dispositive of immigration control with the implementation of the

> military dispositive. The two things need to be read together, thus we see a big limit in the classic humanitarian approach. Because the humanitarian approach ends up justifying Mare Nostrum in the name of rescue. If you do not have a reading of the situation that makes you see that the migratory emergency is created on purpose as a Schmittian state of exception, it is a continuously reproduced event that allows the political power to justify the implementation of the military dispositive, without this reading it is obvious that you will have the apparently pragmatic approach that will make you say 'ok, but we have to save them, so even Mare Nostrum is ok' […]. In 2011 we were there cooking, giving clothes, etc., now there is a different situation. (Interview I5)

There is a visible transition from solidarity-oriented direct social actions to political protest. This process is often helped by the end of the emergency itself or by the intervention of the state in addressing it.

> Both for the really diverse nature of the people that participated and for the fact of meeting in a situation already of emergency, it took time to get to approaches that addressed the issue from a general and critical point of view. Many people came here because they wanted to give a toothbrush to a child, and from there we explained them, we made them understand that those people needed a toothbrush because there were a series of European laws that prohibited their transit, that did not welcome them. Or, even more, we could get to 'But do you know that in Eritrea there is a dictatorship?', and so there was a growth from this point of view. It took some time to pass from solidarity to a more critical point of view. (Interview I6)

> Initially we focused above all on this [providing food and blankets]. Then we started, in parallel, activities that addressed the citizens, to explain what the problem was, to try to raise awareness. […] When the governmental camp opened, in September, the situation changed and our activity changed. We cannot enter the camp, and so we go around the city trying to help the people that our outside the camp, we still participate in the meetings with the municipality, we try to raise awareness on this issue. […] The idea is to shed light on this problem to change the public perception. (Interview I8)

If state decisions were in most cases what created the emergency situation that triggered solidarity-oriented collective action, the choice by the

state to directly address that emergency pushes activists to shift their focus to more claim-oriented political activities. This process of gradual shift from direct social action to political protest is visible in several cases in the Italian context. Furthermore, the more the state intervenes on the issue and anti-refugee actors do the same, the more the people engaged in solidarity with refugees will be pushed to take political stances on state intervention and on anti-refugee actions. Moreover, often the same actors that were previously involved in direct social actions decide to take to the streets. In fact, the Spring of 2017 was characterised by a series of marches in which the most moderate actors addressed the issue of the increasing anti-migrant propaganda, instead proposing 'welcoming' as a sensible attitude towards asylum seekers. The most radical components strongly criticised the 46/2017 law (the so-called Minniti-Orlando Law, from the names of the two ministers that inspired it) passed by parliament in April 2017—which, among other things, changed the judicial procedure for asylum seekers. The Accoglienza Degna collective in Bologna, which had been active in hosting migrants, was among the organisers of a 'March for Welcoming—No one is illegal' on 27 May 2017. A larger initiative was taken in Milan by a member of the local administration, inspired by a similar event in Barcelona on 18 February: on 20 May 2017, more than one hundred thousand people took to the streets. Interestingly enough, the march saw the participation of the 'No one is illegal' network, formed by actors in the social movement milieu that were critical towards the government-friendly stances of the main organisers. As an activist reported during the demonstration, 'the core group in *No one is illegal* is Naga, an association that has been working for years with migrants, organising judicial assistance, healthcare support and so on. This gives them legitimacy on this issue and everybody refer to them' (Interview I21). Once again, direct social action provides connections and legitimacy that become relevant in the organisation of political action.

Nevertheless, the transition from solidarity-oriented to protest-oriented initiatives is not ubiquitous in the movement scene. In a regional assembly of movements in solidarity with migrants in Padua in January 2017, the balance between the two aspects was one of the main issues of debate. Some activists pushed for more open battle in the public sphere: 'We have to fight against detention camps, to convince, to make good

practices of reception emerge in public opinion', stated one activist, while another responded, 'We made very few public statements. We are for closing detentions camps, but we have to focus on producing alternatives. We have to create the conditions for a better reception in the city. We are against doing *Padova protesta* ('Padua protests'), we want to do *Padova accoglie* ('Padua welcomes')'. The same activist also explained his view during an interview:

> We think that the most fruitful reception, in the guys' interest, is the one of medium size, between 20 and 40 people. Since none of them gets asylum, if you have six people isolated in a house and their asylum request is denied, they get depressed. […] We opened a restaurant in which 13 of them work. […] This is the only thing that beats the awful campaign, the racism. If you show them working, you shake the prejudice of people. Having 2000 people come to our restaurant and see that there is a practical experience of integration is the best possible political intervention. […] I get angry with some comrades, that make great battles, great protests that are completely useless. […] The only way to eliminate the camps is to build an alternative. My goal is to solve the problems of these guys. We want to build paths that allow them in a short time to stand on their own two feet. […] Social enterprise is much more useful than protest. (Interview I20)

Conclusions

This chapter reconstructs the dynamics of Refugee Solidarity Activism in Italy since 2015, focusing mainly on practices, and analyses their variation across space and time. The analysis reveals the presence of a broad set of actors and initiatives, the characteristics of which are strongly shaped by existing political opportunities at the local level—in terms of decisions and interventions by the state or by anti-refugee actors, as well as geographic position along the migrant route. In particular, the fact that many of the actions analysed in the chapter were triggered by situations of emergency pushed activists in an early stage towards direct social actions in response to the most urgent needs of refugees. Further interventions by the state and anti-refugee actors, together with a common feeling of frustration among activists with

longer-term engagement in solidarity actions, have created the conditions for transition to a phase characterised by more visible and contentious political participation.

Direct social actions tend to appear in spaces that take on the characteristics of borders, even when, as in the case of Rome, they are geographically situated inside the national territory. At these borders, the migrant route is blocked by state decisions, triggering the situation of 'emergency' that shapes a very peculiar form of collective action—mainly solidarity oriented and focusing on the urgent needs of migrants. In other parts of the country, where collective action emerges either as a reaction to anti-migrant action or proactively, it tends to take on a more claim-oriented approach. Thus, space, as modified by political decisions, shapes the opportunity for mobilisation, influencing the forms of action and consequently the composition of the movement.

In more general terms, the chapter sheds light on the evolution of a solidarity movement, pointing out that different practices may be attached to similar issues, their evolution strongly related to the development of political opportunities. Furthermore, it investigates the dialectical relationship between direct social action and political contention, illustrating that forms of action focusing on solidarity are interpreted by activists both as obstacles to political action and distractions from the struggle and as opportunities to develop political action, gain legitimacy, and address a broader constituency.

Interviews

I1: Interview with #overthefortress activist, Padua, 28 May 2016.
I2: Interview with Mediterranean Hope activist, Lampedusa, 2 August 2016.
I3: Interview with Mediterranean Hope activist, Lampedusa, 2 August 2016.
I4: Interview with Forum Lampedusa Solidale activist, Lampedusa, 4 August 2016.
I5: Interview with Askavusa activist, Lampedusa, 5 August 2016.
I6: Interview with Baobab Experience activist, Rome, 25 August 2016.

I7: Interview with EUI Refugees Initiative activist, Florence, 10 November 2016.
I8: Interview with Como senza frontiere activist, Como, 11 November 2016.
I9: Interview with Como senza frontiere activist, Como, 11 November 2016.
I10: Interview with Solidali activist, Como, 11 November 2016.
I11: Interview with activist of informal solidarity group, Como, 12 November 2016.
I12: Interview with Missionari Comboniani activist, Como, 12 November 2016.
I13: Interview with LasciateCIEntrare activist, Rome, 19 January 2017.
I14: Interview with ARCI activist, Rome, 21 January 2017.
I15: Interview with Accoglienza Degna activist, Bologna, 25 January 2017.
I16: Interview with Accoglienza Degna activist, Bologna, 25 January 2017.
I17: Interview with Accoglienza Degna activist, Bologna, 25 January 2017.
I18: Interview with Accoglienza Degna activist, Bologna, 25 January 2017.
I19: Interview with Ritmi e danze dal mondo activist, Giavera del Montello (TV), 27 January 2017.
I20: Interview with Padova Accoglie activist, Padova, 30 January 2017.
I21: Interview with student activist, Milan, 20 May 2017.

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5

Interwoven Destinies in the ‘Long Migration Summer’: Solidarity Movements Along the Western Balkan Route

Chiara Milan and Andrea L.P. Pirro

Introduction

For a relatively short period between 2014 and 2015, the countries located along the so-called Western Balkan route turned out to be the principal gates of migratory flows into the European Union (EU) (Frontex 2016). The route attracted migrants of Asian origin fleeing war and persecution (e.g. Afghani, Iraqi, and Syrian asylum seekers) who would get access to Europe through the Turkish-Greek border, and eventually to Hungary through Serbia—the latter country neither part of the EU nor of the Schengen Area. Although the ‘migrant crisis’ in these countries had—at least, numerically—reached its height in the summer of 2015, the broader international context as well as internal developments should be taken into account when studying the politics of solidarity and altruism, otherwise interpreted as forms of contention ranging from civil disobedience to solidarity action (della Porta, introduction, this volume).

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First, as the crossing of a distinct—and rather new—Western Balkan route suggests, the very same definition of crisis deserves further qualification. Migratory waves through Mediterranean routes had occurred, in ebbs and flows, since the late 2000s. This essentially means that countries like Greece and Italy had already been exposed to inflows of migrants of African and Asian origin ahead of the 2015 peak. While indicating that the crisis had actually spread over a longer period, what is commonly perceived as the height of a *European* migrant crisis has coincided with exponential increases in the rate of arrivals through the East Mediterranean and Western Balkan routes. Second, by looking at the international context, the poor management and slow responsiveness at the supranational level have certainly contributed to heighten the perception of crisis among the mass public. The initial incapability to create a common European taskforce and unwillingness to circumvent existing regulations (above all, the Dublin III Agreement) have swiftly worsened a situation for which the EU should be partly deemed responsible. Third, the increase in migrant arrivals should be at least in part attributed to the breakout of civil wars in the Arab region after 2011 and the subsequent advancements of the Islamic State (IS); this denotes why Balkan routes have been privileged over others at that particular point in time. The spread of the IS in the region has relatedly led to the assumption that terrorists would infiltrate into groups of asylum seekers—an integral component of the nativist and populist framing of immigration amid the crisis.

Taking these elements as a point of departure, we locate the politics of solidarity and altruism within a porous context exposed to changing internal and external opportunities. Within this framework, we define political solidarity and altruism as a specific form of 'public spirit' stemming from feelings of empathy/affinity with (a group of) individuals combined with a sense of commitment to principle (Mansbridge 1998). With the present chapter, we particularly seek to account for articulations of such public spirit—alternatively referred to as collective solidarity actions—in Hungary and Serbia during the long migration summer of 2015. The two countries, central to the evolution of migratory flows into the EU, have seen their role changing due to a series of political strategies adopted by their respective governments. Despite the independent unfolding of these scenarios, the two countries found their destinies

intertwined, for the political responses of the one affected those of the other. Within this context, we value the aspect of 'sequentiality' as an exogenous stimulus able to alter events that might evolve differently otherwise. We argue that the Hungarian government's decision to close down borders and prevent transit of migrants has provided such stimulus, hence affecting the growth and withering of solidarity movements at home and abroad.

With this study, we wish to demonstrate that solidarity actions can bear similar framings amid divergent opportunities. Indeed, for at least a limited period in the long summer of 2015, the closed opportunities presented by the Hungarian context turned out to increase the prospects for altruistic mobilisations in Serbia—a context in which the political environment has been generally more open. In our research endeavour, we reconstructed how the actors that have mobilised in support of migrants assessed the so-called crisis, their proposed solutions, and their motivations by means of original interviews with them. Accordingly, we first outline the conceptual starting points of our enquiry and the data we used; second, we elaborate on the different opportunities provided by the Hungarian and Serbian contexts; third, we reconstruct the framing of migration by solidarity actors. Finally, we conclude the chapter by summarising the most important findings.

Rationale of the Study and Solidarity Mobilisations

A whole range of collective actors are expected to mobilise at times of heightened salience of the immigration issue. At least judging from public opinion surveys, the long summer of migration has seemingly provided such an occasion, for the issue of immigration had overridden concerns such as the economic situation for the first time since the breakout of the Great Recession (European Commission 2015, pp. 14–16).

Collective actors associated with protest activities would usually include migrant, far-right, and solidarity movements (e.g. Giugni and Passy 2006). While all engage in questions related to multiculturalism,

immigration, and asylum politics, solidarity movements are perceived as distinct entities in that they do not benefit directly from the outcome of their involvement (Giugni 2001). In other words, their actions can be defined as 'collective, altruistic, and political' (Passy 2001), hence driven by altruistic and charitable motivations. As the analysis of our cases demonstrates, 'people who are engaged in the solidarity movement often do so not on the basis of political motives, but rather guided by the goal of bringing relief to those who suffer from some kind of injustice' (Giugni 2001, p. 236). Whereas those displays of empathy and duty subtending the public spirit defined above do not generally rely on private interest, they still qualify as a by-product of social relations; as such, it is important to acknowledge that principles leading to altruism may depend upon their political and cultural context (Passy and Giugni 2001). While those emotions subtending prosocial behaviour (Wolfe 1998) are addressed elsewhere in this volume (see chapters by Kleres and Milan), we seek to address charitable activities within the interactive political realm.

Over the years, the scholarship on social movements and contentious politics has pointed to the crucial role of political opportunities for the emergence and impact of collective action (e.g. Kitschelt 1986; Kriesi et al. 1995). By drawing on the 'political process approach', we resort to political opportunities to analyse the extent to which the context and societal environment influenced pro-refugee mobilisations in Hungary and Serbia. Political process scholars conceive social movements as rational actors that model their behaviour according to the perceived possibilities and opportunities they encounter in the socio-political context in which they are embedded (Tarrow 1998). Essentially, grievances and resources alone cannot explain the emergence and development of movements in the absence of political opportunities. The concept of opportunities thus became useful in explaining why grievances transform into action at a given time (McAdam et al. 1996; Tilly 1978).

In order to tackle the complex articulation of opportunities, and following mobilisations, along the Western Balkan route, we are sensitive to the issue of sequentiality. In our analysis, we indeed adopt a sequential approach, meaning that we conceive the emergence of solidarity movements in Hungary and Serbia not as one the consequence of another, but rather as the complex outcome of a sequencing of events coming one

after another (e.g. della Porta et al. 2017, pp. 182–3). Hence, we argue that solidarity movements in both countries cropped up in waves, following contextual factors that affected their genesis, such as the erection of a fence at the Hungarian border which, by re-routing the migratory movement westwards and forcing the migrants to remain into the former Yugoslav country, created the conditions for solidarity movements in Serbia to thrive.

Throughout our analysis, we analyse the frames adopted by solidarity actors, namely, these 'schemata of interpretation that enable individuals to locate, perceive, identify and label events and occurrences' to make sense of reality (Goffman 1974, p. 21). Following the classical categorisation elaborated by Snow and Benford (1988), we take into account three dimensions of framing: diagnostic, which identify a social problem the movement seeks to address and assign blame to the actors who are considered as responsible for it; prognostic, which evoke and suggest appropriate tactics as potential solutions; and motivational, which provide the rationale encouraging potential supporters to side with challengers and take action. By exploring the different discursive strategies employed by solidarity actors, we wish to demonstrate that, during the long migration summer, solidarity movements along the Western Balkan route converged towards a similar definition of the issue at stake (i.e. the migratory flows into their countries) and identified similar causes behind it. Likewise, they put forth broadly similar prescriptions for solving the problem, as well as analogous humanitarian and moral motivations driving them into action.

Solidarity Actors

When the so-called crisis reached its height in summer of 2015, mobilisations in support of migrant populations took different forms, involved rather different actors, and took place in different locations (i.e. Budapest and Belgrade, as well as other hotspots across the country). We believe that solidarity actors included in this study combined advocacy as well as operational competence in their mobilisations, thus not only putting the needs of migrant populations higher in the public agenda but also

providing immediate relief in a situation of crisis (Giugni 2001, p. 236). Those actors with a longer history of activism had generally operated within the context of human rights advocacy and related activities. Conversely, those mobilisations that emerged in direct response to the humanitarian crisis have been more spontaneous and unstructured in character (see list of interviews).

In the case of Hungary, we interviewed a total of six people from the most relevant groups and organisations. Solidarity actors included activists from the Migrant Solidarity Group of Hungary (MigSzol), an organisation placing emphasis on grassroots activism as well as on joint participation of migrants, refugees, and Hungarians (MigSzol 2014); Let's Help the Refugees Together (*Segítsünk Együtt a Menekülteknek*, SEM) and Migration Aid, that is, the two principal groups that coordinated support activities to migrants and asylum seekers; people working for the Eötvös Károly Institute and involved in the establishment and coordination of SEM; others active within the framework of a specific taskforce coordinated by the Central European University (CEU); and finally, the director of *Artemisszió*, an NGO promoting intercultural dialogue, integration, and education (Artemisszió 2014).

All of these activities can be ultimately interpreted as reactions to the poor responsiveness of public authorities—indeed, solidarity acts aimed to overcome the limited (financial and human) resources available to civil initiatives in support of migrant populations. These response mechanisms brought about devoted Facebook groups, from which SEM and Migration Aid quickly emerged and spread out. While other groups (e.g. Food Not Bombs) had been cooking for migrants, grassroots activists recognised the need for greater coordination in the organisation of support activities. Especially at the height of the crisis, activists operating at the Budapest Keleti railway station provided migrants with food, mattresses, and blankets, as well as medical assistance. Especially this last service proved of crucial importance, at a moment when hospitals refused to provide free treatment to migrants. The CEU taskforce was launched to map solidarity actions in Budapest and reach out to NGOs and civil society actors, but swiftly extended to renting out spaces for the collection of donations and supporting other small projects (e.g. mobile charging stations) alongside other groups. Both the CEU and Artemisszió engaged in longer-term

initiatives, such as providing language courses, mentoring, and administering practical workshops to migrants. Finally, MigSzol actively produced 'informed content' and organised protest events, availing itself of migrants' involvement in grassroots activities.

In the case of Serbia, we conducted eight interviews with members and participants in the main grassroots solidarity groups and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) involved in support activities for the migrants transiting across the Serbian territory, in particular to those temporarily stranded in Belgrade. The activists included the project manager of Refugee Aid Miksalište; activists of Info Park; an international volunteer who joined the local No Border network; as well as representatives and people working for non-governmental organisations such as Asylum Info Centre, Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), and Refugee Aid Serbia (RAS). Almost all the initiatives had an emergency character, meaning that they strove to provide stop-gap help to thousands of migrants who over the summer 2015 reached the capital and found refuge in the parks around the stations.

Refugee Aid Miksalište, the main distribution centre and welcome point in Belgrade, hosted inside its premises different associations providing a wide range of services, from distribution of clothes, blankets, and shoes, to provision of food. Inside the building, migrants could also stop at the social cafe and children could play at the 'children and mothers' corner'. Opened in the summer of 2015 at the initiative of a group of people engaged in the cultural hub Mikser House, Refugee Aid Miksalište was initially hosted inside a warehouse in the riverbank neighbourhood of Sava Mala. After its demolition, the centre moved to another building in the vicinity.

The Info Park hub, a local informal initiative financed by the B92 Foundation, was in charge of distributing food and providing information to migrants about the asylum procedure and the situation at the borders, also involving migrants as translators and cultural mediators. Info Park obtained permission to locate a wooden kiosk in one of the parks, equipped with mobile charging stations. Since the spring of 2015, the commitment of the local No Border group translated into distributing tea in the parks, providing support to small-scale refugee protests, as well as squatting a warehouse in the vicinity of the train station, re-named

'No Border Hostel',[1] to overcome the shortage of sleeping places. Furthermore, the group subscribed to practices of 'witnessing', meaning that they used their role as EU citizens to report on the behaviour of police forces (della Porta, introduction, this volume).

Besides these grassroots groups, the Asylum Info Centre (AIC) was a more structured initiative funded by the UNHCR, and established together by the local government and several domestic NGOs. Its staff, mostly young students occasionally employed, provided information to asylum seekers, mostly concerning the possibility to apply for asylum in Serbia. Free Internet access and a safe space for women and children were available inside the AIC premises. The humanitarian organisation ADRA Serbia, the Serbian branch of the Adventist Development and Relief Agency, operated both inside the premises of AIC and in the state-run transit centre of Preševo, at the southern border with Macedonia. ADRA practitioners provided medical and psychological support to migrants in transit, also offering cultural mediation and translation services. Finally, the NGO Refugee Aid Serbia (RAS) was founded in August 2015 as a community association that gathered diverse local groups, charities, and NGOs involved in supporting migrants in Serbia. In Belgrade, RAS ran a depository where clothing, food, and hygiene items were collected and distributed to the migrants in the parks, together with hot meals. Due to the hectic situation throughout the summer of 2015, the activities of the groups often overlapped, and coordination among all the subjects in the area proved at times chaotic.

Diverging Contextual Opportunities

Besides the central role played in the transit of migrants along the Western Balkan route, the interest of focusing on Hungary and Serbia rests on the different opportunities available to solidarity collective actors. Taking into account the developments that occurred during 2015, Hungary offered a very limited scope for political altruism, whereas Serbia seemingly presented favourable prospects for solidarity actions. We refer to the two contexts in turn.

Hungary

PM Viktor Orbán (Fidesz—Hungarian Civic Alliance, hereafter Fidesz) started politicising immigration in the immediate aftermath of the Paris terrorist attacks of January 2015. Upon attendance to the *Marche Republicaine* on 11 January, Orbán had already manifested his unwillingness to welcome migrants from different cultural backgrounds, and quickly proceeded to frame the ongoing inflow of migrants from African and Arab countries as 'economic immigration' bringing 'trouble and danger to the peoples of Europe'.

> While I am PM, Hungary will definitely not become an immigration destination. We don't want to see significantly sized minorities with different cultural characteristics and backgrounds among us. We want to keep Hungary as Hungary. (Viktor Orbán, quoted in Rettman 2015)

Asylum seekers had already applied for refugee status in Hungary before 2015. Between the first quarter of 2013 and the first quarter of 2014, there was an 18 per cent increase in applications (totalling 19,310). These figures doubled to 41,215 first-time applications in 2014 and steeply rose to 174,435 in 2015, thus signalling a +323 per cent increase over a single year. In 2015, Hungary ultimately received 13.9 per cent of total EU applications (Eurostat 2016). While certainly a relevant question for both humanitarian and public order reasons, very few of these applicants intended to remain in Hungary—a transit country that has habitually recorded negative net migration rates.

The politicisation of the migrant crisis was ostensibly orchestrated by the ruling party, primarily for internal public consensus and electoral reasons. Consensus for Fidesz plummeted after the elections in the spring of 2014, mostly due to a string of corruption scandals and unpopular policy proposals (e.g. Pirro 2015a, 2016). Within this context, large-scale mass mobilisations signalled widespread criticism of governmental activity. In order to regain lost ground, public attention was diverted to the alleged threat posed by migratory flows into Europe. The issue, originally articulated by the Movement for a Better Hungary upon Hungarian entry to the EU (Jobbik 2006), was dropped by the political agenda of

the far right in light of its poor mobilising value. In fact, nativism in Hungary found its principal expression in the opposition to ethnic minorities such as the indigenous Roma population (Pirro 2015b).

Fidesz's strategy has, however, borne fruit. Major swings took place in Hungarian public opinion: between 2013 and 2015, the percentage of people deeming immigration one of the most important issues confronting their country rose from two per cent to 68 per cent (Standard Eurobarometer 79 and 84). A Pew Research Center survey, conducted in the spring of 2016, shows that 76 per cent of Hungarians considered refugees as likely to contribute to terrorism and 82 per cent saw them as a burden on the labour market and welfare (Pew Research Center 2016).

Fidesz launched an extensive anti-immigration campaign in early 2015. Among other things, the government poured public money into an expensive xenophobic billboard campaign, also directed at migrants—*in Hungarian*. Messages included: 'If you come to Hungary, don't take the jobs of Hungarians!' and 'If you come to Hungary, you have to keep to our laws'. Yet, there was also distorted information such as 'Did you know that Brussels wants to settle a city's worth of illegal immigrants in Hungary?' or 'Did you know that since the beginning of the immigration crisis the harassment of women has risen sharply in Europe?' The billboard campaign was placed in the context of a national consultation on 'migration and terrorism', whereby the government sent a politically charged questionnaire to four million households, asking their opinion on these issues.

The national consultation aimed to garner public support for restrictive proposals on migration, such as the erection of a 4 m high, 175-km-long fence along the Hungarian-Serbian border—announced in June, started in July, and completed on 15 September 2015. With the completion of another fence on the Croatian-Hungarian border on 16 October, the Orbán government single-handedly halted the inflow of migrants and asylum seekers into the country (Fig. 5.1).

The mainstream discourse, monopolised by the Orbán government, sought to link the economic to the migrant crisis. On the one hand, the government systematically engaged in a practice of 'othering' against migrants; on the other, it often argued that asylum seekers had come to Hungary to take the jobs of a population already on the brink of poverty.

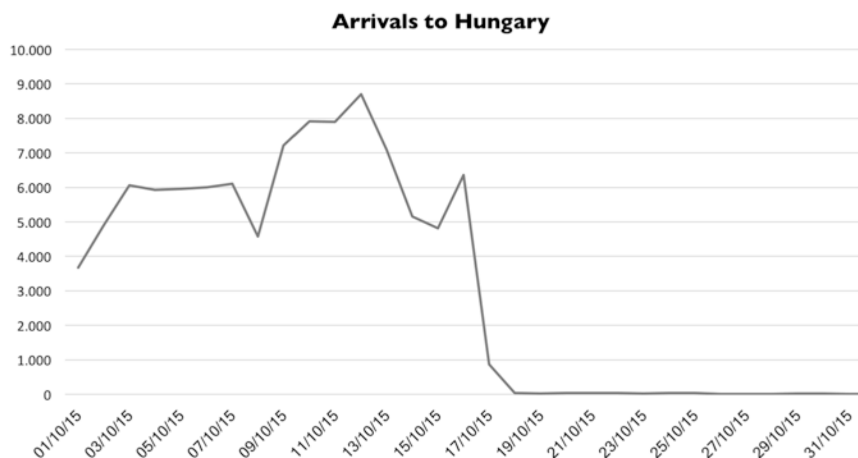

Fig. 5.1 Estimated daily arrivals to Hungary, October 2015. Source: UNHCR (2016)

A positive counter-discourse has been persistently shunned from view and played only a marginal role at the height of the crisis.

The politicisation of the issue by the Hungarian government de facto anticipated what turned out to be a long referendum campaign on the resettlement quotas set by the EU. The referendum, initiated by the government, was announced on 24 February 2016. Ahead of this announcement, and in the run-up to the referendum, Orbán vowed to keep Hungary ethnically and culturally homogeneous, and managed to elevate the conflict on migrants with the EU to one of primary importance. Other governments in Central and Eastern Europe followed suit, going on to form a common bloc against resettlement quotas. After more than a year of campaigning on the issue, the referendum, held on 2 October 2016, was invalidated as it did not meet the quorum; the turnout was 44 per cent. While an overwhelming majority (98.4 per cent) voted against the EU's resettlement quotas, a remarkable 6.2 per cent of total votes were also invalidated.

As the outlining of the context suggests, the political opportunity structure has grown unfavourable to migrant populations and those mobilising in their support. Besides the erection of fences along the borders, the policing of the crisis has also undergone rather unorthodox

phases. Violence and dire human conditions have been variously reported upon at the Hungarian-Serbian border (e.g. Amnesty International 2016). The handling of the situation had been further aggravated by the criminalisation of border crossings. By mid-September 2015, draconian laws were introduced contemplating sentences up to three years for migrants trying to break through the fence, and between one and five years for those providing assistance or help (Amnesty International 2015). Against a backdrop of institutional closure, and the difficulty of opposition parties to take up a humanitarian position without facing setbacks in their support rates, pro-migrant activists evidently faced significant constraints in their mobilisations.

Serbia

During the long summer of migration, Serbia functioned at first as a short-term transit country and stopover for all those migrants aiming to reach the Schengen Area. The flow of migrants, which had begun to increase significantly since May 2015, soared following the decision of the Hungarian government to construct a fence along the Serbian border (Fig. 5.2).

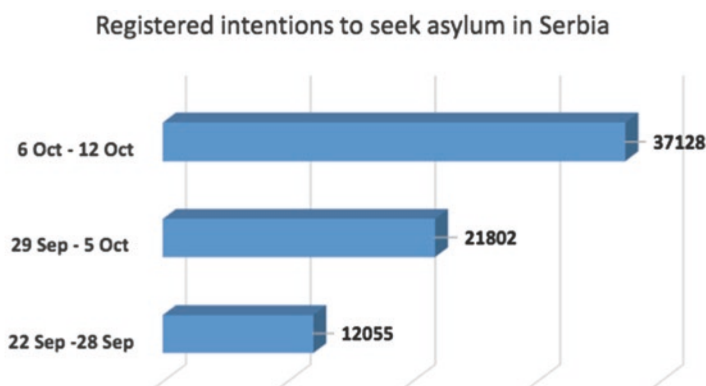

Fig. 5.2 Registered intentions to seek asylum in Serbia, September to October 2015. Source: UNHCR (2015)

As a consequence of Hungary's border closure and the introduction of stricter criminal penalties for illegal border crossings (Šelo Šabić and Borić 2016), the migrants found themselves forced to remain in Serbia, from where they strove to cross the Croatian border, before its eventual closure one month later. Over the summer, they became particularly visible in the parks around the train and bus stations of Belgrade, where they pitched their tents to find temporary respite, setting up makeshift camps in the areas surrounding the train and bus stations.

Unlike his Hungarian counterpart, PM Aleksandar Vučić (Serbian Progressive Party, SNS) adopted a 'welcome policy' towards those migrants transiting across Serbia. In mid-September 2015, he declared:

> I do not see this [migrant crisis] as such a big problem as everyone else in the world sees. They have nothing else to write about, so they scare people with diverse numbers and theories, as if we are not dealing with human beings, but rather aliens. We have no problem with it and we treat these people well. (Aleksandar Vučić, quoted in Al Jazeera Balkans 2015)

The PM often stressed publicly Serbia's pledge to leave its borders open, as well as the country's readiness to welcome refugees as it had in the past during the Yugoslav wars. In an attempt to contribute to the normalisation of the situation, he put forward his refugee background, saying: 'My family was a refugee family, and now I am the prime minister' (Al Jazeera Balkans 2015).

During the summer of 2015, the authorities seemed to tolerate the presence of refugees who had found temporary refuge in the parks around the railway and bus stations of Belgrade, which were supervised by few police patrols. Nevertheless, police behaviour was not always well-disposed: the international NGO Human Rights Watch repeatedly reported experiences of migrant harassment and abuse by Serbian police forces, especially at the border crossings (Human Rights Watch 2015). A few weeks after the photo of little Alan Kurdi drowned on Turkish shores circulated worldwide, another one taken by a BBC journalist portraying a Serbian policeman cradling a Syrian child went viral (BBC 2015). Its resonance increased even more once the Albanian origins of the officer

were disclosed—an element that contributed to accentuate the tolerant and multicultural character of the domestic police forces.

Public officials issued statements in support of refugees and, in August 2015, the PM—along with the Minister of Labour and Social Policy, the Minister of the Interior, and Belgrade's mayor Siniša Mali—personally went to visit the refugees stranded in the parks. A video circulated in the media in which Vučić distributed presents to families, hugged children, and stated publicly that Serbia would do everything possible to provide medical assistance and other types of support necessary 'for the few days the migrants usually spend in Serbia' (Blic.rs. 2015). On other occasions, the PM declared that migrants crossing the Serbian territory would be treated humanely and cared for. Along similar lines, in September 2015, the mayor of Belgrade publicly guaranteed better hygienic conditions in the parks (NI Srbija 2015). Encouraged by the open-arms policy of the government, which on several occasions declared itself to be 'satisfied and proud' of the friendly behaviour of Serbian citizens (e.g. Al Jazeera Balkans 2015), ordinary citizens stepped in to help with basic necessities like food and medication, offering also vital on-the-ground information to refugees.

PM Aleksandar Vučić built national consensus on migrants by stressing two main points: first, by nurturing the idea that refugees would not settle in the country and, hence, Serbia would not have to offer them permanent asylum (Pupavac and Pupavac 2015) and, second, that Serbia had the duty to assist migrants as a way to accelerate its path towards EU membership. Domestic authorities supported the transit of migrants across the Serbian territory, issuing provisional documents to any individual intending to stay legally in the country and confirming their will to seek asylum in Serbia. The permit, valid for 72 hours, offered two possibilities: requesting admission into an asylum centre run by the government's Commissariat for Refugees and Migration[2] or legally crossing Serbia within three days. Past the expiration date, the migrants who had not left the country, or officially lodged an asylum claim, would become illegal. Although a very small number of people showed intention to seek asylum in Serbia, it must be noted that, between 2008 and 2016, the country granted asylum and subsidiary protection to only 77 individuals, notwithstanding the 557,995 asylum applications received in 2015 and the 12,821 in 2016 (Belgrade Center for Human Rights 2017).[3]

Regarding the Serbian relationship with the EU, the welcome policy towards migrants has to be read against the background of Serbia's intention to take further steps on the path towards EU membership, of which the country is a candidate. On the occasion of a meeting with the German chancellor Angela Merkel, PM Vučić stated that, in facing the refugee crisis, Serbia 'behaved in a responsible and European way' (Kristović 2016). Furthermore, he emphasised on many occasions that Serbia would respect and implement the EU policy towards migrants 'as a loyal partner' (Matić 2016).

However, the atmosphere around refugees changed dramatically with the progressive closure of the borders and the shutdown of the Balkan corridor in March 2016. The situation became particularly tense in Belgrade, where a high number of refugees got stuck due to their inability to cross the Croatian and the Hungarian borders, both sealed. Moreover, Hungary progressively reduced to dozens the number of people allowed to transit legally to its territory from Serbia. In line with the progressive militarisation and closure of borders of other EU countries, Serbia's attitude towards migrants also changed. After March 2016, the media started to portray migrants as a European problem that Serbia alone could not deal with.

In several occasions, PM Vučić referred to the high number of people stuck in Serbia by claiming, for instance, that 'Serbia won't serve as a parking lot for the refugees that the EU does not accept' (Večernji list 2016). Mirroring the change in the public discourse, as of mid-July 2016, it was possible to ascertain a securitarian turn in migration policy, as Serbian army and police forces were sent to patrol the borders with Macedonia and Bulgaria (Beznec et al. 2016). This turn in the Serbian migration policy also depended upon the undergoing negotiation process with the EU. The same period, the EU opened negotiation chapters number 23 and 24 to prepare Serbia for the future integration into the Schengen system, which required the tightening of border controls as part of the improvement of the national migration management and asylum system. At the end of July 2016, the municipality of Belgrade evicted the parks where migrants used to gather, ploughing and fencing them. As of November 2016, the domestic authorities addressed a letter to international and national NGOs and humanitarian groups, urging them to

stop providing services to migrants stranded in the capital. In May 2017, the migrants left in Belgrade were finally evicted from the barracks in which they had found shelter during the winter.

Solidarity Frames in Hungary and Serbia

Against a backdrop of marked closure and—at least, provisional—opening of opportunities, the Hungarian and Serbian solidarity movements have seemingly converged in their assessment of the migrant crisis. Leaving aside certain peculiarities to be ascribed to their national contexts—as with the legacy of Yugoslav internal displacement—the timing and pace of political solidarity were affected by the differentiated unfolding of the crisis along the Western Balkan route. Moreover, those involved in solidarity acts seemed to preserve elements of the sequentiality outlined above in their discourses, not least in relation to the closing of opportunities in Hungary.

Hungary

The civil society sector in Hungary has been traditionally weak (e.g. Lomax 1997), and collective displays of solidarity have been sporadic since after 1989. The migrant crisis has offered not only one of those rare opportunities to engage in solidarity acts but also a catalyst for large-scale mobilisation. In the summer of 2015, Budapest Keleti railway station had become one of the main points of transit along the Western Balkan route, hosting between 4000 and 5000 migrants. In the face of the crisis, Migration Aid's chief coordinator at the Keleti railway station recognised that these solidarity acts had been indeed remarkable:

> This mobilisation was really unprecedented, in Hungary at least. We don't really have a history or culture of large-scale volunteerism, donating for a cause, or mobilisations. Of course, it wouldn't be true to say that we never experienced any sort of voluntary movement, but most of these previous mobilisations had something to do with natural crises. … What happened with the refugees, I believe, is nothing short of revolutionary. (Interview HU3)

Those activists that have taken part in mobilisations suggested that the success of solidarity acts should be attributed to humanitarian as well as moral motivations (Interviews HU1 and HU3); in other words, they all came across as a driver of 'strong emotions from both [political] sides' (Interview HU2). Along similar lines, other activists attributed the spread of pro-migrant mobilisations to their non-political character (Interview HU3). Although it may be difficult to disentangle the humanitarian from the ideological components of political solidarity and altruism (e.g. Interview HU6), MigSzol and SEM upheld a politicised outlook in their support activities, at least on the grounds that each form of activism ultimately bears a political component (e.g. Interview HU4). Nonetheless, activist groups such as Migration Aid tried to refrain from explicit engagement with politics, so as to avoid internal infights (Interview HU3).

As the sealing of borders with neighbouring countries started taking shape in summer 2015, the prospects for migrants' own transit and the solidarity acts of Hungarian groups quickly waned. The decision of the Orbán government prompted volunteers to reassess their strategies. While collective efforts were initially redirected along critical border areas (e.g. Hegyeshalom and Röszke), activists belonging to newer solidarity movements were often confronted with logistical problems, on top of frictions with police forces and other organisations (e.g. Interviews HU1 and HU4). As an indicative element in the assessment of sequentiality's role, more occasional volunteers reconsidered their commitment by gradually detaching themselves from the migrant cause, both at the practical and at the ideological level. In particular, the discourses of activists highlight two turning points for the fate of pro-migrant mobilisations: the closing down of the Serbian-Hungarian border (September 2015) and the Paris attacks (November 2015). If the first imparted a serious blow to hands-on grassroots activism by practically ending the arrival of migrants to Hungary (Interview HU4), the second ultimately vilified the ideological commitment of volunteers. Against a backdrop of negative campaigning and further political closure, the sequence of events has finally called mobilising efforts to a halt and undermined the hopes of activists (Interview HU2).

With regard to the aspect of blame attribution, Hungarian solidarity actors have often deemed the EU collectively responsible for the unfolding of events and the mismanagement of the crisis. This perception has,

at times, also borne a rather pessimistic outlook on the future of a united Europe, given the inability of national governments to handle the humanitarian crisis through concerted actions. The stringency of the Dublin Regulation has effectively given little room for manoeuvre for migrant populations to reach their desired final destination. Among those groups that monitored the field in Budapest as well as several other hotspots, MigSzol gained significant insights into the management of the humanitarian crisis. One of their activists precisely seemed to recognise the obstacles posed by EU legislation and the need to circumvent them:

> If you are granted [refugee] status, you need to be granted freedom of movement within Europe. … If freedom of movement was granted afterwards, that would be a *huge* relief … it would really calm things down, and it would *destroy* the business of the smugglers. (Interview HU1)

This notwithstanding, activists also considered the attitude taken by individual countries. According to the SEM spokesperson, the governments of EU member states tried to push the problem away by criticising each other—a behaviour that has contributed to worsening the crisis (Interview HU4). Practitioners with a longer involvement in the NGO sector proved most worried by the turn of events: the very same unfolding of the migrant crisis ostensibly tapped into a 'crack that has been there before' and called into question not only the concept of a 'social Europe' but also the very survival of a single European entity (Interview HU6).

Reconsidering access and transit criteria would arguably contribute to solving a problem that resumed over the course of summer 2016 (e.g. B92 2016). Even so, those activists operating within the framework of the two largest grassroots groups envisioned a change of government as a possible solution to the crisis. Given that Fidesz has, since its rise to power, targeted in turn homeless people, the EU, and migrants, a change of political scenario may as well represent a first step towards a broader sociocultural change—besides offering a more practical solution to the problem. As one of SEM's activists suggests:

> What happened with the refugees is part of a bigger picture—it exactly feeds into the policy of what Orbán and the government have been doing

> in the past six years. … The government has been creating enemies for the past six years—this is their political agenda. They pick an enemy group and create an enemy out of it; they did the same with the homeless, the refugees, and civil society. … It's a kind of war rhetoric. (Interview HU2)

The attribution of blame became even clearer when grassroots activists were given the opportunity to ponder the priorities set by the Orbán government during the crisis. For instance, the chief coordinator at the Keleti railway station drew attention to the lack of institutional response to the crisis, while large investments—in terms of time and money—were made to erect fences along the Hungarian border (Interview HU3). Along similar lines, the SEM spokesperson indicated how huge sums of money and EU funds were poured into defamatory billboard campaigns and the building of fences, whereas serious investments could have been made to hire people at the Migration Office and train police forces (Interview HU4). Besides the perception of governmental negligence, there is a widespread view among activists that a number of organisations that could have taken action were simply afraid to do so as their financial sustainability—not to mention, survival—depended on state provisions (Interview HU1). Activists seemed to argue that the government had not only failed to tackle the crisis but had also (indirectly) prevented a number of civil society actors from taking action in support of migrant populations. Such a perspective is partly shared by the coordinator of the CEU taskforce:

> A lot of NGOs that get funding from the government would be afraid to react, so they were not involved actively. Had there been a different approach from the government, that could have alleviated the humanitarian crisis. (Interview HU5)

As large-scale humanitarian emergencies demand remedies at multiple levels, grassroots activists also referred to the integration of refugees as an essential mid- to long-term condition to overcome the crisis. The economic and social benefits that would derive from their integration were claimed to outweigh the possible problems (Interview HU3), though these results could only be attained by teaching migrant populations the

language, helping them with accommodations, and investing in their peaceful coexistence with local communities (Interview HU4).

Serbia

A wide range of resources were mobilised by the Serbian population to provide a timely response to the crisis. The response of civil society was diversified, as it involved various actors engaged in supporting transiting migrants. As it emerged from the interviews, it was particularly after the announced sealing of the Serbian border by the Hungarian government (September 2015) and the closure of Croatian border one month later that the number of transiting migrants began to increase, particularly in Belgrade. Following the worsening relationship between Serbia and the Hungarian government (Interview SBR1)—which decided to allow into the country only 15 people a day through the transit zones of Horgoš and Kelebija (at the northern border with Hungary)—the number of people waiting in Belgrade rose, while the opportunity for solidarity actions multiplied.

While only registered NGOs were allowed to enter and operate in the state-run registration and transit centres, a more informal response to the growing influx of people took place in the capital. This was an important spot for migrants to meet smugglers helping them to cross the border, or to receive information and first help while deciding on whether to lodge an asylum application in Serbia or continue their journey onwards. Besides some registered domestic and international NGOs, several grass-roots groups got involved in supporting the migrants populating the parks around the train and bus station of the capital. Distribution of food, hygiene items, and clothes took place on a daily basis from the beginning of summer 2015, involving both locals and foreign volunteers. Often, the latter were young people travelling around the Balkans who would stop after being emotionally affected by the plight of refugees in Serbia (Interview SRB5). Regarding their profile, solidarity actors included activists who had already been involved in hands-on activism (as with the founders of Miksalište) as well as 'newcomers'—that is, people with no prior experience in humanitarian aid.

In explaining their decision to support the migrant cause, several interviewees framed it as a moral duty rooted in humanitarian motivations. In that regard, an activist who had been travelling across the Balkans during the summer decided to remain longer in Belgrade in order to help the migrants. He described his motivation as follows:

> It is humanity. You cannot just pass by. We are all victims of a system. This feeling of injustice and insecurity harms all of us. (Interview SRB2)

Another activist volunteering for the association Info Park, and in charge of distributing food and providing information to the migrants stranded in the parks of Belgrade, again pointed at the importance of humanitarian drives:

> As a human, I cannot stand what is going on in the Middle East. (Interview SRB1)

A third, temporarily employed at the Asylum Info Centre as a translator and cultural mediator, also explained her engagement with humanitarian reasons. In her words, commitment to the solidarity cause lay in the attempt to overcome the dire situation migrants were facing:

> It is difficult to see people fleeing and dying from countries where they previously had good lives. When they come here, the main thing is to treat them as human beings, like the people or friends you see every day. … When I recall my situation and that of my friends, I can hardly look away and say that this is not my problem. (Interview SRB3)

The values informing solidarity actions have been humanity, neutrality, and independence—hence, activist commitment seemed to go beyond political, ideological, or religious principles (Interview SRB5). Some actors took a more politicised stance, as the No Border network, whose members claimed that their action was 'a politically motivated support and provision of independent information about the situation at the borders, part of a wider struggle against the neoliberal order' (Interview SRB4).

Frequently, interviewees involved in solidarity actions referred to their past, deriving their motivation for mobilisation from their own biographical experiences. Several interviewees underwent a situation of displacement following the Yugoslav Wars of the 1990s, or were themselves sons of asylum seekers. In their opinion, such experiences compelled them to support the migrant cause. As in the case of solidarity actors in Austria, Germany, and Sweden (see chapters by Milan and Kleres, this volume), the emotional dimension played an important role in motivating ordinary citizens to join solidarity mobilisations; the interviews highlighted that the local population's identification with the migrants in transit stemmed from the perception of having undergone a similar traumatic experience in the past. Other activists praised the positive atmosphere surrounding these mobilisations:

> We experienced a war not so long ago. Elder people were compassionate and understood what was going on. Some people were against the refugees, but most of people really tried to help them. (Interview SRB3)

As in the Hungarian case, a large part of the interviewees deemed the EU responsible, both for the absence of a common European asylum policy and for the inability to find a united response in solving the crisis. By blaming EU institutions, solidarity actors partly aligned themselves with the Serbian government, which had repeatedly underlined the country's willingness to follow EU rules and welcome refugees, notwithstanding the limited resources available. Following the closure of the border with Hungary, they also blamed the Hungarian government for the increasing number of people transiting Serbia, and pointed out its hostile behaviour towards migrants as the main reason for the backlogs in the asylum system in Serbia (Interview SRB5). Similarly, another interviewee attributed the migrant crisis to the overcharged asylum system in Serbia—a direct consequence of the worsening relationship with the Hungarian government after Orbán's decision to erect a razor-wire fence along the border:

> People are escaping wars, fleeing Syria and Afghanistan for safety reasons. At a deeper level, the asylum procedure at the national level is overwhelmed and international relations between Serbia and Hungary are going bad. (Interview SBR1)

Most of the activists rejected the definition of 'refugee crisis', claiming that it was instead 'a political crisis, a crisis of Europe, not of refugees' (Interview SRB2)—and a crisis because 'basic needs are not being met' (Interview SRB1). In this regard, another activist depicted the refugee crisis as:

> A massive movement of people [that] is part of the autonomous migration itself, [caused] by the critical situation in the Middle East. To call it a 'refugee crisis' is a populist expression, as it was not so big in terms of movement. The Schengen [Area], Fortress Europe, the distinction between West and East are the biggest problems. (Interview SRB5)

With regard to proposed solutions, activists often listed the opening of the borders of the Schengen Area member states (in particular Hungary and Croatia) in order to release the pressure on Serbia, the integration of migrants into Serbian society, and especially the creation of a common European migration policy. An interviewee emphasised that the lack of interaction between migrants and the local population contributed to instil the perception of migrants as a threat to the society. As a solution, she identifies the integration of migrants into the local community, in order to overcome both scepticism and fear deriving from the insufficient opportunity for the Serbian population to get in touch with different cultures (Interview SRB6).

Conclusions

Following political turmoil in the near East, countries located along the Western Balkan route have recently been exposed to unprecedented migratory flows. By the summer of 2015, Hungary had become a principal gate of migration into the EU, attracting increasing numbers of asylum seekers from war-torn countries. When the Hungarian government completed the sealing of country borders, however, the onus of crisis management swiftly turned over to Serbia. Amid differentiated institutional responses to the humanitarian crisis on the part of PMs Orbán (Hungary) and Vučić (Serbia), the sequence of events did not prevent

solidarity actors in the two countries from converging on rather similar framings of the issue.

In an attempt to counter declining support rates, the Orbán government proved indeed successful in the adversarial politicisation of immigration, eventually using it for its own political advantage. Conversely, PM Vučić, partly motivated by the prospect of Serbia's EU accession, engaged in an open-arms policy vis-à-vis migrant populations. In the face of diverging opportunities, significant portions of civil society mobilised in support of migrants in both countries, subscribing to comparable readings of the phenomenon. In Hungary, collective displays of solidarity and altruism were mostly visible between June and September 2015—that is, before the sealing of the Hungarian-Serbian border. According to the sequential reading provided in this text, solidarity movements gained momentum in Serbia when the erection of the fence at the Hungarian border became a concrete political plan. It was in fact after the closure of the Hungarian border that the number of migrants stranded in Belgrade began to increase at a fast pace. More than a simple argumentative stratagem, the element of sequentiality was reflected in the words and deeds of activists and practitioners alike.

Our comparative analysis revealed that these mobilisations have, at the same time, delivered a clear solidarity (i.e. altruistic, moral, and humanitarian) component as their principal motivation and managed to summon thousands of volunteers, mobilising both older and newer actors. In Hungary, collective actions ostensibly epitomised the biggest solidarity movement since the regime change of 1989 (e.g. Interview HU2). Perhaps equally momentous, we found that collective displays of altruism in Serbia were at least in part indebted to the legacy of displacement during the Yugoslav Wars (e.g. Interview SRB3). Still, grassroots and civil society actors generally converged in their assessment of the problem. In both countries, the EU was blamed for the mishandling of the crisis and expected solutions to be elaborated at the supranational level. The EU was particularly criticised for its laxness and poor decision-making at a time when swift and effective responses were needed. Different from Serbia, where institutional and non-institutional actors responded based on similar motivations, Hungarian

activists and practitioners additionally blamed PM Orbán for the deliberate investments *against* migrant populations. This is hardly surprising given the overall closure of political opportunities and the ongoing war against civil society waged by the Hungarian government (Guardian 2017). Hence, while some of the Hungarian activists anticipated a change of government as a possible solution to the crisis, both Hungarian and Serbian activists were aware that, in order to attain successful integration of migrant populations, concrete plans should be made to address and guarantee them primary needs.

Interviews

HU1: Activist, Migrant Solidarity Group of Hungary (MigSzol). Budapest, 26 July 2016.
HU2: Practitioner and activist, Eötvös Károly Intézet and Segítsünk Együtt a Menekülteknek (SEM). Budapest, 27 July 2016.
HU3: Activist and chief coordinator at Budapest Keleti railway station, Migration Aid. Budapest, 27 July 2016.
HU4: Activist and spokesperson, Segítsünk Együtt a Menekülteknek (SEM). Budapest, 28 July 2016.
HU5: Taskforce coordinator, Central European University (CEU). Budapest, 28 July 2016.
HU6: Director, Artemisszió. Budapest, 29 July 2016.
SRBI: Volunteer, Info Park. Belgrade, 24 July 2016.
SRB2: Interpreter and cultural mediator, Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Belgrade, 25 July 2016.
SRB3: Practitioner, Asylum Info Centre. Belgrade, 25 July 2016.
SRB4: International activist, No Border network. Belgrade, 27 July 2016.
SRB5: Coordinator, Refugee Aid Serbia (RAS). Belgrade, 28 July 2016.
SRB6: Volunteer psychologist, Asylum Info Centre. Belgrade, 28 July 2016.
SRB7: Project manager, Refugee Aid Miksalište. Belgrade, 29 July 2016.
SRB8: Volunteer, Balkan Center for Migration and Humanitarian Activities. Belgrade, 29 July 2016.

Notes

1. Although evicted and demolished in April 2016 to make room for the contested Belgrade Waterfront Project (No Border Serbia 2016), the warehouse provided sleeping places to refugees for a considerable period of time (Open Borders 2016).
2. The central institution in the national migration regime in Serbia, founded in the late 1990s to deal with the refugees of the Yugoslav Wars and IDPs.
3. These data ought to be treated with caution, as the numbers include both those who expressed an intention to seek asylum in Serbia, but never formalised it, and those who officially lodged an asylum application.

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6

Refugee Solidarity in a Multilevel Political Opportunity Structure: The Case of Spain

Javier Alcalde and Martín Portos

Introduction

Spain is part of the Schengen border, comprising the only European frontier with the African continent. This geostrategic location is crucial for the Spanish role within the EU migration and asylum policies, as it has traditionally facilitated the inflow of migrants. However, since the beginning of the financial crisis, the immigrants living in Spain have particularly suffered, and many have returned to their countries of origin (Hellgren and Serrano 2017). In sharp contrast with other European cases, Spain has not experienced a massive inflow of refugees under the so-called refugee crisis. In part, this was due to the stricter conditions imposed by the Spanish government and the Moroccan authorities to prevent people from crossing the so-called Southern border (Zaragoza Cristiani 2016).

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In early September 2015, the Spanish government negotiated with the other European governments to host 2500–3500 refugees (Pérez 2016). Spain's offer was similar in number to those of other countries run by conservative parties, such as Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary. In this context, the image of the dead body of a three-year-old Syrian boy drowned on 2 September 2015 in the Mediterranean Sea made global headlines, becoming a transformative event that increased civil society's pressure, not only but also through protest activities. The incident changed the government's position as, on 15 September 2015, Spain committed to welcoming more than 17,000 refugees. Far from meeting its self-imposed standards, however, six months later, the Spanish government had only admitted the embarrassing number of 18 refugees in total (Pérez 2016). By the end of 2016, Spain had hosted only five per cent of the refugees to which the government had committed in the two-year period, September 2015 to September 2017 (Público 2016).

In spite of the government's ambiguous position, a strong social movement in solidarity with refugees developed within the country, with varying degrees of institutionalisation. This included well-known organisations, such as the Spanish Committee of Refugee Aid (CEAR) and the Red Cross, together with hundreds of grassroots solidarity initiatives all over the country, as well as Stop Mare Mortum (SMM), a very politicised group dealing specifically with refugees in transit. Additionally, Spanish activists were overrepresented abroad, for example, in the Greek camps. In fact, Spaniards are considerably more concerned about refugee issues than are most of their European counterparts, as various surveys show.[1] The inexistence of a relevant political opposition to the refugees also proves the favourable political context for the solidarity movement in Spain.

Despite the general strength of the solidarity movement in Spain, the spread of protest, its features, and citizens' reactions vary dramatically from town to town. In this chapter, we focus on three subsets of cases, which we will explore in detail, based on our fieldwork: the Southern border, Barcelona, and Andalusia and Galicia. Before moving to the empirical part, we highlight the importance of the local dimension—and especially of varying local-level opportunity structures—for the mobilisations in solidarity with refugees. We conclude by highlighting the main contributions of this chapter.

Political Opportunities at the Local Level in Spain

Despite the relatively low number of refugees, Spain has a long history of dealing with waves of immigration, with long-established NGOs and organisations focusing on the issue (e.g. CEAR). Citizens' mobilisations tend to have a transnational scope, but they are deeply rooted at the local grassroots level and are characterised by the—comparatively rare—absence of relevant anti-refugee protest events led by racist counter-movements. However, the solidarity movement with refugees in Spain is quite heterogeneous, assuming different characteristics in different municipalities, which became crucial arenas for contention, given their capacity to carry out specific policies independently from the national ones.[2] Regarding refugee policies, the relevance of local agency relative to national policies has been highlighted (e.g. Katz et al. 2016; Juzwiak et al. 2014). As far as contentious politics is concerned, places like Tahrir Square in Cairo, Puerta del Sol in Madrid, and Gezi Park in Istanbul have played a central role as (symbolic) arenas of political action. In fact, since the 1990s, the relationship between space and contentious politics has received growing attention in the social sciences (Andretta et al. 2015, p. 200), and so has the study of the political opportunity structures at the local level.

In his pioneering work, Eisinger conceived political opportunity structures 'as a function of the degree to which groups are likely to be able to gain access to power and to manipulate the political system' (Eisinger 1973, p. 25). Later, other authors would elaborate this idea by suggesting that institutional factors were mediated by the characteristics of protestors' allies and opponents (e.g. Kriesi 1989, 1991; della Porta and Rucht 1995). In fact, social movements interact with a variety of actors within the public administration, in the party system, among interest groups, and within the civil society. During a cycle of protest, including recent campaigns for the refugees' rights, relationships of conflict or co-operation among these actors intensify.

As far as allies are concerned, several social movements have developed special links with political parties, such as the labour movement and the socialist parties, ethnic movements and regionalist parties, ecologists and

the Greens, and so on. According to Goldstone, 'political parties and social movements have become overlapping, mutually dependent actors in shaping politics' (Goldstone 2003, p. 4). Although the configuration of power on the left is particularly important for social movements (Kriesi 1989, p. 296), some authors argue that participation by left-wing parties in government has a negative effect on collective action because it discourages those who are potentially more protest-prone from actual protest. For example, Koopmans and Rucht (1995) found that left-wing protest increases under right-wing governments and vice versa. Thus, when faced with a government to which they feel closer, social movements reduce the use of protest and increase their use of direct pressure. In addition, the presence of powerful allies has a moderating influence on social movement tactics (della Porta 1995; della Porta and Rucht 1995), in part because when in power, progressive politicians tend to support moderate demands on issues compatible with their traditional voters (Kriesi et al. 1995, p. 59).

In Southern Europe, several cases of collaboration between parties and movements can be mentioned, including the feminist (della Porta 2003; Valiente 2003) and the global justice movements (della Porta et al. 2005; Tarrow 2005). Activists from these movements have influenced the institutional Left by focusing on the traditional demands of social rights and justice, which are also central to the social movement in solidarity with refugees. To sum up, 'the presence of powerful allies is generally a factor facilitating social movement success' (della Porta and Diani 2006, p. 218). Although the availability of allies is expected to increase the mobilising power of protest, it may in fact weaken anti-government performances in the streets when the allied party is in office.

Another dimension of the political context that is crucial for our analysis is the policing of protest. In Spain, we have identified two locations, Ceuta and Melilla, where the level of coercion applied to the collective action by asylum seekers and their supporters has been increasing in the last years. Techniques developed in these sites have also been applied elsewhere in the EU. This is consistent with the conservative narratives and securitisation policies focused on stimulating panic, which have presented juvenile protestors as a threat to social order in a country with low criminality rates but high levels of fear of crime (Calvo and Portos 2018).

In this chapter, we look at the activists' perceptions of the local opportunity structures and their impact on social movement strategies. In studying the role of activists' allies and opponents, the Spanish case has the advantage of a lot of variation. Following the previous cycle of anti-austerity mobilisations, a number of movement parties (della Porta et al. 2017b; Portos 2016) emerged in the country. Along with cities governed by traditional parties, such as the conservative PP and the social-democratic PSOE, a number of municipalities are run as so-called cities of change, by Podemos-backed candidacies—among them Madrid, Barcelona, Santiago de Compostela, and Zaragoza. Social movement studies would expect the presence of allies in government to facilitate movement success, but also to reduce the need for contentious action, which would instead grow in radicality when opportunities are limited.

To address this issue, we have compared cities with different political opportunities. We start the analysis with a case in which the local government was indeed elected on a platform in which solidarity with migrants occupied a central role: Barcelona. We then continue by comparing, within Galicia and Andalusia, some Podemos-backed local governments (A Coruña, Cádiz) with municipalities led by the PSOE (Seville, Córdoba) and PP (Ourense). Finally, we look at the two enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla, where political opportunities are particularly closed, with high levels of repression. In all the mentioned localities, we carried out more than 30 semi-structured interviews with key informants, plus desk research. Although most of the interviews were conducted between April and October 2016, our research time frame covers the period between 2015 and late 2016.

Barcelona: Does the Movement Jump into the Institutions?

In the European context, Barcelona is a special case. Politically, the city council co-ordinates the European refugees' network at the inter-municipal level. Moreover, a number of protest events for refugees' rights have taken place regularly in the city, promoted by a broad range of groups, associations, and networks focused on solidarity initiatives at the

local level (e.g. hosting refugees in private houses) and internationally (e.g. volunteering in the refugee camps abroad). Regarding network configurations, these mobilisations are of a mixed nature. On the one hand, they are connected to previous activism, in particular (but not only) in the fields of immigration and development. On the other hand, they include groups and organisations created in 2015 and 2016, many of them as a consequence of personal or very small-scale initiatives.

Although there are tensions, in Barcelona there is more proximity between movement and party than in other Spanish cities. Among the new SMOs created during the crisis, Stop Mare Mortum was built from collaborative networks and personal relationships to gradually become an umbrella platform aimed at co-ordinating most of the various initiatives by civil society.[3] It focuses on challenging the current regional, national, and European policies of migration and asylum, and on major monitoring of the business agreements (including halting the selling of weapons to countries in violation of human rights) and the destination of aid and development funds (Stop Mare Mortum 2015). Its spokesperson defines its concrete role in the whole panorama of Catalan SMOs working on refugees as follows:

> When we started, there were already people working on the causes of the problem. That is, war. The peace movement here has a long tradition and its main organisations had been claiming against arms' trade and the situation of the Middle East conflicts, for example. Also, there were well-established NGOs welcoming refugees who had already arrived here. But in between there was a vacuum. No one was dealing with the transition since these people leave their home countries until they reach our society. (Interview S7)

As the movement network around the refugee issue was flourishing in the depths of the crisis in the Mediterranean, the 2015 municipal election brought in Ada Colau—a social activist and former spokesperson of the PAH (Platform of those Affected by the Mortgages)—as the city's new Mayor, with the issue of refugees as one of her political priorities.

Similarly to other Spanish cities, local activism in Barcelona is trying to fill the gap between what the central government has promised to do and what it has done in reality. While the government pledged to facili-

tate the arrival of thousands of refugees, since the beginning of the crisis, the numbers have been much smaller. The head of the city council's refugees' office confirms the existence of such a gap: 'The Spanish State has not allowed us to fulfil our duties as citizens and as institutions in order to welcome asylum-seekers following international law' (Interview S10). According to our interviewees, this gap is one of the main reasons why non-politicised people have joined the social movement in solidarity with refugees.

In sharp contrast to other parts of Spain, religious organisations have played a marginal role in the mobilisations on refugees in Barcelona. In the words of a local activist, 'even though some of them are rebellious, their focus here is usually on assistance. They have signed manifestos, but there is always the element of saving people, assisting them, rather than the political confrontation that characterize us. We need political confrontation, because we want to change the policies' (Interview S14).

In the evolution of 'the refugee crisis', two turning points have been identified. As elsewhere in Spain, one of them is the picture of the drowned child Alan Kurdi, which reached people with profiles different from the traditional activists and dramatically increased protest participation. As confirmed by a participant in many demonstrations, 'in May 2015, there were no more than 30 people in our demonstrations. In September 2015, we were already 500' (Interview S13). Moreover, several local associations were created following this event.

The second significant moment in this evolution was the EU agreement with Turkey. According to the same activist from SMM: 'paradoxically, it helped the movement. Prior to that, we were overemphasizing several internal differences we had. This agreement strengthened the cohesion of the group' (Interview S13). Meanwhile, the movement kept expanding. In March 2016, 15,000 people demonstrated. As the activist continues: 'we had to create "open assemblies" because more and more people kept coming to our internal meetings. We began to say "no" to some invitations to give talks' (Interview S13).

Regarding the diffusion processes, there have been efforts to create local sections of SMM in other Catalan cities, such as Girona, Lleida, and Tarragona. In addition, in other parts of Spain such as Galicia, proposals have emerged to create similar platforms with the same political project

of focusing on the right to safe passage for refugees in transit from their countries of origin to the countries of destination. In the words of an activist from SMM, ‘it was unimaginable that it could reach the level of mobilization that has been achieved’ (Interview S14). On 19 June 2016, more than 100 organisations came together in a joint call for a demonstration, with representatives of the local government opening the march, thus showing that the social movement has evolved and become an established actor within the civil society.

Friends and Foes

Even in Barcelona, however, activists define their relationship with the city council as cordial but claim that flows of communication could be improved. We have already noted the diversity existing within the platform, which includes members of different left-wing political parties. The activists who are more closely aligned with Ada Colau’s coalition, Barcelona en Comú, are not among the most active, despite the favourable discourse of the Mayor of Barcelona toward the refugees’ cause. The availability of allies at the local level seems to increase the resources available to the movement and to present an opportunity to advance their claims in the institutional arena, expanding their popular support and enhancing their influence over the policy-making process. However, as a side effect, internal tensions and disputes have arisen over the movement’s strategic choices (collaborative versus confrontational tones with institutions), along with criticisms of the Mayor for turning the refugee issue to her advantage without effectively redressing the situation. As described by this activist from SMM, there are opportunities but also challenges related to the presence of political allies in the city council:

> This is a movement that emerges from below and remains this way. It cannot be controlled by the City Council of Barcelona or by the regional government. Sometimes, people close to the City Council have tried to take our place. There is a very specific political orientation and an attempt of the municipality of the city to become the leader of the defence of the refugees’ rights. They truly believe in this cause, but there is a political

> advantage for them. From an electoral standpoint, this is an appealing issue in Barcelona. (Interview S11)[4]

As far as the opponents of the movement are concerned, 'only tourists sometimes criticize our protest events', says a local activist (Interview S13). This situation is quite exceptional in the context of the European Union, where organised far Right groups have targeted refugees, sometimes even physically. While Catalan activists working on immigration issues are often insulted through online networks, Barcelona has not seen any anti-refugee protest events. This might be explained by a number of factors. Some might posit that the tiny number of refugees in the city does not challenge coexistence—but in other countries (e.g. Poland), there is strong opposition against refugees despite their small numbers. Rather, the existence of a local, grassroots anti-racist and anti-fascist movement might have contributed to the lack of resonance of anti-immigrant and anti-refugees' frames for mobilisation. In addition, the Indignados movement has channelled citizen discontent in a more constructive and tolerant way than in other countries. Importantly, immigrants were overrepresented and very active in many social endeavours that have large popular support (e.g. the Platform of those Affected by the Mortgages, PAH, which fights evictions). Additionally, the political agenda in Catalonia was focused on countering austerity and promoting independence. Mobilisations on both issues used and pre-figured democratic-emancipatory and inclusionary frames (della Porta et al. 2017a), which are not compatible with non-solidary conceptions around the refugee issue.

Finally, although there might be demand for a populist radical right party, there is no strong national-level successful force within this ideological spectrum. On the one hand, (potential) populist radical Right parties are punished by the Spanish electoral system (Alonso and Rovira-Kaltwasser 2015). On the other hand, the party competition system and electoral strategies of the conservative Partido Popular are successful in appealing to both moderate and (also extreme) right-wing-leaning citizens. While many of its founding members had ties to the Francoist regime, the PP has become a sort of catch-all party on the right wing of the electoral spectrum, at least until the national-level irruption of the

centre-liberal Ciudadanos. Also, advancing an anti-immigration agenda in Spain while detaching from Francoist reminiscences would be problematic—this is particularly important in Catalonia, where civil society actors tend to portray themselves as leaning toward the Left. As a member of the International Commission of SMM stressed, 'we come from a dictatorship still very recent and this makes us a little scary to link us with xenophobic movements coming from the extreme right. Fortunately, there is not an anti-immigration party. And potential supporters of such a policy do not want to be associated with the dictatorship. They would feel disappointed' (Interview S14).

Andalusia and Galicia: Discursive Opening in the 'Cities of Change'

In the last few years, various Podemos-backed local governments have launched the 'cities of change' network of municipalities in Spain. Most of them have participated in launching the 'Refugees Welcome' initiative. In order to assess the impact of potential allies on the characteristics of the mobilisations, we studied two different regions (Andalusia and Galicia), comparing in each of them municipalities run by movement-related candidacies with others led by more traditional forces. Specifically, we focus on two cities run by Podemos-backed candidacies in very different settings, Cádiz and A Coruña, and others ruled by more traditional forces (PSOE and PP) such as Córdoba, Seville, and Ourense. According to our empirical evidence, having forces of change such as Podemos in office in several city councils has some consequences, but mainly at the discursive level. While such potential allies embrace the movement's demands, they neither necessarily act accordingly nor lead the transformation of claims into policy priorities. In part, this may be explained by the Spanish government's unwillingness to implement pro-refugee policies. Since the commitments regarding the number of refugees to be let into the country have not been transformed into actual country-wide policies, most local politicians have, in the words of a local policy-maker, their 'hands tied'. That is, they cannot use their own resources to welcome the refugees that have not arrived as they were supposed to.

Beyond local politics, the configuration of the social movement in Spain combines different strategies and objectives. While some of the solidarity groups have traditionally focused on direct help (e.g. Andalucía Acoge, Teranga, Cáritas) and raising social awareness (e.g. Acción en Red), more recent—grassroots—initiatives emphasise refugees' empowerment and organise contentious activities (e.g. Córdoba Ciudad Refugio). In addition, pre-existing networks have played an important role in the emergence and persistence of the solidarity campaigns. In smaller cities, several solidarity platforms emerged from Catholic Church-related foundations and organisations that operate from a charitable work perspective. Finally, there seems to be a trend toward an increasing regional- and national-level co-ordination, as several campaigns are on the rise (e.g. No Somos Delito, SOS Racismo, Caravana a Melilla, Caravana a Grecia). Having said this, we also noted that, as the numbers of asylum seekers who have actually arrived in Spanish cities are scanty, people have tended to demobilise.

In Andalusia, the solidarity movement with refugees faces several challenges. On the one hand, as a social activist based in Cádiz argues, 'people are sensitized, but the socio-economic conditions of the local population are bad. This is one of the reasons why the refugee issue is a bit blocked here' (Interview S18). On the other hand, the actual number of refugees that make it to the region remains low. As an activist from APDHA in Cádiz continues, 'different from what happens in Italy or Greece and with the exception of Ceuta and Melilla, here we have not encountered the problem of refugees' arrival in conditions of needing direct aid' (Interview S2).

As in other places, the movement in Andalusia consists of a mix of traditional SMOs and new projects created since 2015. The Asociación Pro Derechos Humanos de Andalucía (APDHA) is the most important organisation working in the field of immigration in the region. APDHA is a well-established and widely known organisation that has maintained its subversive character. It consists of grassroots activists, many of them with long records of protest, together with younger volunteers. It is closely related to the Catholic Church, as one activist from APDHA in Cádiz explains: 'our association was founded by a priest and we have many links with the working-class people within the Catholic Church,

which are very progressive' (Interview S2). While APDHA does not only deal with migrants, this section is particularly strong in the towns located in the Bay of Cádiz—where migrants would normally arrive on boats from Africa. In absolute terms, 'we are a modest organization (we work only in Andalusia) but also ambitious (we defend all human rights). We aim to give voice to the underprivileged people, such as prostitutes, imprisoned and migrant population' (Interview S2). Although varying in size and profile, APDHA's mission on activism around migrants and refugees has three components: (a) to facilitate their reception, by proposing the instruments needed so that the municipalities can accommodate refugees; (b) to put pressure on the governments, pointing at their responsibilities; and (c) to raise awareness within the local population, which is particularly hard hit by the crisis. In this perspective, activists have deployed mixed tactics. In Seville, they would organise one gathering or night vigil in the main square of the city every time one person died in the Mediterranean. They also conduct research and generate reports and are often present in the media.

The relationship between the new groups and more established organisations is not always smooth. In the words of a local activist of the Plataforma Activista Social,[5] 'large NGOs deliver awareness-raising activities, which is something that needs to be done, but we do something else' (Interview S17). With regard to the associations working on human rights issues, they view these new initiatives with mixed feelings: 'This is ethically acceptable, these people try to do good from the heart, but they do not always know how to single out where the real problems are' (Interview S2).

With regard to the activists' backgrounds, in Cádiz the Indignados movement that took to the streets in Spain on 15 May 2011 and shook the country during the following months has played a less significant role than in other cities, such as Madrid or Barcelona. The most meaningful effect of the 15M is the politicisation of some (arguably key) social actors, including the current Mayor of Cádiz. As a human rights activist noted,

> He [the Mayor] had been active with the Hermandad Obrera de Acción Católica [Worker's Brotherhood of Catholic Action, a working-class organisation set up by the Catholic Church], which is a relatively strong organization of the progressive Church. The participation in the squares contributed to his

political commitment. Moreover, many young people started to work with us after the 15M (Interview S2).

Indeed, the selection of Cádiz as a case study was motivated by the fact that its Mayor has one of the most progressive public discourses in relation to the refugee issue, quite similar to Barcelona's Ada Colau. However, our research suggests that the situation in Cádiz is not much different from that of other city councils with a traditional political party in government. Generally speaking, activists admit that access to institutions has improved with the new parties in government, although they also complain that the new municipal policy is more about 'nicer and more radical words' than about a real change in concrete policies (Interview S5, local activist). Perhaps because activists' expectations were so high, the local governments' policies have failed to meet them.

After the publication of the picture of Alan Kurdi, several city councils of the region began to declare themselves as 'cities of refuge'. Most of them created 'a committee for refugees' to co-ordinate efforts with the various actors working on this issue. Activists use these committees to pressure institutions to move from solidarity statements to solidarity policies. In the words of a local activist from the Plataforma Activista Social, 'all these "cities of refuge" are mere mechanisms to catch media attention. They are formulas that are useful to improve their reputation in relation to the movement of solidarity with refugees. But we ask the institutions to take the lead' (Interview S17). For example, activists complain that city councils do not use all of their potential instruments, including municipal television and radio stations, to raise awareness within the local population. Interestingly, according to a human rights activist, 'the only city council that has done it is Jerez, with a PSOE Mayor' (Interview S2). Moreover, he continues, 'among all the refugee committees in the region, the only one that works fairly well is the one in Jerez', in part because this is the only place where there are actually refugees (Interview S2, activist from APDHA in Cádiz). Aware of their limitations, activists blame local governments for not doing more. A local activist summarises it this way: 'It is not something that should remain in the realm of charity or in the solidarity of the people, but it must be a governmental commitment' (Interview S17).

Comparing Cádiz with two cities run by the traditional centre-Left (led by PSOE, which also governs at the regional level), Córdoba and Seville, we note similar tensions with governments considered as discursively supporting refugees but hesitant in translating words into practice. While Córdoba has been a left-wing leaning city (the IU or PCE has ruled the city town hall for almost 30 years), Seville has historically alternated between the conservative PP and social democratic PSOE.

In Seville, the capital of Andalusia, actions in solidarity with refugees are co-ordinated through the Somos Migrantes platform ('We are Migrants'). Formerly known as 'Platform against Institutional Violence', the group has moderated its framing to make it resonant for a wider audience. Most organisations working with refugees and migrants at the local level are members of this network—including several NGOs and foundations, as well as grassroots actors linked to the Catholic Church, but also some local political parties and unions. Overall, we find a wide array of well-established organisations in this field, which however has not clearly grown in members after 2014–2015.

In the wake of the crisis, a new grassroots organisation was born and gained considerable strength though: the Asociación de Ayuda al Pueblo Sirio de Andalucía (AAPS). This group is critical of the largest international organisations working in the field which are perceived, as highlighted by this grassroots activist, as more interested in money than in action: 'I have lost all respect for them [ACNUR and the Red Cross]. They do not have credibility, they get huge amounts of money, but do nothing to redress the situation. For them this is business' (Interview S19). Many of the activists have participated in the 15M campaign and other anti-austerity protests. Not by chance, they tend to frame the conflicts and their social engagement by pointing at the linkages between the issue of refugees and the neoliberal critical juncture. In the words of the same grassroots activist, 'we do not speak about a crisis of refugees, we do speak about a humanitarian crisis, caused by ruling neoliberalism and selfishness' (Interview S19).

Both AAPS-Andalucía and the organisations working under the Somos Migrantes network feel that left-wing actors (traditionally IU, but also Podemos and, in general, the local Participa Sevilla platform) are more willing to listen to their claims. As observed in other areas, while the PSOE has

a discourse that is receptive to the movements' claims, actions do not follow. As confirmed by a local activist from Somos Migrantes, 'the declaration of Seville as a city of refuge, which the Platform promoted, is now on standby' (Interview S21). Some people from AAPS-Andalucía are also critical of the cities of refuge initiative, which they consider 'nice, but empty of content' (Interview S19). Most activists claim that the local government is supposedly sensitive, but not really committed to the issue of refugees.

On another front, there are some rather spontaneous far Right actions against migrants—including some personal attacks—but these events are very rare and loosely co-ordinated. In addition, police tend to repress illegal street vendors—many of whom are immigrants without legal permits.

In some regards, the situation is similar in Córdoba, where the municipal government has set up an umbrella platform (Plataforma Córdoba Ciudad Refugio) that encompasses the most relevant civil society actors in the field, including unions and parties. Activists' perceptions of the (left-wing) local elites are rather positive. While their relationships with the PSOE local governments (supported by IU-Ganemos, which is a citizen platform related to Podemos, as well as former activists from IU) 'have not been bad, they should be much more committed with the refugees and migrants' (Interview S1). This mismatch between discourse and action when the Left is in power is also stressed by the co-ordinator of APDHA's regional Migration Committee, who happens to be based in Córdoba. He complains that 'I have never been granted an official meeting with the former IU mayors of Córdoba. I think they (left-wing local politicians) often regard us as traitors of the left … but we owe nothing to anyone. We come here to stand for human rights, regardless of the party in office' (Interview S12). Nevertheless, according to the same activist, relationships with the PSOE government are better than with the conservative PP, which literally 'made our lives impossible' (Interview S12).

Similar to activists in AAPS-Andalucía in Seville, grassroots activists in Córdoba tend to conceive their field of action in a broader sense. As a local activist stressed, 'we need to make a shift and try to converge with pro-Palestine and pro-Sahrawi platforms in order to globalise our discourse. After coming from Calais, where there are refugees from all over

the place, we saw and remembered many conflicts, which we seem to have forgotten about' (Interview S1). On the one hand, this is consistent with the biography of most assembly members in Córdoba: many hold previous records of activism and even report current, overlapping memberships with other social movements (anti-globalisation, labour, austerity, feminist, pro-Sahrawi, etc.). In sharp contrast with members of other organisations more devoted to assistance or mere awareness raising, many activists have travelled to hot-spots in order to contribute to easing the humanitarian crisis.

A similar picture emerges in Galicia from the comparison of Ourense, a conservative bastion (traditionally PP-ruled), and A Coruña. A Coruña has traditionally been run by the PSOE, but since 2015 a left-wing nationalist and Podemos-backed platform, Marea Atlántica, has been in office. Notwithstanding the different colours of the administrations, regarding mobilisation around the refugees and migrants, there are many similarities among both cities. They have well-established NGOs in the field of migration that channel these efforts: many of them are linked to the church and work from an assistance-centred perspective. Additionally, there have been some recent—still ongoing—efforts to co-ordinate and replicate umbrella platforms, based on the model of Barcelona's SMM (Interview S7, activist from SMM in Barcelona).

In general, despite being conservative, the local PP government in Ourense is quite receptive to these actors—in part because they deliberately avoid disruptive repertoires. In the words of a local activist:

> [W]e do not need to protest, we can just ask for a meeting and give a call, and someone from the city town hall will help us out … and it does not make much sense to react against big, broad policies in a small city full of old people … it is really hard to mobilize people here unless there is something that directly touches them. (Interview S23, social activist in Ourense)

Although activists in A Coruña find that the local-level government is now more open, there is a tension between their 'real lack of will to coordinate the platform actions' and their discourse, which often tries to 'appropriate the movement's success'; some activists claim that there have been some personal co-optation attempts (Interview S24, social activist in A Coruña).

The Southern Border ('Frontera Sur'): Closed Borders, Closed Opportunities

The Spanish (and European) Southern border includes two enclaves on Moroccan land—Ceuta and Melilla—but also the Canary Islands and the Andalusian coast. Because of their current (and symbolic) importance, we focus in this part of the chapter on Ceuta and Melilla.[6]

Interestingly, these two enclaves share a very closed local political opportunity structure, characterised by increasing levels of violence and repression by the police and far-right groups, which in Europe are only (to some extent) matched by the situation in Calais. In a way, it seems that Ceuta and Melilla held back the historical pace in the 1950s or 1960s. From a demographic perspective, a significant percentage of inhabitants is related to the police-military forces—patriotic symbols can be found everywhere, with continuous references to the army—while at the same time another significant portion of its population has a Moroccan background. NGOs and activists have often protested against the *devoluciones en caliente* ('hot returns'), in which Spanish authorities sent back some migrants to Morocco who managed to reach the Spanish territory—either by sea or by land. Such 'hot returns' are not only illegal and risky for the physical safety of migrants but make it difficult for them to apply for a refugee status.[7]

To some extent, the immigration and asylum policies implemented by the whole European Union during the so-called refugee crisis have mirrored the Spanish government's traditional policies in these enclaves. In the activists' perception, the idea of 'fortress Europe' was first applied here. As one interviewee in Córdoba put it, 'the Southern border of Spain is a laboratory for EU-wide migration policies' (Interview S1). These measures not only included fortified frontiers (through, e.g. increasing police repression, militarised border controls, and—razor-wire—fences between the Spanish and Moroccan territory) but also a co-operation agreement with the Moroccan government, similar to the 2016 deal between the EU and Turkey.

According to ACNUR, at least 60 per cent of immigrants coming through the Southern border could be entitled to the status of refugee.[8]

Such asylum seekers try to cross the border by different means, such as hiding in cars or reaching a Spanish beach from the sea—provided they can afford it. If they cannot, they try to jump over the fences, in increasingly dangerous and risky ways. In just the first half of 2016, 45 people died trying to reach Spanish soil via the Moroccan-Spanish route (a threefold increase relative to 2015).[9]

With regard to the organisation of the pro-refugee movement, in Ceuta and Melilla, there are few groups working specifically with migrants and refugees; however, their numbers have grown steadily since 2015, in part due to the newly available EU funds for co-operation at the European frontiers. In terms of configuration of local opportunity structures, both cases can be defined as closed settings. Activists in the two enclaves face strong institutional closure and opposition from a good portion of local society. They have tense relationships with the police forces and do not often find allies—or sympathisers—within the local-level elites and main political parties, the conservative Popular Party being the dominant force in both cities.

Whereas they co-ordinate some of their actions with like-minded organisations from other Spanish regions, the international co-operation with human rights associations in Morocco is very limited. From the Moroccan side, both Ceuta and Melilla tend to be considered colonies and collaborating with Spanish organisations as legitimising Spanish colonisation. From the Spanish side, civil society organisations in Morocco are seen as unreliable given their lack of independence from the Moroccan state.

Since 2015, many of those successfully crossing the border have come from Syria. For a well-known activist in Melilla, migrants are mainly escaping wars: 'The peaks of people who arrive increase when there is a war. People from Mali stopped coming in 2006. Then, many people from Mali came in 2012 and 2013. No one from Syria had ever come here. In 2012 and 2013 came one person, then 5, then 100, then 1000, etc. Is there a refugee crisis? Well, there are wars behind the peaks' (Interview S16).

Despite the fact that the local population has been witnessing the arrival of refugees for a long time, it has not connected that reality with the long summer of migration. This might explain why the effect of the

refugee crisis (in terms of the mobilisation of civil society) has been felt later and less significantly here than in other places. As explained by a local activist from Ceuta:

> […] people here tend to be informed about migration and refugees issues through the national press and the TV, including the jumps over the fences that take place at 500m. from their place. They watch the news and they may start crying, but then I tell them about the fences and there is no reaction. It seems like a parallel universe that is thousand miles away. (Interview S15)

Even on the occasions when several people crossing the border have died in confrontations with the police (most notably in 2005 and in 2014), the local population has failed to show solidarity with the migrants.[10] An activist from ELIN remembers that in 2014, 'at the burial ceremony [of the migrants] there was not one single person from Ceuta, but myself' (Interview S3).

Once they reached Spanish soil, refugees would stay for up to two years in the Centro de Estancia Temporal de Inmigrantes (CETI). In January 2015, a group of 144 Syrian refugees rebelled and camped in the main square of Ceuta. The government ended up changing its policy and opened asylum offices, but only (or mostly) for Syrian citizens. In that moment, the local population was not aware of any refugee crisis. In the words of a human rights activist, 'at first, the local government sanctioned them on the basis of the norm that prohibits camping in the street. In a radio interview, I remember that I had to explain what was happening, tell them that they were actually refugees who were escaping war, that this was not a problem of people invading our public spaces' (Interview S2). In February 2015, APDHA and other smaller NGOs organised a demonstration for migrant rights in Ceuta. The same activist thus describes the difficult context of that protest event: 'during the anniversary of the deaths of Tarajal, we filed an application to the delegate of the government of Ceuta. There was a series of restrictions, but we managed to gather 2000 people, mostly from other parts of Spain. Part of the local population insulted us from the windows …' (Interview S2).

Another event with a powerful impact among the Spanish civil society was an award-winning photograph taken on 22 October 2014, which

shows 15 people from Ghana atop the Melilla fence, while a couple plays golf on the nearby course. The photographer, an activist from PRODEIN, remembers that episode well: 'on that day there was a golf competition. While the competition was going on, the Sub-Saharan immigrants remained on the fences the whole day. At night, the lights went off for 15 minutes and when they went on again nobody was there. The migrants had been taken back to Morocco' (Interview S16). The picture had an international media impact as well, even reaching the European Commission: ironically, the golf course had been built thanks to funds for EU development aid. A few days later, the EU passed a new regulation banning the use of development aid to build golf courses. At that moment, PRODEIN was already widely covered in local media and well known by public opinion. The picture made them famous throughout Spain and attracted more attention to their cause.

In fact, PRODEIN is the main SMO in Melilla, performing an important task by raising awareness outside the enclave, both at the national and international levels (Manzanedo et al. 2016, p. 39). Despite the fact that they have gained some public visibility, they argue that potential supporters are afraid of publicly collaborating with them. In the words of one of its founders, 'many people support us, but most of them do not join us. The risk is high and also the cost we have to pay' (Interview S16). Their potential collaborators—musicians, actors, and the like—rarely pass by, as the place is difficult—and expensive—to reach. In contrast, due to Ceuta's geographical situation closer to the Iberian Peninsula, this sort of synergy can be more easily generated there. In addition, Melilla comprises some far-right groups who attack immigrant children at night, as explained by the PRODEIN activist: 'like in South America, with bats and dogs … and children appear smashed in the mornings' (Interview S16). There is a Facebook group called 'popular opinion' that consists of 11,000 people, most of them non-locals, who have organised demonstrations demanding 'more security'. According to the PRODEIN activist, 'the leaders are some far right-wingers, but they have dragged many people who do not have much idea about these issues' (Interview S16).

In Ceuta, the most relevant organisation is ELIN, an SMO founded by two progressive Spanish nuns, which is now part of the European network Migreurop. Interestingly, because most of the people they work

with are Muslims, all of their religious activities are in fact interreligious. The church in Ceuta has a strong relationship with (and organisationally depends on) the church in Cádiz, as the bishop of Cádiz is also the bishop of Ceuta. As a local activist from APDHA in Cádiz explains: 'religious organizations are not confrontational with the institutions, but still they work a lot. Although the current bishop is a very conservative one, the priests and nuns tend to be relatively progressive and we get along very well with them' (Interview S2). At the same time, the society of Ceuta is very conservative, with many families related to the police, the military, and other law enforcement bodies. In the words of a local activist, 'they feel they are Spanish bastion with the mission of fighting everything that is not Spanish. However, more than half the population is Muslim' (Interview S3). Another local activist stresses the existence of anti-refugee activism in Ceuta: 'the population is very right-wing leaning here, but they are not organized. There are huge Spanish flags everywhere. There is the fear of invasion. Many people here feel like they are forgotten from the rest of the Spanish territory' (Interview S15).

In contrast with most of the Spanish territory, activists in Ceuta and Melilla carry out direct actions. As explained by an activist in Ceuta, 'a network connected through WhatsApp has emerged these days. When someone finds out that there is a jump on the fences, they alert the others and people go to that point to film or take pictures or to report what is happening. That puts pressure on the police .... They feel their actions are being monitored' (Interview S15). There are some contacts among activists in both enclaves, and good personal connections between the key activists in PRODEIN in Melilla and ELIN in Ceuta, but little coordination among them. It should be noted that collaboration is complicated by the 400 kilometres of tortuous routes through the—rather dangerous—Rift Valley that separates the two enclaves.

Finally, some Spanish NGOs, such as APDHA, have connections with various NGOs from Morocco; however, according to these human rights activists, these are 'always difficult relationships' (Interview S12). Among them are several women's rights and human rights associations. Moreover, 'there is also a racist component within Morocco in relation to the sub-Saharan people' (Interview S16). APDHA also has a delegation in Morocco, in Tangier. However, they admit that the Moroccan authorities

do not make activists' life easy, which is clearly perceived from the history of a protest campaign, 'the Caravan to the fence of Melilla'. In the words of a human rights activist:

> […] every year we used to commemorate cases in which high numbers of migrants were killed at the fences, with a concentration on both sides of the fences. Year after year, the assistance on the Moroccan side was diminishing and after its fourth year it had to be suspended. Also, when we have done actions in Tangier, the police have come to identify us and sometimes they have not allowed us to carry them out. (Interview S2)

From this perspective, Moroccan activism should not be judged by European standards. Whereas some activists consider that 'it is difficult to find counterparts in Morocco, they do not dare to confront the state and, in the end, they do nothing' (Interview S16), others are more empathetic with the Moroccan activists: 'We know that they are risking more than we do' (Interview S2). In fact, while pro-migrant rights Moroccan activists complain about systematic violation of migrants' human rights, our interviewees from AMDH and the Delegación de Migraciones of Tangier's Archdioceses in Nador expressed awareness of the need to be extremely careful, as their activity is closely monitored by Moroccan authorities (Interview S6). Pressing circumstances often make them prioritise the ability to help refugees over direct confrontation with the Moroccan state. Not only the configuration of allies and opponents but the repressive strategies of Moroccan-Spanish states and authorities make them extremely cautious.

Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, we focused on varying political opportunities at the local level, comparing municipalities governed by movement-connected parties with others run by more traditional political forces. Although tensions exist, in Barcelona an administration that has labelled itself not only on the left, but explicitly on the side of pro-refugees, is more open to activists' claims and demands. The municipality has even led some public

protest on this issue. In contrast, Ceuta and Melilla are cases with very closed opportunities for mobilisation. These enclaves are highly securitised and activists heavily repressed, bringing about few actions and weak movements. In between, we found mixed results in Andalusia and Galicia, with less clear-cut effects.

Some of these results support Eisinger's expectation that protest is less likely in extremely closed places, as well as in extremely open ones. On the one hand, in totally closed places, 'not only is protest likely to be an inadequate tactic for enhancing political opportunities, but it is not likely to be tolerated' (Eisinger 1973, p. 28). To a certain extent that could explain the situation in Ceuta and Melilla, where for years the level of mobilisation has been minimal and is still based on certain individuals' commitment, despite the continuing presence of migrants and refugees' needs. In these two enclaves, an additional element is crucial: the level of securitisation and repression.

On the other hand, protesting might not be the most effective way to influence policy-making in a very open political system, where activists have easy access to decision makers and 'government is not only responsive but anticipates needs and meets them' (Eisinger 1973, p. 28). That circumstance could help us in understanding several of the situations we found in the cities led by Podemos-backed candidacies, such as Cádiz. From this perspective, local protest will be more likely in settings with partially open political opportunity structures. That would be the case for places such as Seville in Andalusia or Ourense in Galicia.

As far as the case of Barcelona is concerned, the situation is exceptional in various regards, including the fact that the current Mayor (as well as many of her main collaborators) is an activist with a long history of participation in social movements in which migrants are well embedded. Although Barcelona has fewer refugees than most large European cities, Stop Mare Mortum shows that the action repertoire here has gone beyond the solidarity realm, becoming more protest-centred. In other words, in Barcelona there is not only more popular mobilisation, but activism is also more protest-oriented than in other places. The first element (mobilisation) would be related to the fact that both the movement and the party share some objectives (i.e. the Mayor has based part of her political programme on the defence of refugees). The second element (protest)

could be connected to activists' resilience in order to keep their independent and politicised profile.

From a comparative vantage point, a low number of refugees arrived in Spain during the long summer of migration, relative to other countries such as Italy and Greece. However, if the increasing trend in the number of arrivals through the Moroccan route that began in the summer of 2017 remains high, it could bring about a profound change in the configuration of—and perceptions around—political opportunities for mobilisation in solidarity with the refugees in the different cases examined.

Interviews

S1: Joint interview with local activists, 11 October 2016, Seville.
S2: Activist from APDHA, 13 October 2016, Cádiz.
S3: Local activist, ELIN, 5 October 2016, Ceuta.
S4: MEP of Podemos (Grupo Confederal de la Izquierda Unitaria Europea/Izquierda Verde Nórdica), 30 November 2016 (via phone).
S5: Local activist from Cádiz, 12 October 2016, Cádiz.
S6: Spanish religious activist, 8 October 2016, Nador, Morocco.
S7: Local activist from Stop Mare Mortum, 28 June 2016, Barcelona.
S8: Spanish Fotomovimiento activist, 23 May 2016, Barcelona.
S9: Local activist, Sagrada Família district, 28 June 2016, Barcelona.
S10: Barcelona city council, 11 July 2016 (via phone).
S11: Local activist from Stop Mare Mortum, 28 June 2016, Barcelona.
S12: Spanish activist from APDHA, 13 October 2016, Córdoba.
S13: Local activist from Stop Mare Mortum, Barcelona, 22 May 2016, Barcelona.
S14: Stop Mare Mortum, International Commission, 28 June 2016, Barcelona.
S15: Member of ELIN, 5 October 2016, Ceuta.
S16: Founder of PRODEIN, 8 October 2016, Melilla
S17: Activist from Plataforma Activista Social, 13 October 2016, Cádiz.
S18: Activist and researcher, 13 October 2016, Cádiz.

S19: Asociación de Ayuda al Pueblo Sirio, Seville, 10 October 2016 (via phone).
S20: Activist from Fotomovimiento who volunteered in Calais, 27 June 2016, Barcelona.
S21: Activist from Acción en Red, 11 October 2016, Seville.
S22: Joint interview with three activists from Plataforma Córdoba Ciudad Refugio, 12 October 2016, Córdoba.
S23: Local activist, 21 December 2016, Ourense.
S24: Local activist, 22 December 2016, A Coruña.

Notes

1. See, for example, the Refugees Welcome survey by Amnesty International: https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2016/05/refugees-welcome-survey-results-2016/. Another example, in the words of a local activist from Cádiz, is the following: 'a few days ago, the UNHCR representative in Spain was here. In recent months they have delivered a campaign to collect signatures for a petition. They had collected over 1.5 million in total. 500,000 came from Spain, by far the country that had signed the most' (Interview S18).
2. For the case of language policies at the local level, see Fettes (2015); Alcalde (2016).
3. See https://stopmaremortum.org/
4. This SMM activist goes on: 'Every now and then there was a proposal to call for a macromanifestation. It seemed their objective was to assemble one million people, take a picture of a crowded city centre, but this could have not been done' (Interview S11).
5. See http://www.plataformaactivistasocial.org/
6. An analyst from Open Migration puts it this way: 'today, fluxes have changed and barely a few hundred people attempt to escape via the western route. The crossing to Gran Canaria is too dangerous, the patrols too frequent, leading sub-Saharan migrants to head north instead, towards Ceuta and Melilla…' (Lanni 2016).
7. In the words of a local activist from Cádiz, 'when there was bad weather (i.e. strong wind coming from the east-side of the strait), nobody used to dare to cross, but now they do it to avoid such pushbacks. With bad

weather conditions, the Moroccan patrol boats stay and the immigrants try to take advantage of this' (Interview S18).

8. See EFE (2014).
9. See EFE (2016).
10. The 2014 case has to do with a number of sub-Saharan immigrants who tried to reach the Tarajal beach in Ceuta by swimming. At 7 a.m., while it was still dark, the Spanish police used anti-riot material to prevent migrants from entering into Spain, firing rubber balls and smoke canisters from the Spanish land. As a result, at least 15 people died (some survivors talk about 87). See the award-winning documentary *Tarajal* (2016) by Metromunster—Metromunster is a social company made up of activists who met in the Indignados squares in Barcelona.

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7

Emotions that Mobilise: The Emotional Basis of Pro-asylum Seeker Activism in Austria

Chiara Milan

Introduction

Hundreds of thousands of people who fled the Middle Eastern countries to escape war and poverty have sought refuge in Europe in recent years. It is estimated that in 2015, more than 760,000 migrants[1] transited across the Western Balkans route, a pathway leading from Turkey towards Central and Northern Europe across the territory of former Yugoslavia (European Commission 2016). Unprecedented and extraordinary numbers of arrivals were recorded during 2015 in several countries of the European Union (EU), and the number of applications for international protection lodged in EU member states rose at a rapid pace. As a direct consequence of the increased inflow, by the end of the year, Austria had recorded almost 85,500 asylum applications, registering a 233 per cent increase compared to the previous year (Eurostat 2016). In 2015, the country ranked amongst the top ten European member states for number of asylum claims received, becoming the fourth-largest recipient of

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asylum seekers behind Germany, Hungary, and Sweden in absolute numbers (Eurostat 2016).

As of September 2015, the migratory movement towards Austria was forcibly diverted to land routes crossing Croatia and Slovenia, following the closure of the Serbian-Hungarian border and the consequent shutdown of the Nickelsdorf-Miklóshalma crossing in northern Hungary, previously used by migrants to get access to Austria. Consequently, migrants started to enter Austria through the southern border with Slovenia, and the border crossing located in the village of Spielfeld (nearly 1000 inhabitants) was converted into the main entry passage for migrants heading towards Austria and eventually Germany.

The steep increase in migratory pressure from the southern border sparked diverse reactions amongst the population, sharply dividing civil society between supporters and opponents of the country's asylum policies. A part of the population opposed the migratory flow and demanded restrictive asylum legislation. The far-right youth Identitarian movement of Austria[2] (Identitäre Bewegung Österreichs) performed small-scale protests against the arrival of refugees at the southern border, blocking the border crossing of Spielfeld (The Local 2015) and organising marches to demand the closure of the borders in Austria and all over Europe (Lane 2015).

The arrival of refugees did not go uncontested in the mainstream political arena either. In Parliament, the right-wing populist Freedom Party of Austria (Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs, or FPÖ), renowned for its anti-immigration stance, advocated firmly the closure of the country's borders and called for measures restricting the right to asylum in Austria. Against the odds, another part of the civil society mobilised in support of the refugee cause, bringing about grassroots groups aimed at helping incoming migrants first-hand. Following the introduction of restrictive asylum and immigration laws in the country in 2016, ordinary citizens organised protests to oppose the deportation of asylum seekers from the Austrian territory.

In a society characterised by a generally modest protest culture and political attitudes largely hostile to immigrants and asylum seekers (Rosenberger and Winkler 2014), the engagement of ordinary citizens in pro-refugee collective solidarity actions is puzzling. By drawing on the

cultural turn in social movement literature, this chapter explores the emotional dynamics driving individuals into action during the long summer of migration in 2015, in spite of an environment unfavourable to both asylum seekers and protest activities. Hence, this study explores the extent to which emotions informed individuals' choice to engage in pro-refugee activism. The analysis revealed that participation in solidarity activities was rooted in moral and reactive emotions (i.e. humanity, outrage, and compassion), which drew and maintained people into action even when feelings of frustration and fatigue threatened to take over. Secondly, particular public or personal events transformed into moral shocks that, provoking outrage and indignation, contribute to explaining self-recruitment in the absence of networks or previous experience of volunteerism. Thirdly, the findings of this analysis also revealed that the background of activists should be taken into account when investigating the politics of solidarity, as personal experiences of displacement and uprooting proved important prerequisites for engagement.

The chapter is organised as follows. The first section outlines the theoretical and methodological framework driving the research, while the second examines the political and social background in which pro-refugee activism emerged and unfolded. The third section focuses on the factors that explain citizens' engagement in pro-refugee activism. To that end, it concentrates respectively on the relevance of moral and reactive emotions as resources for the solidarity movements, on the collective and personal moral shocks that propelled ordinary citizens into action, and on the biographical background of activists as constituting a predictor of volunteerism. Finally, the chapter concludes by summarising the main findings of the study.

Theoretical and Methodological Framework

A wide range of factors accounts for the engagement of ordinary citizens in collective action. Amongst these, emotions are particularly important in the study of solidarity movements, as they rely on feelings of humanity and compassion rather than on private interest (Giugni and Passy 2001). To disentangle the explanatory power of emotions, some scholars have

distinguished between reflex (Goodwin et al. 2004) or reactive (Jasper 1998) emotions (Goodwin et al. 2004), which emerge spontaneously and involuntarily, like fear, surprise, anger, disgust, joy, and sadness, and affective (Goodwin et al. 2004) or cementing (Flam 2005) emotions, which persist over a long period of time and involve cognitive mechanisms such as love, hate, loyalty, respect, and trust. The latter are culturally constructed 'rather than being automatic somatic responses' (Jasper 1998, p. 399). Hence, they result from 'complex cognitive understandings and moral awareness' that reflect one's comprehension of the world (Goodwin et al. 2004, p. 422). According to Jasper, moral emotions compose a third category, which encompasses 'feelings of approval and disapproval based on moral intuitions and principles, as well as the satisfactions we feel when we do the right (or wrong) thing, but also when we feel the right (or wrong) thing, such as compassion for the unfortunate or indignation over injustice' (2011, p. 143). Essentially, moral emotions include shame, guilt, pride, indignation, outrage, and compassion (Jasper 2011). Moral emotions are connected to cultural meanings and cognitive understandings, being 'the result of moral judgments of what is right or wrong, good or bad' (Goodwin et al. 2004, p. 422). Siding with Rosenberger and Winkler (2014), who claim that the distinction between reactive and moral emotions is blurred in reality as the former 'might be also shaped by moral principles', I chose not to distinguish between the two. Therefore, throughout the chapter, I refer to them as reactive/moral emotions.

Although acknowledged as a part of all social action, emotions were given little explanatory power in the majority of social scientific theories until the 1990s, being dismissed in favour of an emphasis on structural and organisational elements (Goodwin et al. 2004). In the 1990s, the cultural turn in the social sciences 'opened the way to incorporating emotions into explanations of social movements' (ibid., p. 416), following the assumption that part of a movement's work involves emotions. For instance, Gamson (1992) noted that a sense of injustice and moral indignation constitutes a precondition for collective action. Similarly, Flam (2005) remarked that the cognitive activity of framing involves an emotional component, as the diagnosis of a social problem always encompasses a feeling of anger towards those responsible for it, while the

prognosis implies a hope for change. Essentially, 'emotions accompany all social action, providing both motivation and goals' (Jasper 1998, p. 397). It follows that it would be 'almost impossible to imagine mobilisation in the absence of strong emotions' (ibid., p. 414).

Following the cultural turn in the social sciences, groups of researchers explored the role of emotions in protests and political conflicts, revealing their relevance in explaining social action, along with cognitive processes and organisational and structural factors. The cultural turn emphasised that, far from being irrational, emotions are 'created and reinforced in narratives and discourses' (ibid., p. 423) and 'firmly rooted in moral and cognitive beliefs that are relatively stable and predictable' (Jasper 1998, p. 421). With the purpose of highlighting the emotions involved in response to perceived injustice, some scholars coined the concept of 'moral shock' (Jasper 1997; Jasper and Poulsen 1995), which is particularly useful to understand how morality actually moves people into action. Defined as 'the vertiginous feeling that results when an event or information shows that the world is not what one had expected' (Jasper 2011), moral shocks can draw people into action or predispose individuals to act if there is an opportunity to do so. Essentially, moral shocks serve 'as the functional equivalent of social networks, drawing people into activism by building on their existing belief' (Jasper and Poulsen 1995, p. 498).

With the purpose of explaining the emotional dynamics informing citizens' engagement in pro-refugee activism during the long summer of migration in 2015, I conducted seven in-depth qualitative interviews with solidarity activists and volunteers. These actors were involved in initiatives in support of migrants at the Austrian-Slovenian border and at the railway stations of Graz and Vienna during the period between September 2015, the beginning of the crisis, and December 2015, when the shutdown of the Austrian southern border crossing effectively arrested the influx of migrants. As a consequence, the majority of the solidarity activities came to a halt. Drawing on Rosenberger and Winkler (2014), I relied on emotion analysis (EA) of protest material, which consists in analysing qualitatively the content of the interviews, coding the emotions and inner feelings the interviewees put forward during the guided conversations.

Political and Social Background

For a long time, Austria had been considered a success story in the reception of refugees owing to its long asylum tradition. During the 1956 Hungarian uprising, Austria opened its borders to thousands of Hungarians; in the course of the Prague Spring in 1968, it let in numerous Czechoslovakians, while during the Balkan Wars of the 1990s, it received people fleeing former Yugoslavia, with more than 90,000 Bosnian-Herzegovinian nationals settling in the country (Benedek 2016; *The Guardian* 2016).

In recent years, the country has tightened its refugee policy, enacting restrictive asylum legislation. Throughout the long summer of migration in 2015, the national asylum policy shifted 'from a showcase of support to asylum seekers to one of the most restrictive in Europe' (Benedek 2016, p. 949). In contrast to the initial open-arms policy adopted in alignment with the German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Austrian state authorities progressively implemented measures aimed at effectively controlling and limiting the flow of migrants into the national territory. In November 2015, Austria erected a string of barriers along the Slovenian border, officially 'to control the flow of hundreds of people crossing into the country' (Graham-Harrison 2015). At the beginning of 2016, domestic authorities decided to allow into the country only those individuals intending to seek asylum in Austria (Šelo Šabić and Borić 2016). Following the temporary reintroduction of internal border controls, in April 2016 anti-migrant barriers were placed at the Brenner Pass on the Italian border to stem the flow of migrants. Meanwhile, the Austrian government amended the asylum and immigration laws by fixing a ceiling to asylum. The upper limit (*Obergrenze*) was established at 37,500 asylum claims for 2016 and a total of 130,000 by 2019 (Benedek 2016). An 'emergency regulation' foreseeing the rejection of any asylum requests in case of declared state of emergency and for the maintenance of public order and protection of internal security abolished in practice the right to asylum in Austria. After imposing daily entry limits in February 2016 (80 asylum applications registered, plus 3200 persons allowed to transit towards Germany per day), in early March 2016 Austrian Foreign

Minister Sebastian Kurz started a round of talks with his Balkan counterparts, sanctioning the closure of the Western Balkans corridor announced on 9 March. Since July 2016, Austrian authorities have regularly pushed back the refugees who got access to the country during the opening of the Western Balkans corridor, in case it could be proven that they had crossed third safe countries (e.g. Croatia or Slovenia). About 3300 migrants from Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan have been expatriated from Austria in 2016, 275 of them returned to Croatia (Milan 2016) regardless of their entitlement to receive international protection in Austria.

Public discourse and the emotional atmosphere around migrants have been sensitive to the wider political context. At first, the Austrian society adopted a sympathetic attitude towards refugees. Some interviewees recounted that in September 2015 numerous citizens supported solidarity actions at the railway stations, donating food, clothes, blankets, and other items to the migrants (Interviews AU5 and AU7). However, the atmosphere began to change with the Paris terrorist attacks of November 2015 and the New Year's Eve episode in Cologne (December 2015), when migrants were reported to have harassed women. In the opinion of the interviewees, both episodes had a strong impact on the public opinion. In their view, in the wake of the events the public perception of migrants worsened to the extent that, they claim, at the beginning of 2016 anti-migrant rhetoric and xenophobia had replaced the initial empathy (Interview AU3). As one activist emphasised, 'refugees are now used as scapegoats, being blamed for the lowering standard of living of Austrians' (Interview AU2).

One event in particular is said to have marked a turning point in the public perception of migrants in Austria: on 21 October 2015, around 1000 migrants entered *en masse* the southern village of Mureck from the Slovenian border.[3] As the crowd started to push violently against the fences erected to stem the flow of people, the police realised it could not contain them anymore (Sputnik 2017). To avoid injuries and panic, police officers decided to let the persons cross the border (Interview AU3). The event had a high resonance in the media, which termed it 'The day of invasion' (*Durchbruch*, a word meaning 'breakthrough', 'irruption'). The episode marked a crucial moment in the collective memory, as 'that day Austria got the impression that the situation was out of control'

(Interview AU3). The alleged loss of control of the state authorities over their territory, and the spreading of the term 'invasion' in the mainstream media, fuelled a narrative framing migrants as posing a threat to social stability and state security. At this moment, explained an interviewee, 'a shift in the wording happened: those we accepted and wanted to help became a threat, the poor refugees became the dangerous refugees' (Interview AU3).

Within a context of strong polarisation of civil society on issues of migration, the media coverage also shifted over time. At the beginning of the migrant crisis, public discourse revolved around the overwhelming support of citizens and the positive response of the Austrian society, while newspapers reported positive stories of integration. In Autumn 2015, mainstream media started to portray migrants in a negative light, using dehumanising language and stressing the problematic aspects related to the presence of refugees in the Austrian territory (e.g. reporting about the problems that the increased influx of people caused to the railway systems, publishing pictures of the train stations full of waste after the departure of migrants, and highlighting the workload that the Red Cross, the police, and the Army had to bear to handle the influx) (Interviews AU2 and AU4). Especially after 'The day of invasion', the rhetoric used by media and public officials evoked an imagery of threat to internal security, public order, and social peace, and migrants started to be portrayed as a financial burden to the Austrian society.

Solidarity Actors and Mobilisations

In spite of having little or no previous experience in supporting refugees, ordinary citizens organised grassroots initiatives to support migrants getting access to Austria through the southern border. Along the Austrian-Slovenian border, some small community groups were already dealing with the social integration of refugees at the local level prior to the 2015 migrant crisis. Amongst these, since 2014 the Platform Welcome Culture (Plattform Willkommenskultur), based in the village of Mureck, was taking care of the social integration in the local community of asylum seekers accommodated in the local asylum houses. In September 2015, some

participants in the platform organised an informal group composed mostly of women, named 'Border Crossing Spielfeld', gathering individuals living in Spielfeld and the neighbouring villages. Some of them had been previously in contact with solidarity activists at the border crossing of Nickelsdorf, with whom they exchanged information and drafted a document called 'The manual to activist border management' (Interview AU5). By means of a page on the social platform Facebook, at the height of the crisis, the activists of 'Border Crossing Spielfeld' provided daily up-to-date information about the situation at the border, addressing the migrants in transit along the Western Balkans route. On the Facebook page, they also posted regularly a 'need list' of items to be collected and distributed at the border crossing.

At first, the group was also in charge of dispensing food items and clothes to migrants trapped inside the corridor between the border points of Spielfeld (Austria) and Šentilj (Slovenia), informally named 'no man's land'. The open-air fenced area, run by the Austrian military, was intended to regulate the flow of people, as migrants would wait there to cross the border. Ideally, they would remain in the 'no man's land' for a couple of hours before being transferred to state-run camps or temporary shelters in Graz and Klagenfurt, if they wanted to lodge an asylum claim in Austria, or to the train stations, from which they could reach Vienna or continue their journey. However, long queues resulted from the fact that Slovenia let 1000 people to leave the country, while Austria allowed only 50 persons per hour into Spielfeld (Interview AU1), and in several cases migrants happened to spend the night sleeping on the ground in the 'no man's land'. As blankets and meals distributed by the Austrian Army and the Red Cross proved inadequate for all the migrants, solidarity activists and self-organised volunteers intervened to provide them with warm clothes, food, and emergency medical help (Moving Europe 2015).

Following what an interviewee termed 'the professionalisation of borders' (Interview AU2), the access to the 'no man's land' was progressively restricted exclusively to the Army, police, and the volunteers officially affiliated with registered non-governmental organisations (NGOs). As a consequence, all informal subjects, like 'Border Crossing Spielfeld', were prevented from entering the area and distributing food and clothes to the migrants. To obviate the problem, some activists of 'Border Crossing

Spielfeld' affiliated with the Red Cross in order to continue the distribution of items to the migrants in the 'no man's land'. However, they expressed disappointment and strong criticism towards the support provided by the Army and the Red Cross, which 'reduced [volunteers] to machines to distribute food and water' (Interview AU1), without allowing any personal contact with the migrants. The group stopped operating in Spielfeld following the shutdown of the border around Christmas 2015, although it continues to collect and dispense clothes and other essential supplies to migrants in the region and to visit regularly the asylum seekers who have been pushed back to Croatia.

Other grassroots initiatives concentrated in the railway stations of Graz and Vienna. Both cities functioned as transit places where migrants stopped temporarily on their way to Germany or towards the Austrian state-run camps. At the Graz railway station, the association 'Borderless: Refugee Relief' provided migrants with clothes, food, and information about the special trains heading to Vienna or Salzburg, as well as on the available means to continue their journey towards their final destination. The majority of volunteers in Graz were students, and several solidarity activists and volunteers belonged to a group of Bosnian-Herzegovinian nationals, once refugees themselves or descendants of previous generations of asylum seekers, living in Austria since the 1990s. The group 'Train of Hope' organised an analogous initiative at the railway station in Vienna. Volunteers of all ages, genders, and nationalities dispensed lunch packages and clothes, also providing language translation and medical care to transiting migrants. Between September and December 2015, the volunteers of 'Train of Hope' assisted around 10,000 refugees (Interview AU7). Since January 2016, most of the volunteers of both groups have been involved in activities focusing on the social integration of refugees with the local population.

The Refugees Welcome Austria (Flüchtlinge Willkommen Österreich) Internet platform emerged in 2015 with the purpose of finding accommodations for refugees in shared houses, matching migrants with available families, based on the model of an analogous German solidarity project. Around 150 persons volunteered to make the platform functioning, although the initiative could count on the support of around 1000 people (Interview AU6). Some of the initiators have a background of

militancy in the Austrian Green Party; others had been engaged in projects of integration of asylum seekers in the public schools, while others have a record of involvement in solidarity activities at the borders and at the train stations. Over the years, they developed contacts with solidarity groups active at the local level, which facilitated the process of matching refugees in need of housing with available hosts. Notwithstanding a slow start, the registration on the web page of families and individuals willing to offer their flats or rooms to asylum seekers peaked in 2015, as a consequence of the growing influx of refugees streaming across the Austrian borders (Interview AU6). The goal of the founders of the platform was not limited to hosting refugees in need of accommodation but also to raise awareness on the migrant issue, making public the possibility of hosting refugees (Interview AU6). Through the Internet platform, in 2015 366 asylum seekers were matched with the same number of families (ibid.).

Loosely organised and generally unstructured, the solidarity initiatives in Austria were joined by individuals both with a record of activism and with no previous experience in humanitarian aid. Generally, solidarity actors resorted more to consensual than confrontational forms of action. The activities organised aimed mostly at providing immediate relief and were at times combined with advocacy and awareness-raising activities targeting the local community, as well as legal advising to migrants. The strategy of solidarity groups changed according to the needs and availability of volunteers (Interview AU2). Following the shutdown of the Balkan corridor in March 2016, the Austrian self-organised groups shifted from first-aid help to support in the social integration process of migrants in the Austrian society. The volunteers of 'Border Crossing Spielfeld', in particular, shifted much of their efforts towards providing legal and human assistance to migrants deported to Croatia, collecting the personal belongings they had left behind in the rush of leaving Austria and bringing them to the asylum centres in Croatia (Interview AU2). The bulk of solidarity initiatives did not have a political character and were often undertaken with a certain degree of collaboration with state institutions. For instance, the volunteers of 'Train of Hope' collaborated with the national ÖBB railway company and the 'Crisis team' of the city of Vienna (which included the Red Cross, the police, and the military) in

guaranteeing security in the train station. Moreover, they co-ordinated the access to state-arranged special trains that redirected migrants to shelters in Vienna or towards Germany (Interview AU7). Given the scarcity of resources and time, 'Border Crossing Spielfeld' opted for first-aid support activities, for its members had 'little time to spend in organisation and public appearances' (Interview AU2). Similarly, the activists of 'Train of Hope' did not organise street actions owing to the lack of resources, although the volunteers took part in demonstrations as individuals (Interview AU7).

Few demonstrations and street protests were organised during the 2015 long summer of migration, reflecting the generally modest protest culture of the country (Rosenberger and Winkler 2014). On 13 November 2016, sit-ins took place at the local level as a way to contest the deportation of asylum seekers from Austria to Croatia and Slovenia. Under the slogan 'Let them stay!', candlelight vigils and sit-ins were set up simultaneously in 13 Austrian cities (Milan 2016). On 26 November, a national demonstration in Vienna called for the immediate halting of deportations to Croatia for all asylum seekers who had registered in Austria during the opening of the Western Balkans corridor.[4] In their communiqué, the organiser 'Platform for a Human Asylum Policy' (*Plattform für eine menschliche Asylpolitik*) demanded that the government take responsibility for the asylum applications submitted in Austria prior to the official closure of the Western Balkans corridor and to guarantee the right of return for all those who had been deported afterwards (Plattform für eine menschliche Asylpolitik 2016).

Emotional Commitment

Solidarity actors responded to the growing flow of migrants on the basis of similar humanitarian and moral motivations, meaning on the basis of a similar understanding of the situation that inclined them to intervene in order to compensate for the perceived violation of a shared moral code, that of the respect for and inviolability of human beings. This desire, notes Jasper, 'often comes from a moral vision and ideology which suggest that the world should be different from the way it is' (2011, p. 14.7).

Even when political reasons were put forth as underpinning their claims, the humanitarian element was stressed as prominent, as the following excerpt reveals:

> For me this is a political activity, but based on basic values of humanity. You cannot watch someone starving or in pain without being there. Being there as a human, giving hope to someone: this is what drives me. (Interview AU1)

Activists' commitment was grounded on strong moral principles of justice, dignity, and respect for human rights. For instance, often interviewees attributed their engagement in solidarity actions to a 'moral duty', a 'pressing need', or a 'necessity', while a clear distinction between 'right and wrong' emerged from several conversations. One interviewee stated that he never felt 'being at the wrong place' while helping migrants (Interview AU3), while another describes her decision to get involved in pro-refugee activism as a sort of necessity that suddenly disrupted her daily routine:

> I woke up in the morning, went out of my house and looked up at the sky, and felt it was not freezing: I was just hoping no one had died over night. We could not have a normal life in this period, because we were just thinking how to finish working to go there [at the border crossing], to stay there. We were in this place all the time … I think it was just this kind of necessity that kept us going, because each day we felt that we had to be there, that even when there were particularly difficult days, there was always something to do there. (Interview AU1)

A young student with no prior experience in humanitarian activism describes her involvement as a personal duty, a response to an 'inner voice' that prompted her into action:

> I felt I must go; it is a feeling … I do not know how to explain it. I realised not everybody feels the same. My parents came to Austria from Bosnia Herzegovina before the war started, they were working in hotels for a couple of months and now they are here. Maybe this is a reason why I felt like helping the refugees … Some inner voice was telling me to go there.

> [During the period volunteering at the train station] I forgot to drink and eat, I was in the station for 6–7 hours a day. My daily routine changed, I stood up in the morning, did my university stuff and then went to the train station. It was so good to be there, I made new friends and experiences, and I would do it again. You were just there, always active. (Interview AU4)

Similar feelings and moral motivations urged another solidarity activist into action:

> This work has to be done! I never ask myself if I should do this, if it must be done: this was the feeling! And when you step into it, you cannot say: 'I won't do anything'. Spielfeld was an emergency, everyday it was cold, I went home and thought: 'I am so happy nobody is freezing outside'. We should do everything we can for no baby to die on our streets … Getting in touch with other cultures, religions … For me it is an important thing to keep peace here, to get in contact with people coming here. And how could they integrate if nobody takes care about their integration? (Interview AU5)

The emotional analysis of the material collected reveals that emotions such as rage, dismay, and indignation were amongst the most frequently displayed emotions described as informing the personal decision to get involved in solidarity actions. These emotions, which emerged as particularly important at the first stage of the mobilisation, belong to a category that Goodwin and Jasper (2006) define as activating emotions, as they tend to encourage people to take action. In reverse, satisfaction, addiction, and liveliness were put forth as explanatory factors for the actors' reiterated participation in collective solidarity actions, even when tiredness, overwhelming, and alienation surfaced. The latter group of emotions, which came up in a later phase of mobilisation, belong to the realm of deactivating emotions, likely to provoke an effect opposed to that spurred by activating emotions. This mix of feelings is not uncommon, as in the guided conversations solidarity actors frequently combined positive emotions with negative ones. For instance, the work at the border crossing was described as an addictive experience that provoked simultaneously liveliness and satisfaction, but also helplessness and overwhelming, as the following quote shows:

> Working down at the border has a nearly addictive effect, because there are so many things going on … you feel like you are such a small piece in the universe and you cannot make the difference, you cannot change anything. But when you are down there you feel you are making a difference: even if it is just a cup of tea you are giving to a person, for this person it is really a cool thing to have it at the moment. And you are in a kind of heightened state of alert all the time because so much is happening, and you do become very alive. This is actually a good feeling. At the same time, and sometimes even at the same second, you do feel overwhelmed, you feel extremely helpless sometimes, since it is too much to handle for any person and even for a group of people. (Interview AU2)

The emotional atmosphere on the field (at border crossings, railway stations, asylum centres) has generally been described as 'really positive, with interaction going on between refugees and volunteers, who shared stories, and got in touch with people' (Interview AU7). However, the mood changed over time, as feeling such as helplessness and frustration started to prevail amongst volunteers in the course of the action, particularly in the wake of the introduction of restrictive asylum laws and the closure of the Spielfeld border crossing in the winter of 2015.

According to the majority of interviewees, the experience of solidarity actions produced a strong impact in their personal lives, to the extent that somebody described it as marking a turning point in their lives. After the volunteering experience, some described 'feel[ing] very different and kind of alienated' (Interview AU2), at times overwhelmed by the amount of pain and the workload the situation required. A solidarity actor described 2015 as 'one of the most important years of my life, for the events and what is happening inside myself' (Interview AU3), while another stressed how the perception of having passed through a strong and emotionally loaded experience provoked in her a feeling of detachment from her acquaintances not involved in solidarity actions with refugees. She expresses it with the following words:

> There is a kind of disconnection between you and your family and people who have not been down there [at the border], because they really do not know what the hell you are talking about! (*laugh*) But if you have lived through this stuff … all of us have seen things there that are quite hard to

> process. We noticed every time we met with people who had been down there [at the border] that there is this big need for people to talk and discuss things, there was a lot of talks and crying going on. (Interview AU2)

The personal relationships established with other members of the group and the affective ties developed over time with volunteers and migrants were also relational resources that played a pivotal role throughout the time, as the following excerpt reveals:

> At first I had a lot of emotions, I thought: 'This is too much, we cannot handle them.' I was at the border with my car when the refugees broke through it. I saw thousands of people passing, and I had the feeling they were millions. From this moment on I calmed down, and focused on what we could do. I cried while standing on the no man's land between Austria and Slovenia, where hundreds of people were standing without food and water. I was sad and angry at the same time. The moments when some of the families are coming back here finally, or found a job or a room, those are good moments we shared together. (Interview AU4)

The sharing of similar emotions, motivations, and analogous feelings in response to events, as well as the affective loyalties that surfaced throughout the volunteering process, appeared as factors that strengthened the group, motivating volunteers to remain involved in solidarity movements after the initial enthusiasm waned. As the analysis of the qualitative material demonstrates, the humanitarian and moral motivations delivered by volunteers, as well as the primacy of emotions, proved central in motivating and reinforcing the decision to support the refugee cause. Nevertheless, it also reveals that humanitarian and moral frames provided little space for political criticism, limiting the capacity of solidarity actors to bring about political change. However, the lack of a more politically driven response to the restrictive changes in the asylum legislation of the country has to be understood both in light of the sparse resources solidarity actors held, which they deliberately concentrated on addressing the emergency situation, and a cultural context characterised by a weak tradition of protest culture. For instance, solidarity activists often mentioned the period volunteering at the borders or in the train station as a hectic moment that left no time to elaborate a political strategy. Furthermore, few interviewees

have a previous record of political activism, making them less inclined towards political action.

In their speech, solidarity actors made little or no reference to the ruling class, although they blamed the far-right youth groups for encouraging a negative perception of migrants. It is noteworthy that the approach to the push back of migrants from the Austrian territory was not rooted in political motivations, but rather had a legal basis: Solidarity activists claimed that the deportation of migrants to Croatia and Slovenia was illegal, as they had entered the Austrian territory while the borders were open and the transport across the Balkan territory organised by state authorities (Interview AU1, AU2; Plattform für eine menschliche Asylpolitik 2016). Building on the fact that the Austrian government could not push back the same migrants it had previously allowed to enter, the activists resorted to a legal argument rather than a political one.

Emotional Triggers: Moral Shocks

In investigating the factors triggering people into action, empirical data disclosed that often, against a backdrop of loose pre-existing solidarity networks, moral shocks proved necessary for self-recruitment, defined as the decision of individuals to participate in social movement activity without being connected to any existing networks (Mariel Lemonik Arthur 2013) and regardless of having acquaintances in the movement (Jasper and Poulsen 1995). In several cases, moral shocks were reported as triggering emotions of indignation, outrage, and disappointment that spurred individuals into action.

These emotional triggers took two forms: indirect and direct. The indirect included public events with high resonance in public opinion, for instance, the arrival *en masse* of migrants into a territory previously not affected by the migrant crisis. The direct trigger encompassed personal experiences of first-hand contact with migrants. As regards the former, two events are often mentioned as collective moral shocks, constituting key moments not only in the evolution of the refugee crisis but particularly in sparking individuals' decision to side with migrants: First, there was the discovery on 27 August 2015 of the decomposing bodies of 71

migrants (59 men, eight women, and four children, mainly Syrian and Iraqi nationals) in a refrigerator truck found abandoned in eastern Austria (Hawramy 2015). The people in the lorry, abandoned close to the village of Nickelsdorf, near the Hungarian border, had died of asphyxiation (De Genova 2016). In the opinion of the informants, this episode contributed to raise awareness on the refugee issue at the collective and personal level, as well as to increase sensitivity to the topic by fostering the empathy of the Austrian society. The discovery provoked outrage and a sense of indignation, to the extent that almost all interviewees identified it as an emotional turning point in their personal lives as well, meaning an emotionally loaded experience that changed their life course by generating the decision to commit to the refugee cause.

The migrants' 'March of Hope' constituted a second emotional turning point. The self-mobilisation was organised on 4 September 2015 by about 1200 migrants encamped at Budapest's main railway station, Keleti, who set off to walk from Budapest to Austria (The Guardian 2015). Their arrival at the Vienna train station was described as a particularly emotional moment, as people welcomed them with applause (Interview AU4). The high resonance both events received in the media and public opinion increased their emotional impact. In this regard, a young activist emphasised the physical arrival of refugees in Austria as motivating her into action, saying:

> Some years ago there were articles about refugees going to Lesbos and I did not think much about it. When they arrived in Austria I felt I had to help. (Interview AU4)

In addition to public events, personal experiences such as first or unexpected encounters with refugees are also frequently described as constituting moral shocks. An activist recounted a casual meeting with a family of Syrian origin walking in the fields near her village, striving to cross the border with the help of Google Maps:

> I just dropped everything in the vineyard and went down the hill to the border crossing. This is when I met the first group of Syrians walking, showing me mobile phones with their Google maps navigator open and

> asking me: 'Sorry, is this the border crossing? And do you think there is any police? Do you think we might be able to cross?' (Interview AU1)

The activist used the word 'surreal' to describe the surprise and dismay that arose from the unexpected appearance of the Syrian family on the Austrian hills (Interview AU1). The encounter, she said, suddenly channelled her disappointment into concrete activity, generating in her the 'need to be there and to help' (Interview AU1). Similarly, another interviewee with no previous experience in humanitarian aid portrayed the first physical encounter with refugees by her and her husband as a crucial moment that spurred them into action. She recounted the meeting as an emotional and sensorial shock:

> When we went to the first camp, I did not know what to expect. The moment you see the situation, and enter it, the faces, the persons, you feel this incredible smell of camps, this disgusting, incredible smell of camps. At this moment you stop thinking. (Interview AU3)

Another interviewee recalled as a crucial personal event underlying his engagement the accidental discovery of a municipal shelter hosting migrants in Graz. His first encounter with refugees in Austria happened by chance: driving in the outskirts of Graz, he spotted a family of people walking in the rain without any protection and decided to give them a lift. In this way he discovered the existence of a municipal-run shelter for refugees and decided to drive to Spielfeld to check on the situation at the border (Interview AU6). Given her experience in logistics and management, another activist decided to put her expertise at the service of the 'Border Crossing Spielfeld' group by administering the Facebook page, after entering in contact with other women living in the villages along the Slovenian border. In September 2015, she first went to donate clothes to an organisation supporting asylum seekers, then accommodated in a hotel near the border. After encountering some Syrians, she decided to get involved, first at the Hungarian border and, after its shutdown, at the border crossing of Spielfeld (Interview AU4). To conclude, indirect emotional triggers, such as public events that had high resonance in public opinion and the media—as well as direct emotional ones, such as the first

contact with migrants and the physical proximity with them—were reported as constituting moral shocks that motivated people into action by sparking a sense of outrage or indignation.

Emotional Propensity: Personal Background

Despite the important role of emotions and moral shocks in leading ordinary citizens to support the refugee cause, the values and reasons behind their commitment were rooted in their personal biographies. In particular, the study revealed that personal experiences of displacement or uprooting, as well as an activist background, informed the decision to become engaged with migrants. Essentially, in several cases emotions reactivated the already existing sense of injustice shaped during previous experience of activism or displacement. A volunteer pointed out her family history of migration, as well as personal daily contact with foreigners, as a sort of predictor of her commitment, which she also considered as a moral duty in light of her personal story. She recounts:

> I have always had a weak spot for foreigners, and a really multicultural background. My own parents were refugees … My dad lived in a refugee camp for 10 years, and a lot of our friends and family have a migrant and refugees background. My families are in Canada, the US, Germany … I just generally feel that for me 'Why I am doing it?' is not even a question: it would be impossible to sit and have a nice Sunday meal while 8 km from me there are people standing and starving in the cold. (Interview AU2)

Other solidarity activists had already developed professional experience in dealing with persons seeking international protection, from which they derived their motivations for mobilisation:

> I have experience with migration issues and people displaced. In the course of my life I have been an activist and I met people displaced, experiencing wars and liberation struggles. (Interview AU1)

Some individuals mobilising in support of refugees were already involved long term in various groups supporting the integration of asylum seekers in Austria prior to the 2015 migrant crisis. For example, the founder of

the 'Refugee Welcome' platform in Austria cited an interest in foreign cultures and frequent travel to the Middle East as possible reasons to find the field of refugee initiatives more appealing than others (Interview AU6). His personal history of welcoming an unaccompanied refugee minor constituted a precondition for his involvement:

> I actually started seven years ago, with a project that tries to find and match godfathers and mothers to unaccompanied refugee minors, and support them meeting each other. It was not an official project, it just aimed at supporting them to grow and integrate into the Austrian society. I was matched with a 17 year old Somali boy, who is still here and after six years he got registered. He is part of our family now. (Interview AU6)

Reflecting upon the reasons motivating their decision to get involved in supporting refugees, one couple maintained that it had stemmed from having lived abroad for many years. They said:

> We [she and her husband] had no previous experience with refugees, but we have been living in foreign countries, and both of us have personal experience of working in an international basis. We love the international context. We know a bit what it means to be alone in a foreign country, even if you are privileged. You could not say: 'I do not do anything!' … I learnt to respect other people and to be empathetic for what happens to them. To me, to lose all you have, your home and friends and roots is one of the worst things a person may experience. If I have a possibility to help, why shouldn't I? (Interview AU3)

As the excerpts quoted above suggest, the motivation for pro-refugee engagement proceeds from a pre-existing experience of activism or political engagement, as well as from biographical experiences that shaped the moral convictions of solidarity activists.

Conclusions

The 2015 migrant crisis represented a clear-cut moment in the recent history of Austria, which deeply affected its society and brought about the emergence of a new cleavage dividing society between supporters and

opponents of the country's reception policies. In an attempt to compensate for the increasingly restrictive asylum legislation, during the crisis pro-refugee activists in Austria mobilised to provide first-hand help to migrants, delivering necessary items and supporting them at the entry and transit points. In some cases, they also provided asylum seekers with accommodations, legal and psychological support, and social integration at the local level, advocating for their right to stay in the territory instead of being pushed back to other European countries of the Western Balkans.

In light of the empirical material collected, the analysis emphasised the importance of emotions in drawing people into action. It emerged that reactive and moral emotions account for the most relevant resources for solidarity actions occurred in Austria in 2015. Activating emotions such as rage, dismay, and indignation proved particularly important in the first stage of mobilisation, as they informed the personal decision to engage in solidarity actions. At a later stage, deactivating emotions such tiredness, overwhelming, and alienation surfaced, although they did not affect negatively the fate of the movement, as the satisfaction, addiction, and liveliness derived from the engagement in solidarity action motivated people to continue along their path. Ordinary citizens responded on the basis of similar humanitarian motivations and moral emotions, which compensated for the lack (or weakness) of pre-existing solidarity networks and social ties. Rather than through personal contact, in many cases recruitment occurred through social networks, to the extent that some solidarity activists recall having met in person only at the end of the intense period of mobilisation.

Whether through public events or personal experiences, indirect or direct moral shocks constituted the first step in the self-recruitment process, raising a sense of outrage that inclined people towards solidarity action. However, the sense of injustice did not emerge unexpectedly, but depended on previous personal experiences. A biographical history of migration, displacement, or uprooting shaped individuals' moral convictions, and the perception of having undergone a similar experience in the past inclined ordinary citizens to take action. Essentially, reactive and moral emotions, sparked by public or personal events, emerged as relevant factors accounting for the engagement of ordinary citizens in pro-refugee activism in a context largely unfavourable to both asylum seekers

and collective action, while a legacy of displacement or uprooting functioned as predictor of pro-refugee volunteerism.

Interviews

AU1: Activist, Plattform Willkommenskultur/Border Crossing Spielfeld association. Graz, 8 November 2016.

AU2: Activist, Border Crossing Spielfeld association. Graz, 9 November 2016.

AU3: Activist, Border Crossing Spielfeld association. Graz, 13 November 2016.

AU4: Volunteer, Borderless: Refugee Relief Action. Graz, 13 November 2016

AU5: Activist, Plattform Willkommenskultur. Graz, 14 November 2016

AU6: Founding member, Flüchtlinge Willkommen Österreich/Refugee Welcome Austria. Graz, 23 January 2017.

AU7: Organisation and assistance co-ordinator, Train of Hope: Flüchtlingshilfe am Wiener Hauptbahnhof. Vienna, 24 January 2017.

Notes

1. Throughout the chapter I use the term 'migrant', 'refugee', and 'asylum seeker' interchangeably to refer to individuals who have fled their countries in a bid to escape war, or as a result of economic deprivation, regardless of having lodged an asylum claim or having been granted official international protection.
2. The group, which has a pan-European dimension, is inspired by the French 'Bloc Identitaire' and counts on branches in several European countries.
3. The march was allegedly triggered by false information regarding the distance to Germany (No-racism-net 2015). Once in the Austrian territory, the refugees headed towards Deutschlandsberg, a village they thought to be part of Germany as its name recalls Deutschland (Germany). Suddenly the military stopped the crowd and, with the help of translators, clarified the misunderstanding (Interview AU3).

4. 'Border Crossing Spielfeld' was one of the main groups starting an information campaign to raise awareness on the deportations, claiming they were illegal (Interview AU1).

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8

Emotions in the Crisis: Mobilising for Refugees in Germany and Sweden

Jochen Kleres

Introduction

Sweden and Germany have shared a number of similarities during the so-called refugee crisis. Both have been predominantly destination countries for refugees. In European comparison, both have taken in somewhat disproportionate numbers of people per capita during the height of the 'refugee crisis'. In October 2015, Sweden absorbed more refugees than in any previous month; 162,877 asylum claimants entered in that year, more than twice as many as in the previous years (Berger 2016). Germany saw a total of 890,000 for the same year (BMI 2016). Both countries also subscribe in the dominant public discourse to the notion of a 'refugee crisis'. And finally, the civic response to this 'refugee crisis' shares the prevalence of a certain kind of civic organising in support of refugees that emerged during this period—so-called welcome initiatives.

I would like to thank Margit Mayer for a stimulating conversation and for sharing with me the draft of an article (Mayer 2017). This also brought some of the available literature to my attention.

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However, as I will carve out in this chapter, closer analysis reveals some significant differences between the two country cases, too. Both commonalities and differences come into relief if we focus on some patterns of the emotional underpinnings of welcome initiatives and their presence or absence in the field of civic organising for refugees, rather than their formal characteristics. The comparative perspective proves particularly fruitful here. This focus raises the question of contextual conditions accounting for similarities and differences.

The following analysis explores the role of the discursive construct of a 'refugee crisis', the role of different forms of nationalism, and differences in the structure of the civic field and, relatedly, of state-civil society relations. Based on a comparative analysis focusing on the cities of Berlin and Gothenburg (expanded to other cities as well), I will show how a number of discursive contexts have conveyed feeling rules that have shaped some of the emotions that have mobilised civic organisers. What emerges from this comparative analysis are aspects of an emotional politics of the 'refugee crisis' in Sweden and Germany.

German and Swedish Mobilisations

Both countries saw the emergence of a new kind of mobilisation during the 'refugee crisis'—welcome initiatives—which dominated, at least in much of the public perception, the civic response to the 'refugee crisis' but were far from the only civic actors in the field. Welcome initiatives were often entirely new organisations typically mobilised through social media (some only existing as informal online groups). Some also emerged from pre-existing organisations that shifted their focus towards refugees and grew significantly in the process. Many involved individuals had no previous experience with civic action. For Germany, survey research among individual civic actors found that 66 per cent had mobilised for refugees since 2015 and 19 per cent since 2014 (Karakayali and Kleist 2016, p. 19; see also Daphi 2016, p. 35; Sutter 2017, p. 3). Swedish analyses similarly found that many individuals had mobilised for the first time (Weinryb 2016). My own interview data corroborates this.

Welcome initiatives have to a large extent provided stop-gap help to incoming refugees in the context of a state's greater or lesser failure to provide basic and legally stipulated provisions to them. This included handing out food, clothing, basic supplies, accommodation, bureaucratic help, language courses, and so on. Most of the organisations interviewed in this project were rather informal (see also Karakayali and Kleist 2016, p. 22; Weinryb 2016). This seems to be more out of pragmatism than based on normative considerations such as a penchant for grassroots principles. German welcome initiatives, however, more than their Swedish counterparts, have started a process of formalisation and professionalisation. This distinction points at differences in state-civil society relations that I will discuss more in depth at a later point.

Structure of the Field

Welcome initiatives emerged in a field of pro-migrant civic organising that has existed in both countries for decades and comprises a range of other organisations. In Germany, there is a long lineage of civic action both by and for migrants (Oulios 2016; Schröder 2014). Up to the 'refugee crisis', this field had slowly regained some momentum after the severe legal restrictions of the constitutional right to asylum in 1993 and the 'refugee political ice age' that followed (Jakob 2016, p. 106). One notable current in this field is mobilisations since 2012 by migrants themselves, which have involved a number of radical actions (e.g. hunger and thirst strikes, stitching lips shut, occupations of exposed urban spaces), but had already undergone a period of demobilisation when the 'refugee crisis' set in (Mayer 2017).

Another current is radical/autonomous left activism. Two examples are Alarmphone and No Border, which are in fact transnational initiatives, but operating in Germany as well. This current of activism enacts solidarity with refugees as part of a wider struggle against a neoliberal, capitalist order (Kleres forthcoming). My interviews suggest that there is some overlap between radical leftist and migrants' activism, though not free of tensions.

Two other currents remain relatively detached from the former two. One is a range of migration-related interest associations and church-

based initiatives, such as Pro Asyl, Germany's largest pro-immigrant advocacy organisation. Pro Asyl functions as an umbrella organisation for regional refugee councils, church and union initiatives, welfare and human rights organisations, and traditional humanitarian organisations. Many of these are professionalised NGOs.

Finally, churches have formed a pillar of pro-immigrant civic organising in themselves. This often operates on a parish level. A specific form of this is the church asylum, that is, local parishes hosting refugees on their premises in order to protect them against impending deportations. Oulios (2016, p. 326) counted 500 instances of church asylum between 1983 and 2002, helping 5000 individuals. Another example is the Jesuit Refugee Service, providing pastoral care in deportation prisons, offering legal advice and counselling for refugees, and carrying out political lobbying. Our interviews indicate a certain overlap between welcome initiatives and this older, ecclesiastical current.

In Sweden, too, there have been pertinent mobilisations for some decades. Parallels with Germany include the significance of churches. Here as well, parishes have provided direct help for refugees. One example is Svenska Kyrkan Bergsjön, a parish of the Church of Sweden in Gothenburg's Bergsjön neighbourhood. The parish premises have turned into a hub for social and support activities for refugees and migrantic denizens including a cafe, a clothing desk, and other services. This has resulted from the neighbourhood's transformation into a segregated, migrantic one, which predated the 'refugee crisis'. Other parishes in Gothenburg have started supporting refugees only during the 'refugee crisis'.

Political parties—specifically Vänsterpartiet [the Left Party]—played a significant role in the civic response to the 'refugee crisis', as the local chapter in Gothenburg closed down operations in its party headquarters, turning it into an improvised refugee home for several weeks. As one of their representatives put it, Vänsterpartiet and the church provided much of the infrastructure for the civic response to the 'refugee crisis', co-enabling welcome initiatives.

A radical, autonomous Left has been relatively absent in Gothenburg. The most radical left-leaning organisation relevant in this context is Inga Människor Är Illegal [No One Is Illegal]. This has been one of the more

central civic organisations in support of refugees and other immigrants, catering especially to undocumented immigrants. As such, its activities include explicitly political activities such as organising demonstrations. Rosengrenska, another example of a pre-existing organisation, has provided medical care for undocumented immigrants and successfully pushed to have them included in Sweden's regular medical system. A syndicalist group briefly got involved during the height of the refugee crisis.

Another difference from the German case is the lack of any separate, sustained mobilisation by refugees themselves, although individual migrants were involved in any of the above-mentioned forms of mobilisation. The single exception was a 2016 demonstration in Stockholm, with refugees coming from all over Sweden to a central square in the city.

In comparison with Germany, politicisation played a greater and more central role in Sweden. The context for this was at the time still impending (and later implemented) limitations on the legal rights of refugees, for instance, making it more difficult for refugees to even reach Sweden or have their families come after them. A broad range of civic initiatives formed an alliance—the Folkkampanj För Asylrätt [People's Campaign for the Right to Asylum]—to advocate against these legal changes.

Approaching Civic Emotions

Our fieldwork focused on Berlin and Gothenburg for a number of reasons. Both are major cities with a diversity of civic organisations and focal points for refugees' arrivals. The developments in Berlin also took on a particular symbolic character in the German context: the failure of German institutions to take care of incoming refugees was particularly apparent here as the pertinent institution—the Berlin Regional Office for Health and Social Affairs (LaGeSo)—virtually collapsed. This had severe consequences for refugees who were left in large numbers waiting outside for days, unprotected against weather conditions, without food, water, accommodation, medical care, information, and so on. This was a formative context for civic organisers, as I will argue below. Additional interviews were carried out in Leipzig.

Gothenburg is Sweden's second biggest city. While Malmö was the key point of entry—given the city's geographic vicinity to mainland Europe, connected with Copenhagen via the Öresund Bridge—Gothenburg (and Stockholm) was another hub for incoming refugees either as a first destination or as a point of passage en route to other places in Sweden or on to Norway and Finland. To increase the diversity of organisations, additional interviews were carried out in Malmö and Stockholm.

In both countries, interviews focused mainly on welcome initiatives as the new entries into the field and as the organisations that grew to predominance in the civic response to the 'refugee crisis'. A limited number of additional interviews covered other types of organisations (leftist, migrantic, church-affiliated, etc.) and functioned as contrasting cases.

In order to analyse the emotional dimension, I drew on emerging methodologies in social emotion research (Flam and Kleres 2015) and especially for expert/semi-structured interviews (Kleres 2015a). The interview guideline used throughout our project included some direct questions about emotions. However, as many emotional expressions remain implicit in interview texts, I also drew on elements of narrative methodologies for analysing emotions empirically (Kleres 2011). This is also helpful in analysing the emotional configurations of wider political discourses. It draws on the notion of a narrative quality of emotions, which are constituted through the gestalt of actors, events, conditions, thoughts, feelings, and so on. Anger episodes, for instance, involve elements that together form a scene of faulty, unfair behaviour by others (see also Fischer and Jansz 1995, p. 73). Crucially, this perspective blurs the distinction between reason and emotion (Barbalet 1998). Narrative or discourse is thus inextricably emotional and vice versa. In this way, by constituting the world meaningfully, discourse configures how social actors are to feel. That is, they have feeling rules (Hochschild 1979, 1983)[1] inscribed into them.

Given emotions' often covert manifestation, both in interviews and in real life, an interpretive, qualitative methodology is particularly suitable. Qualitative methodologies cannot and do not attempt to propose numerical generalisations. Their potential is in analytical generalisations, identifying empirical patterns (see Kleres and Wettergren 2017, pp. 4–5). The present analysis thus does not aim at generalising statements about

the emotional bases of all welcome initiatives in both countries. Rather, it attempts to identify typical emotional patterns as they emerge from the interview data. The comparative perspective is particularly useful in bringing into relief which emotional patterns were present in the field of civic pro-immigrant organising in one country but less so in the other, which in turn raises questions as to the sources of such patterns and their differences.

This notion tallies well theoretically with a view on civic action whose emotional bases are shaped by feeling rules (Flam 2005; Kleres 2017). Feeling rules are inscribed into discourses, institutions, and organisations. They are social norms that prescribe certain feelings and ways of feeling and expressing them for specific social situations and contexts (Hochschild 1979, 1983). Sets of feeling rules embraced by a social group or institution as pertinent to a social setting constitute emotional regimes (Reddy 2001). This perspective allows us to analyse patterns in the emotional bases of civic action and link them to formative social contexts without reducing the empirical complexity of emotions in social life to single emotions. Rather, it sheds light on how this complexity is governed, but never resolved, through regimes of feeling rules.

Finally, to meet the standards of this volume, excerpts have been carefully edited to enhance their readability. Analytically relevant linguistic features were retained, however.

The Crisis: Mobilising Feelings and Moral Shocks

Compassion

The 'refugee crisis' was keenly mobilising as both a discourse and a material practice. This was because it evoked specific emotions. And as the international comparison will show, these emotions were in fact rather contingent.

For one, the mobilising impact of the 'refugee crisis' as such was particularly evident from the fact that many civic actors had not been mobilised before (see above). The media, too, were crucial in conveying a

sense of crisis. Several interviewees both in Sweden and Germany referred to the image of Alan Kurdi's dead body on the Turkish sea shore as a turning point for them. Others mention the harsh reality of the 'refugee crisis' on the ground as a crucial experience:

> […] that yes there are a few coming now and there is nobody from the government here or the migration service or anything and they are like hungry and thirsty they hardly have any shoes or clothes and they don't know where to go so people you need to come down here and help. (Interview SW7)

> […] already in December 2014 the first gym hall was emergency occupied in [my burrough]. And in our case in fact neighbours showed up and said, that is really horrible that people have to live that way what can we do? Ok then the conditions here came to a head in Berlin, keyword failed state LaGeSo which didn't function, people who simply weren't provided for which led to an enormous will to help and a surge of support. (Interview GE5)

As these excerpts indicate, a keen sense of palpable crisis—mounting unmet needs and shocking living conditions—precipitated civic action, crucially without apprehending much of the context of this plight. This was compounded by a feeling of being overwhelmed by the sheer scale of the plight witnessed on the ground: a mounting list of the needs of incoming refugees; the local witnessing of refugees' plight framed as an 'emergency'; and in both cases an immediate link to helping with only fleeting reference to the state as a mere background condition. At an early stage and for emerging civic actors, the 'crisis' was a humanitarian crisis in the first place. I want to argue that what was mobilised and mobilising here were feelings of compassion.

Leaning on Arendt (2006), compassion can be understood as the emotional apprehension of the suffering of *individual* others as such, rather than of a category of sufferers nor of the contextual causes of this suffering. It is because of this individualising bent that Arendt (2006, pp. 76–77) argues that compassion shuns politics. It decontextualises the plight of others.

The above two excerpts indicate an immediate apprehension of a pressing plight and how this entailed an urge to help. Crucially, both

interviewees made reference to political contexts (such as state neglect) only in passing, as mere background conditions. Equally expressive of compassion is many interviewees' explicit emphasis on fellow humanness as a key driving force for their civic action (on the link of fellow humanness and empathetic feelings, see Schmitt and Clark 2006). This fellow humanness is also expressed by recurring references in the interviews to what civic actors experienced as violations of refugees' human dignity. This care for human dignity is a humanitarian concern, as some research participants explicate:

> […] there really exists a humanitarian consensus; and this humanitarian consensus is on the one hand described in the Geneva convention; and on the other hand in what anyone in the world would agree on, if asked, do you want that someone has his own housing, has his job can earn his money and take responsibility for his own decision and life. No one will then say no, why shouldn't that be possible for refugees. […] That someone gets a residence status and a residence permit is a VERY! different issue that has nothing to do at all with the initial provision and with giving him the chance at all. But I really don't want that anyone who has fled, and also for no German, that he has to live on the street, doesn't know where to buy his bread and with what, and how to provide for his children. I don't want that and no one wants that in our funny little association. (Interview GE9)

Consonant with humanitarianism,[2] the care for human dignity is here constructed as detached from more political issues such as legal status. Another interviewee explicitly refers to dignity as the bottom line of her civic action. This is equally a pre-political, fellow-human stance:

> […] that has a lot to do with dignity, there are homes where refugees aren't even allowed to leave […] there are homes there is a clothing counter, says I just showed you three shirts. If you don't like them, you don't seem to need them. No, that has to do with dignity. […] I decide if I want one of the three or not or if I wash what I have another four times. […] Last week […] it started to rain again. [Another volunteer] ran out and distributed rain capes outside [where refugees were waiting in line in front of a state institution]. The family whom she gave rain capes then said thank you for the rain capes, thank you for the respect. It's not only about protecting

> people but also to give the person the feeling you were important to someone and he saw that you need this […] the feeling that someone else, I care. (Interview GE3)

The fact that the image of Alan Kurdi's body had such a mobilising effect may equally be attributed to the fact that it triggered intense emotions (Procter and Yamada-Rice 2015) and, in particular, compassion: it is no coincidence that this was the image of a child and that, in fact, images of children have played an important role in mobilising civic actors more generally (Karakayali 2016; Sutter 2017). These images operate on the basis of cultural notions of children as innocent and deserving of care (Karakayali 2016; Procter and Yamada-Rice 2015). Both innocence and deservingness are key configurators of compassion (Nussbaum, cited in Höijer 2004, p. 514).

In sum, the discursive-material reality of the 'refugee crisis' exposed would-be civic actors to the suffering of others, triggering feelings of compassion and thus the impulse to mobilise their immediate help. Compassion, however, is not the only emotion to apprehend the plight of others. Arendt (2006) also singled out solidarity and pity (on their emotional qualities, see Kleres 2015c, 2017). This contingency of compassion raises questions about its social sources: where can we identify feeling rules (Hochschild 1979, 1983) and other factors that shape civic actors' compassionate emotional response to the 'refugee crisis'?

Compassion and the Crisis Discourse

One particularly formative discourse, giving shape to feelings of compassion, has been the 'refugee crisis' discourse itself. In both countries, the 'refugee crisis' was the dominant paradigm in public discourse to make sense of increased numbers of incoming refugees. On closer examination, however, this is a contingent construct (see also Alcalde 2016): The per capita numbers of refugee arrivals have been much higher for years in some southern European locales without much dominant talk of a crisis, which became the central denominator only when higher numbers of refugees reached central and northern European countries (Elfwering

2016, p. 42; Pries 2016, p. 28). The refugee crisis discourse is thus predicated on a very specific vantage point.

To no small extent conveyed by the media, the 'refugee crisis' is a metaphor of a suddenly emerging threat including an imagery of migration as a wave, flood, stream, and so on (e.g. Anderson Käppi and Hedman 2016; Elfwering 2016; Herrmann 2016). Like metaphors in general (e.g. Kövecses 2003), it has been keenly evocative of emotions, yet not without ambivalences. It conveyed the image of overburdened societies swept by a large number of incoming refugees. This discourse established, on the one hand, an emotional climate[3] of overwhelmedness and in this way also fear (cf. Herrmann 2016, p. 10).[4]

As it happened, fear would become more dominant especially in 2016, manifesting in both countries, for instance, in increasing right-wing mobilisations and violence, and in political changes that restricted refugees' rights. Fear, however, was not the only element in the emotional climate of the 'refugee crisis' and not the most important aspect with regard to welcome initiative organisers. This can be briefly indicated by German Chancellor Merkel's (in)famous dictum during the height of the 'refugee crisis' in August 2015:

> Germany is a strong country. The way we approach these things must be: we have made it so often—we will make it.[5]

This statement inserted emotional elements of national pride and hope amidst the refugee crisis. Hope, in particular, has a keen potential to outbalance fear and inspire action (Kleres and Wettergren 2017).

Perhaps more importantly, the crisis construct also conveys a feeling rule of compassion. Crisis constructs are tantamount to what has been described as the central trope of the discourse of humanitarianism—emergency (Calhoun 2010; Krause 2014, p. 115). Emotionally, this conveys a keen sense of urgency, amplifying the emotional apprehensions of others' suffering and its action dispositions in terms of direct helping. It also prescribes feelings of compassion by configuring how to relate to others' suffering in specific ways: as Calhoun (2010, pp. 30–31) argues, the emergency construct operates without ascriptions of agency, leading to a focus on suffering per se rather than to an apprehension of its contexts. In

this way, it discursively configures a feeling rule of compassion. By constructing the situation of increased immigration as a crisis, the 'refugee crisis' discourse thus amplifies, or makes particularly palpable, the plight of others. It calls for a kind of help that does not apprehend the political contexts of suffering in favour of immediate and direct help. At the same time, however, the feeling rules of the crisis construct have been fundamentally ambivalent, and we need to look for other factors to understand why this ambivalence was first resolved in favour of compassion.

Moral Shocks

Consonant with the construction of a sudden crisis, the experience of the realities on the ground came to some civic organisers as a moral shock (Jasper 1998). This may also help explain why many without prior experience in civic action mobilised. What was shocking to civic organisers was the extent of human misery witnessed first-hand. Shock was explicitly expressed, for instance, in the following excerpts, or by the iterative, emphatic construction of the situation in Berlin as 'catastrophic':

> […] and then I went there [to LaGeSo] and had a look at the situation and was shocked like all others, too, how badly that was handled there in the summer, that they got [no] water, without any scrutable system of registration being visible there, no information signs, no medical services, no and there were really many [refugees] there at that time. (Interview GE10)

> I went there with my friend to LaGeSo and had a look at the conditions there. Cause until then I personally knew that only from TV. And we realized that is Africa. That is third world. There was no water, no hygiene uh uh facilities etc. etc. So it was really, it was really catastrophic, it was really REALLY! catastrophic. (Interview GE9)

The situation at LaGeSo,[6] the state institution responsible for registering arriving immigrants and, subsequently, for attending to their basic needs, was particularly appalling, as the excerpts describe. Having arrived in a presumably safe place, refugees found themselves in an endangering situation again (Schneider 2015). While LaGeSo rose to particular and

symbolic notoriety, it was representative of what happened in other places in Germany as well (see, e.g. Pelzer 2015). State failure was also a topic in Swedish interviews, albeit to a much more limited extent and with a lesser sense of shock:

> […] there are a few coming now and there is nobody from the government here or the migration service or anything. (Interview SW7)

But the situation in Berlin was arguably a lot worse and longer lasting.

The concept of a moral shock, despite its ad hoc plausibility, says little about the sources of shock and about the shape of actors' response to such shock. The quality of any event as shocking is in fact rather contingent. As we shall see, there were some emotional differences between organisers in Germany and Sweden, and shock seemed to be more predominant in Germany.

What shocked civic organisers in the first place was the utter plight of the refugees as they witnessed it personally on the ground. This had a keenly politicising potential, as this plight was to some extent co-produced by state failure. And yet, none of the welcome initiative organisers engaged with the intricacies of asylum politics beyond the state's failure in attending to the basic needs of refugees. In fact, these organisers—even the Swedish Vänsterpartiet political party—were repeatedly at pains to describe their work as non-political. The depoliticising feeling rule of compassion is one element accounting for this. This was, however, retained and buttressed by another element: the role of nationalism. As we will see in the next two sections, this also accounts for some of the differences between Sweden and Germany.

German Nationalism, Integration, Pity

Pride and Shame

Nationalism has been an important element in the crisis discourse.[7] It also figured in terms of civic action as a formative and mobilising condition, though it did so differently in Germany and Sweden. This can

account for some of the differences between the mobilisations in both countries.

As Arnold and Bischoff have noted for Germany (for Sweden cf. Trägårdh 2016), the political discourse of the 'refugee crisis' 'was an expression of negotiation processes about central motifs, values and the self-image of the immigration society' (2016, p. 28). What was at stake in this discourse was the image of the German nation as humane and, emotionally, compassionate, evoking an image of a set table for all to enjoy:

> […] fantasiz[ing] once more a Germany that is open, liberal and tolerant where migrants are being welcomed. But, as I said, this contradicts the current political climate. From the perspective of the majority of the population migrants are most of all a security risk. (Castro Varela 2015, p. 91, my transl.; cf. also Seng 2016, p. 26)

I have already noted how the 'refugee crisis' discourse has oscillated emotionally between fear of migrants ('security risk') and feelings of compassion and hospitality. Another emotional dimension here is pride in the nation, which is made possible by constructing the nation in superior terms as altruistic and just. Merkel's (in)famous invocation of hope ('We will make it') was significantly coupled with appeals to national pride—a strong country and people that has 'made it' so often before (see above Sect. 'Compassion and the Crisis Discourse'). This element of pride may indeed explain some of the initial enthusiasm when the first trains with large numbers of refugees arrived and masses of locals applauded them at train stations and so on:

> Euphorically, a 'new welcome culture' was celebrated especially in Germany and Austria, which, according to its emphatic proclamation, seemed to symbolize the human face of European civil society. (Castro Varela and Heinemann 2016, p. 52, my transl.)

Politicians like Chancellor Merkel or Munich's lord mayor publicly stated that they were proud of the many citizens who helped (Popp 2016, pp. 22, 24).

In sum, the nationalist element in the welcome discourse sustained and buttressed feeling rules of compassion and suggested taking pride in a

nation that was constructed as humanitarian and compassionate and thus as morally good. In these ways, the 'welcome' discourse provided a formative context for the emotions of welcome initiative organisers, retaining their feelings of compassion and giving them pride in their work as they essentially enacted the moral nation. It is thus no coincidence that we find references to this kind of nationalism in the interviews.

One interviewee explicitly linked the initial enthusiasm among welcome initiative actors with nationalism, which in his experience had taken on more positive connotations after Germany hosted the soccer world cup in 2006:

> […] there was a turning point in German history, that was the world cup, where suddenly flags appeared and there was again a kind of pride to be German and to be a host. […] And out of that feeling, having been dragged over from the world cup, uhm we are great hosts, in my view this euphoria emerged at the stations, see the pictures in Munich. (Interview GE10)

The flip side of this ascent to pride through welcome initiatives is feelings of shame—pride's dialectic counterpart[8]—about the 'catastrophic' situation of state failure on the ground. One research participant talked about the blatant neglect of one refugee's rather urgent medical needs by public institutions when she said:

> I feel ashamed. I sit here and feel ashamed for this state [I: mhm] to the bone [*in Grund und Boden*]. (Interview GE3)

Both pride—available through enacting the welcoming nation—and shame, motivating actions to rectify the disgraceful situation of falling short of the national welcome ideal, functioned as mobilising emotions here.

Integration and Pity

Nationalist precepts are interlinked with another discourse that took on greater significance as welcome initiatives evolved over time: integration discourse (Seng 2016, p. 24). Integration has been one of the most central

elements of recent migration discourse. It attained renewed emphasis when the initial 'welcome' enthusiasm gave way to a more fearful general climate around the 'refugee crisis', epitomised by the racialising scandalisation of the New Year's Eve sexual assaults in Cologne and other cities in 2015–2016 (Hauer 2016, p. 53; cf. Jungk 2016, p. 99). Indeed, with this new discursive phase, 'fear appears to be the dominant emotion in political discourse about refugees' (Castro Varela and Heinemann 2016, p. 54, my transl.). This shifting discursive emphasis impacted both the practice and some of the emotional bases of welcome initiatives, subtly altering the regime of feeling rules that governed it.

While many activities of welcome initiatives in the beginning revolved around stop-gap help, such as providing food, housing, clothing, and so on, my interviews indicate a shift as the numbers of incoming refugees declined and as the institutional failure became less acute. In parallel with these changes and the shifting discourse, welcome initiatives began to focus more on integration work, that is, organising leisure activities, German language classes, and so on:

> […] we are now in phase two. We moved from the catastrophe phase [i.e. food, accommodation etc.] […] to phase two, that is integration. […] We take care of supporting people with their masses of applications they need to file, with learning German. And the most important […] we try to give people an understanding of this country. […] It's a bit like teaching children how to walk. You show them something and the rest they need to do themselves. Simply that they understand how does it work here. (Interview GE7)

This excerpt not only describes the shift of practice but equally hints at an emotional shift that I explore in the following. This emotional shift relates to some of the central precepts of integration discourse: intertwined as it is with nationalism, it is inherently an assimilationist discourse (e.g. Geisen 2010; Seng 2016; Terkessidis 2010; Yıldız 2010). It sets a norm to which migrants are to adapt. I argue here that this also alters the regime of feeling rules for civic actors.

The ethnocentrism of integration discourse reflects among some of the welcome initiative actors. Consider, for instance, in the above excerpt the

belittling metaphor of refugees as children who need to be taught to walk. Another interviewee, a more extreme example, complains about what she sees as refugees' more recent tendencies not to integrate, such as when the welcome initiative's efforts to play music were not welcomed by refugees:

> […] uh no we don't want that music. We don't want to listen to that. […] [Interviewer: what kind of music was that?] Well, that was like classic European music. And that they said, no we don't want to listen to that […] it's understandable. Their home country, like, for a moment to delve into their history. But I think our task is to [say], gee folks, you're living here now. If you want a prospect here you have to. Then it is somehow a part of that. You don't have to like it. You don't have to fully buy into it. But it is somehow a part of it, you have to accept that, that's how it is. (Interview GE4)

How can we understand the emotional implications of this ethnocentrism? Through its assimilationist thrust, integration discourse constitutes a matrix of superiority. It sets primacy of the nation as the benchmark for refugees' integration—that is, the standard they need to adapt to. Secondly, by enacting a valued vision of the nation as doing good and as just welcome initiatives ultimately serve the nation. This discursive configuration gives shape to a feeling rule of pity. As we will see, however, this is a feeling rule that welcome initiative organisers have dealt with reflexively to a certain extent.

Pity is a more superficial apprehension of others' suffering (Arendt 2006). This is so because in pity, the hierarchy between those in need and those who can alleviate suffering is reinforced. The reason for this is that the intentional object of pity is not suffering (as with compassion) but, rather, the pitier, that is, a concern with improving social prestige or gaining religious virtue through acts of pity. Pity is about 'announc[ing] one's virtue by registering one's feeling about such suffering' (Spelman 1997, pp. 64–65).

Integration discourse introduces a subtly altered feeling rule into the emotional regime of the 'refugee crisis'. It sets the nation as a supreme standard to which migrants must adapt. Welcome initiative actors sub-

scribing to this discourse convey this to refugees and thus simultaneously enact the vision of a virtuous nation. This changes the apprehension of the plight of refugees into a pity-based stance in which helping functions to establish one's virtuousness. The 'children' metaphor or the paternalising effort at teaching European culture/music to refugees succinctly expresses this. Pity would thus explain why there is at times an element of paternalism in welcome initiatives' support for refugees:

> Helping thus turns into an opportunity to demonstrate the gloriousness of the (national) group of belonging: 'Look, we Germans are good!' (Castro Varela and Heinemann 2016, p. 60; my transl.)

A corollary of this intertwining of welcome and integration discourse is the production of good and bad migrants—those who assimilate and others seen as unable or unwilling to integrate (Castro Varela 2015, pp. 91–92; Seng 2016). In the above excerpt there was thus a palpable sense of irritation about refugees' reluctance to listen to the offered music. Conversely, it also translates into feeling rules stipulating gratitude from refugees for the help they receive (Bröse and Friedrich 2015). This is also an outcome of social policies that have devolved social provisions for refugees to civil society. As the state has often failed to provide the legal minimum for refugees, leaving it up to civic action to step in, refugees are in effect and practice divested of their legal rights and become recipients of charity (Graf 2016, p. 88)—a rather pity-based form of providing help.

Refugees became dependent on 'a-smile-is-enough' whims which measure themselves against their gratitude and the goodwill of the helpers (Lambert et al. 2015, my transl.)

Welcome initiatives navigate this matrix of self-referential pity and expectations of gratitude. While this is a formative and motivating discursive regime of feeling rules for some organisers, some initiatives deal with it rather reflexively and try to redress its effects:

> Narcissists and frustration is a very big issue, right. So, that doesn't function, that is, if I as a fairly disturbed narcissist try to help a Syrian extended family of eight, and attend to them 24 hours a day, and I see then suddenly

> that they are NOT registered right away, that they do not find a job no apartment, that they don't have language classes, and they then even define themselves as individuals who tell me as a helper, but I rather want it this way, and I have to accept that, that gets difficult. (Interview GE9)

Note how in this excerpt an element of self-referentiality (narcissism) combines with an expectation of gratitude—that is, a pity-based approach to helping. While indicating that this is a very big issue, the research participant continued in the interview indicating a critical stance in his organisation towards this kind of attitude. Welcome initiatives may thus show a degree of reflexivity about some of the problematic implications of pity-driven help, informed as it is by emotional regimes. Another research participant, though notably from a relatively left-leaning organisation, for instance, rejects gratitude in her own practice:

> I don't want a thank you at all, doesn't interest me at all. If someone says thank you for the trousers then I say thank you that you take those trousers from me. I don't need that at all. Actually I don't want to be here, I don't want to be needed for such things, I find it a catastrophe that we have to be here. (Interview GE3)

Crucially, she contextualises this statement by talking about how help is a means to honour and re-establish others' dignity—an arguably more compassionate rather than pity-based stance.

Sweden: Nationalism, Compassion vs. Solidarity

The Swedish mobilisation during the 'refugee crisis' differed from Germany's in that there was not only a politically limited current of organising but equally a relatively more politicised one, epitomised by the Folkkampanj För Asylrätt. In the following section I will argue that the two currents drew upon different feeling rules, both of which relate to (different) Swedish nationalist traditions.

Consensus: National Solidarity and Compassion

Some civic actors opted for a relatively consensual approach and limited themselves to an at times even explicitly apolitical stance. For instance, the Left Party (Vänsterpartiet) made an effort to keep a low public profile about their considerable effort during the height of the 'refugee crisis', when they closed the operations at their local party headquarters in order to house incoming refugees. They felt that what they were doing was and should be non-political work, and they did not want to make it a political act by communicating their actions to the wider public. Weinryb (2016, my transl.) notes on Swedish welcome initiatives:

> Instead of criticizing and giving proposals for improvements of the authorities' actions people started to organize themselves, both formally and informally, in order to meet refugees' needs.

One welcome initiative in Gothenburg disbanded when they felt that state institutions, after initial negligence, started to step up and take sufficient care of the situation.[9]

In line with this, some civic organisers acquiesced to the legal changes and curtailments of the asylum law (2015–2016, see introductory section above) and the practices of Swedish asylum policies. The following organiser, for instance, combines a degree of political awareness with political acquiescence:

> […] it's not a crisis for Europe. I mean taking care of one million refugees, it's not a big thing for Europe. They are making it a big thing. (inaud.) They are spending more money on stopping them then what it would cost to just, you know, try to create ways to handle it in a more humane way. It's not like we say […] they should let every single refugee stay. But as a refugee you have the right to, you know, come and try that. […] And I can accept that. We can't have everyone that comes because they are only poor. If it's not a political thing or a war or something […] we can tell them no. But we don't have to let them wait in a camp for, like, one year or two years or you know or [where they] kill themselves or let them die from cold just because they are refugees. So yeah I don't like that. (Interview SW7)

On the one hand, she keenly apprehends the refugees' plight, leading her to assume a critical stance towards policies that aim at limiting refugees' access to Sweden. She is equally critical of some of the Swedish practices of receiving refugees, such as housing them in rather isolated camps, far off in the Swedish forests without much connection to the outside world, with negative consequences for refugees' mental health ('kill themselves'). And yet, at the same time, her critical concern is only about some of the practicalities of refugee reception in Sweden. Specifically, she does not question border regimes as such (in contrast to older organisations such as No One Is Illegal). And in fact, she disbanded her organisation when she felt the state had begun to take sufficient care of incoming refugees. Awareness of the implications of the Swedish migration regime did not keep her mobilised.

Consent to these changes may be attributed to the compassionate element and the depoliticising effect of compassion. For instance, Vänsterpartiet's insistence that their actions were and should be non-political implies the assertion of a feeling rule of compassion rather than political solidarity. I have already argued how compassion is informed by the crisis discourse. However, there is an additional element in the production of political acquiescence that has to do with the specifics of Swedish nationalism.

Sweden has a long tradition of moralist nationalism and sometimes even prides itself as being a humanitarian superpower (Anwar 2015). Swedish nationalism involves the dual elements of, first, a moral duty towards fellow citizens through an expansive welfare state based on a conception of Sweden as leading in terms of modernity and wealth and, second, of solidarity with small, peripheral countries in the so-called Third World (Trägårdh 2002; Ruth 1984). Emotionally, Swedish nationalism combines the dual emphasis on national solidarity (welfare state) and international solidarity (internationalism). This provided a basis for both consent to curtailments to the asylum law (Trägårdh 2016) and resistance against it. The duality of national and international solidarity constituted a sense of tragedy during the refugee crisis and lent the legal restrictions a quality of necessity: tragically, as it were, asylum rights had to be curtailed in order to prevent a dreaded system breakdown. Indicatively, the minister in charge was in tears as he presented these legal changes (Trägårdh 2016).

This discursive-emotional regime—the duality of nationalist feeling rules and a sense of unresolvable conflict between the two during the 'refugee crisis'—also affected civic organisers. An activist paraphrases how this was reflected among some civic organisers, who

> […] accepted the mantra or the rhetorics of the government and they were, like, yeah ok, we buy this, it's enough, you know. […] That we need order, we need a structure, we need the migration board, and all the municipalities need to build up better structures so that we can give these people a good welcoming. And as it is now we cannot do that. We cannot offer them what they deserve. And it's not worthy and it's not humane. (Interview SW1)

Thus, a sense of the practical impossibility of living up to a humanitarian standard informed some civic organisers' consent to policies that limited immigration. Interviewees expressed how the fear of a 'system breakdown' became a popular element in public discourse and motivated legal restriction. As this indicates, legal changes were seen as a matter of political reason—ironically, precisely for humanitarian reasons.

Politicisation: Civic Anger and Political Solidarity

A notable feature of the Swedish case is that the compassionate, relatively depoliticised stance did not continue to dominate the field of pro-refugee civic action as it did in Germany. In fact, political plans to curtail the asylum law sparked a wave of politicised mobilisation in opposition. This coalesced in the Folkkampanj För Asylrätt [People's Campaign for the Right to Asylum] presented at the outset of this chapter. A sizable number of organisations and individuals mobilised as part of the People's Campaign—a total of 160 civic organisations managed to collect almost 70,000[10] signatures in support of its petition. A different emotional basis of pro-immigrant civic action emerged here, from a specific, rather non-compassionate emotional trajectory: It drew on different national traditions.

For some organisers, the civic mobilisation during the 'refugee crisis' constituted an emotional climate of hope. This was in itself a mobilising

emotion, given hope's potential to spur civic action (Kleres and Wettergren 2017). This was a hope for different, more refugee-friendly migration policies and formed an important emotional backdrop and point of departure for how these activists apprehended the political shift towards legal restrictions. They developed an emotional stance of political solidarity. One research participant indicates this emotional climate of hope at the beginning of the 'refugee crisis':

> […] in the beginning of this refugee crisis [there] was such a, such a positive, like, hopeful atmosphere. Everyone wanted to [do] something. Everyone wanted to participate. […] Europe is not building borders. Wow. We can fix this. We can help like help solve the situation together. (Interview SW1)

However, as legal changes were impending with a good chance of passing the parliament, as they did in the end, activists instead found that their hopes were frustrated, and they reacted with anger:

> […] and then there's other people that, for the first time maybe, started to learn about how the migration system works and how the regulations work. And they really believed […] that we could help, that we could do more, that it's our duty to help out, you know. And I would say that when the policy from the government changed those people got even more engaged and even more angry and formed for example like Folkkampanj För Asylrätt and other initiatives. (Interview SW1)

What emerged here was the formation of political solidarity with refugees, apprehending both their plight and, antagonistically, the dominant policy's neglect of that plight. Consider, for instance, the following statement by an activist who had joined a spontaneous demonstration after the legal changes passed in parliament:

> We gather in quiet, concern, grief, determination to fight and stillness. And in all this we gave each other hope. We raised our hands and there was nothing else to say than let our palms speak. RIGHT TO ASYLUM. June 21 is a pitch black day in Sweden's history. It is still impossible to understand that this new inhuman asylum law went through. But one day people

must grasp this and the law must be pulled down. (Folkkampanj För Asylrätt n.d., my transl.)

The emotional apprehension of others' plight—not on an individual level but as a category of others together with an antagonistic apprehension of a perceived source of that suffering—constitutes the emotion of political solidarity (Scholz 2010; Kleres 2015c, 2017). The internationalist element in Swedish nationalism conveys this with its feeling rule of solidarity with the global South, understood as marginalised globally. Indicatively, what mobilised some activists was what they saw as a breach with this feeling rule of international political solidarity.

Comparative Conclusion

I have traced here how feeling rules are ultimately grounded in discursive contexts such as the crisis discourse or nationalism. Discursive constructions of issues shape how social actors understand and feel about an issue and thus influence whether and how they might take action on it (Kleres 2017). There are, however, other factors to be considered, especially from a comparative perspective. One has to do with processes of framing and coalition forming. In Sweden, the field of pro-immigrant civic organising included left-leaning, radical organisations such as No One Is Illegal that were politically much less marginalised as far-off radicals than in Germany. In the latter case, many welcome initiative actors expressed an insurmountable cleavage between their own initiatives and those of radical Left activists. In Sweden, by contrast, the radical, autonomous Left has been severely weakened in general, leaving No One Is Illegal as the most radical actor in the field. At the same time, the lack of a political cleavage in the field of pro-immigrant civic action meant that an alliance was easier to form between older, existing organisations—including more leftist ones—and some of the newly emerging initiatives. What came out of this process was a common frame and emotional stance uniting older political activism and the initially more humanitarian civic action of some of the newer organisations, which thus became more politicised over time.

What is more, the co-optation of welcome initiatives seemed less developed in Sweden than in Germany. While there has been a move in Swedish civil society-state relations towards the devolution of public service delivery (see Weinryb 2016), the case of Gothenburg shows that older, more statist or, rather, social-democratic traditions of welfare delivery are still tangible, given that the city administration of Gothenburg—albeit only after some time—took over caring for refugees and did so to the satisfaction of some of the welcome initiatives, some of whom disbanded in response. In this way, civic pro-refugee organisations were less integrated into depoliticising emotional regimes of co-optation that would have fostered their compliance with dominant policies as it did in Germany.

In Germany, the emergence of welcome initiatives and their subscription to the crisis discourse tallied well with an ongoing process of welfare state devolution, including greater reliance on service delivery through civil society actors (van Dyk and Misbach 2016; Graf 2016). As part of this, welcome initiatives have evolved in a climate that values and at time heroises their work, amplifying feelings of pride for welcome initiative organisers. This also manifested in numerous awards granted to some initiatives or individual organisers (Bröse and Friedrich 2015). Furthermore, there are a number of public programmes to foster civic action for refugees, both on a federal and a regional state level (Graf 2016, p. 92). In Berlin, the state even went so far as to require carriers of refugee homes to co-operate with volunteers. This occurred in a context of blatant institutional failure to provide for refugees, for which the state compensates by activating civic organising. Welcome initiatives have dealt with this reflexively. There is a critical discourse among them about how best to walk the tightrope of providing necessary support for refugees while holding the state accountable for providing what is legally required.

In conclusion, a comparative analysis of emotional motives can reveal a number of differences beyond the strong resemblances that civic action took on at face value in both countries during the so-called refugee crisis. These emotional bases emerge from cultural, discursive conditions. However, the differences between these two similar cases also indicate that civic actors draw upon these conditions with degrees of agency in the

way of a toolkit (Swidler 1986). In fact, the compassionate approach to supporting migrants is far from static but can be transformed in the process of civic action. As civic actors, through their organising work, become exposed to migrantic realities and the politics that shape those realities, they may very well assume a more politicised stance and shift the emotional bases of their civic action accordingly. This happened much more in Sweden than in Germany.

Interviews

Germany

GE1: Professional in humanitarian organisation. Lübeck/Skype, 16 June 2016
GE2: Professional in ecclesiastical organisation. Berlin, 17 June 2016
GE3: Professional in welcome initiative. Berlin, 16 June 2016
GE4: Civic organiser in welcome initiative. Berlin, 19 June 2016
GE5: Civic organiser in welcome initiative. Berlin, 20 June 2016
GE6: Civic organiser in leftist organisation. Berlin, 20 June 2016
GE7: Civic organiser in welcome initiative. Berlin, 18 June 2016
GE8: Civic organiser in welcome initiative. Berlin, 23 June 2016
GE9: Civic organiser in welcome initiative. Berlin, 16 June 2016
GE10: Civic organiser in welcome initiative. Berlin/Skype, 17 October 2016
GE11: Civic organiser in welcome initiative/leftist organisation. Berlin, 6 October 2016
GE12: Civic organiser in welcome initiative. Berlin, 6 October 2016
GE13: Civic organiser in leftist organisation. Berlin, 7 October 2016
GE14: Civic organiser in refugees' organisation. Potsdam, 7 October 2016
GE15: Civic organiser in legal aid organisation. Leipzig, 4 October 2016
GE16: Two civic organisers in leftist organisation. Leipzig, 4 October 2016
GE17: Two civic organisers in refugees' organisation. Leipzig, 2 October 2016

GE18: Civic organiser in welcome initiative. Berlin/Skype, 24 October 2016
GE19: Three professionals in ecclesiastical organisation. Berlin/Skype, 7 October 2016

Sweden

SW1: Civic organiser in welcome initiative/leftist organisation. Malmö/Skype, 28 May 2016
SW2: Civic organiser in medical organisation. Gothenburg, 29 May 2016
SW3: Civic organiser in left-leaning organisation. Gothenburg, 30 May 2016
SW4: Civic organiser in left-leaning organisation. Gothenburg, 1 June 2016
SW5: Civic organiser in left-leaning organisation. Gothenburg, 9 June 2016
SW6: Civic organiser in welcome initiative. Gothenburg, 10 June 2016
SW7: Civic organiser in welcome initiative. Stockholm, 28 August 2016
SW8: Civic organiser in anti-racist initiative. Gothenburg, 5 September 2016
SW9: Civic organiser in left-leaning organisation. Gothenburg, 7 September 2016
SW10: Civic organiser in anti-racist initiative. Gothenburg, 8 September 2016
SW11: Civic organiser in welcome initiative. Malmö, 7 September 2016
SW12: Two professionals in ecclesiastical organisation. Gothenburg, 8 September 2016
SW13: Professional in political party. Gothenburg, 8 September 2016

Notes

1. Hochschild (1979, p. 567) argues that framing rules and feeling rules mutually imply each other.
2. The discourse of humanitarianism is explicitly depoliticising and has compassion as one of its key feeling rules (Kleres 2015b).

3. In my use of the term ‘emotional climate’, I lean on Jack Barbalet (1998) but employ the term in a more discursive way than he does. Emotional climates are thus established by how widely shared discourses produce emotions narratively (cf. Kleres 2011).
4. Fears differed between the two countries, however. In Germany, this was a fear of national coherence under threat by too many racialised others. This is symbolised by the moral panic precipitated by the New Year’s Eve sexual assaults in 2015/2016 in Cologne. In Sweden, this was the fear of a system breakdown, that is, the notion that the institutions of the Swedish welfare state—a pillar of Swedish nationalism (Ruth 1984; Trägårdh 2002, 2016)—would quite possibly collapse.
5. Cited and translated from: https://www.bundesregierung.de/Content/DE/Mitschrift/Pressekonferenzen/2015/08/2015-08-31-pk-merkel.html (accessed 4 September 2017).
6. Landesamt für Gesundheit und Soziales—Regional Office for Health and Social Affairs.
7. For a scholarly articulation of this nationalism, see, for example, Kronenberg (2016). In line with research on nationalism and emotion, I understand nationalism as being inextricably emotional rather than a mere ideology (e.g. Berezin 2001, 2002; Billig 1995; Ismer et al. 2015; Scheff 1994). This is also based in the argument about blurring the distinction between reason and emotion sketched out in the methods section of this chapter.
8. Shame and pride are the emotional apprehensions of social devaluation vs. valuation (e.g. Simmel 1992; Scheff 1988; Katz 1999).
9. The decision of the government that all refugees need to register in Malmö, the point of entry for many given the city’s link with Denmark over the Öresund Bridge, had a demobilising effect, too. Effectively, it meant that many refugees arrived at train stations in other cities.
10. This must be balanced against a total population of less than ten million.

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9

Scale Shift and Transnationalisation Within Refugees' Solidarity Activism. From Calais to the European Level

Javier Alcalde and Martín Portos

Introduction

According to UNHCR figures, 65.3 million people were forcibly displaced from their homes globally in 2015 (UNHCR 2016). This represents an increase of 5.8 million people relative to the preceding year. Of those, 21.3 million were refugees, and half were under 18 years old. As the Norwegian Refugee Council put it in its 2015 Annual Report: 'both the number of refugees having crossed a national border and the number of internally displaced people are higher than ever registered before' (NRC 2015, p. 8). According to UNHCR data, as much as 53 per cent of the world's refugees came from just three countries: Somalia (1.1 million), Afghanistan (2.7 million), and Syria (4.9 million). Most of these persons have found refuge in neighbouring states. The three top hosting

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countries were Turkey (2.5 million refugees), Pakistan (1.6 million refugees), and Lebanon (1.1 million refugees). Only a tiny minority of worldwide refugees managed to reach the European territory. According to Eurostat data, although the number of first-time applicants doubled in 2015 relative to 2014, less than 1.3 million asylum requests were filed in all EU countries together in that year.

Even if the numbers in Europe are not spectacular, the phenomenon has been often portrayed as a (refugee) crisis. The European states and institutions have proved unable (arguably unwilling) to respond to the humanitarian crisis and figures of forcibly displaced people trying to cross the European boundaries. 'In 2015, the European countries committed to host 120.759 refugees by September 2017 and 74% [as of June 2017] are still in a limbo waiting for their destination. The processes of the families who have applied to be reunited are also stuck', as the transnational solidarity campaign We are #SickOfWaiting puts it.[1] In fact, citizen mobilisations have emerged to fill the void, provide aid, and put forward alternative conceptions of *Europe as solidarity*, as opposed to the *Europe as fortress* ideal.

This chapter is concerned with the articulation of solidarity platforms and organisational endeavours that developed as a reaction to the refugee crisis beyond the national domestic arenas. On the one hand, it tries to make sense of the relationships and interactions between local grassroots initiatives and networks, international NGOs that have a strong record in the field and the European arena. On the other hand, we aim at assessing how conflict around refugees shifted from international to local settings and vice versa. Shedding light on the dynamics of cross-national initiatives around the refugee issue is challenging for two reasons. First, the processes of articulation and cohesion are unfolding. In this sense, the object of study is an incipient transnational movement, still in the making. Second, actor networks consist of many peripheral nodes, with few and small central actors. This leads to multiple and geographically spread scaling processes, which are characterised by different dynamics and features.

The varying nature of changes in the levels of co-ordinated contentious actions forces us to restrict our scope to certain cases. Specifically, we have conducted fieldwork in two different settings, Calais and Brussels, interviewing more than 30 activists but also several politicians engaged with the refugee issue, both at the local and at the international level.

Paradoxically, through our fieldwork we have found that while many local citizens are not always sympathetic towards the demands of activists and the needs of displaced migrants living close to them, they do tend to be sensitive to the aggregate humanitarian drama of forced migration in general.

From a comparative vantage point, the chapter bridges local, national, and transnational arenas through the study of changing levels of contention. Together with opportunities for mobilisation in the political context and the internal lives of social movement organisations, this endeavour implies taking into consideration the repertoires of contention and interactions with other relevant (either institutional or not) actors, as well as several framing issues. The remainder of this chapter is structured as follows. In the next section, we introduce our object of study, present the theoretical framework, and survey some of the cross-national attempts at co-ordinating citizen mobilisations at the pan-European level. Subsequently, we study the scale shift processes and transnational dynamics of the movement in solidarity with refugees, with a focus on our two main cases, Calais and Brussels. We conclude by exploring the challenges and prospects of some cross-national mobilisations that aim at co-ordinating locally spread initiatives.

Scaling Processes, Transnational Dynamics, and Mobilisations in Solidarity with Refugees

This chapter focuses on scaling processes, and more specifically on scale shift. Although the importance and thorough study of scale shift has been neglected for years in social movement research, it is central to episodes of diffusion and transnational contention (Tarrow and McAdam 2005; Tarrow 2005, Chap. 7). Following McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly (2001, p. 331), by scale shift we refer to the process of 'change in the number and level of coordinated contentious actions leading to broader contention involving a wider range of actors and bridging their claims and identities'. According to Sidney G. Tarrow (2005, p. 121), 'shifts in scale are not simply the reproduction, at a different level, of the claims, targets, and constituencies of the sites where contention begins; they produce new

alliances, new targets, and changes in the foci of claims and perhaps even new identities'. This phenomenon implies a transformation in the trajectory of contention, often from small to larger arenas, from local settings to regional, national, and even international levels.

Some degree of scale shift can be observed in virtually all major and successful social movements (McAdam et al. 2001). Based on a bottom-up understanding, most research on diffusion—and the processes associated with it, such as scale shift—has focused on the conditions that facilitate and enable contention to grow beyond its localised beginnings and become a force for transnational change (Givan et al. 2010). Yet, scale shift is a bidirectional process, as the scale of contention can change both upward and downward: contention moves bottom-up but also spreads top-down. As Tarrow (2005, p. 121) concedes,

> today's international system offers a special challenge for activists because it both opens conduits for upward shift and can empower national, regional, and local contention with international models of collective action. But by the same token, as new forms of contention move downward, their original meanings may diffuse and the forms of organization they produce may domesticate.

Specifically, Tarrow and McAdam (2005, p. 127) identify three distinct pathways that might shape scale shift processes: (1) *non-relational diffusion* refers to information exchanges that impersonal carriers (e.g. mass media) deliver; (2) *relational diffusion* concerns information flows along established lines of interaction; and (3) *brokerage* refers to transfers of information by linking some previously unconnected social sites.

Going beyond the specific scale shift process, transnational co-ordination attempts are manifold across movements, but successful instances of mobilisation across nations are scanty. Although sustained and co-ordinated social mobilisation is unlikely to happen in general, purely domestic movements tend to have less transaction costs of mobilisation as well as fewer obstacles, gaps, and challenges than transnational movements do (Tarrow and McAdam 2005, p. 126; Snow and Benford 1999; Tarrow 1998, Chap. 11). With the rapid growth of information technologies in the shadow of globalisation processes, along with increasing flows of capital and persons across borders, transnational instances of contention have proliferated in the last decades—and, subsequently,

scholarly attention has shifted towards this phenomenon (Smith et al. 1997). According to Jackie Smith (2004, p. 320),

> as was true within national states, we see that an increasingly integrated global political environment has brought a proliferation of transnationally organized social movement organizations, or TSMOs, which combine activists from multiple countries around common social change goals [...]. In addition, [...] national groups are participating in more informal transnational networks or coalitions as they discover that achieving their organizational aims requires engagement at the transnational level.

However, it is largely acknowledged that the focus and scope of contentious activities is still the nation-states. In the words of Tarrow and McAdam (2005, p. 121), the latter 'remain the dominant actors and *loci* for all manner of politics, including contentious politics'. As the content and structure of this volume reflect, mobilisations in solidarity with refugees might be no exception to this trend. In sharp contrast with other instances and sites of popular contestation, the type of mobilisations we focus on presents a number of distinctive features with regard to the transnational dimension.

The Challenges of Upward Scaling

When looking at their agendas and demands, actors and contentious performances in solidarity with refugees tend to have the aspiration of transcending territorial boundaries. In order to facilitate migrants' flows and (residence, work) permits, many demands that challengers make entail questioning the very meanings and policy implications that borders may have. Pushing this idea farther, the libertarian network No Border puts it this way:

> [...] People should be free to migrate where they want; [...] this freedom applies to all regardless of race or nationality; and [...] ordinary people should bypass the state to support those who do not have this freedom. This need is ever-pressing in view of the increasingly securitised, sophisticated, and lethal nature of global border controls as industrialised econo-

mies struggle to fortify their disintegrating havens of wealth, and shore up a narrative that scapegoats migrants for politically sensitive issues. (CMS [Calais Migrant Solidarity] 2010)

The flows of migrants often involve different counterparts, crossing borders, which raises legal issues and disputes between the different legislative frameworks at play. While EU policy towards asylum seekers is the usual object of claims, EU institutions and states are among the main targets of claims—at least on the hosting side.[2] Not surprisingly, many claims of pro-refugee activists tend to be supranational and transnational in scope. Moreover, many of the motives that fuelled mobilisation are not to be found in the proximate local context or first-hand experiences, but come from abroad. In the words of an activist who was part of the grassroots movement in solidarity with refugees in Cádiz, Spain: 'the images that come from Eastern Europe are the ones that start to attract attention. The attempts to enter in Germany, the refugees on railroad tracks, fences, etc. Then, of course, there is the image of Alan Kurdi' (Interview TR12).

As of today, however, there is no well-co-ordinated and organised transnational movement on the refugee issue (especially at the European level) that can be compared to the global justice, environmental, or peace movements (see, e.g. della Porta et al. 2006; della Porta and Caiani 2009).[3] The reasons are manifold. Part of the answer lies in the fact that mobilisations around the refugee issue have unfolded only recently. From this perspective, it would still be very early for such a transnational social movement to develop. In addition, a specific problem faced by transnational collective action on refugees is the activists' awareness of pressing humanitarian needs: if people still need food, clothes, or shelter, activists feel that any other activity is secondary. According to an activist in Calais, 'we constantly receive WhatsApp messages about someone who needs something. In this situation I cannot think about long-term goals' (Interview TR11).[4] Moreover, as asylum procedures differ in every country, some of the national problems faced by refugees and activists also vary from country to country. In addition, in most cases it is difficult to develop real room for collaboration due to the different routines in the hot-spots and the daily work at home. As described by one activist from

Stop Mare Mortum, a successful (and rare) example of an umbrella platform created in Barcelona:

> We tried some kind of international coordination, because in our platform we have activists who are Greek, others who live in Germany, etc. They contacted Greek and German associations, but international coordination does not work. It can work when we are all in the same place, like in Idomeni, Moria or Lampedusa. When we meet there, some coordination emerges. But then when we go back home we forget about coordination. This is a disaster. As it has happened other times, there should be a movement at the European level that exceeds borders, a truly internationalist movement. (Interview TR13)

Another issue concerns diverging—even conflicting—views on the nature and ultimate aspirations of the movement. For example, Brussels-based grassroots interviewees emphasised movement de-ideologisation, insisting on the heterogeneous views of participants. For many, the aspirations were circumscribed to the refugees' realm and the need to redress a specific, pressing situation—from this perspective, solidarity in the face of a humanitarian emergence would be the key frame for mobilisation. Although one might see this as a genuinely Belgian feature at the grassroots level, various interviewees explicitly mentioned that as mobilisation efforts scale up, de-ideologisation spreads at different levels. One member of the Citizen's Platform at Maximilian Park in Brussels even mentioned that a cross-national movement of solidarity with the refugees would fail if organisers tried to frame it 'in a partisan way' (Interview TR1). The key to success, that interviewee continued, lies in 'its encompassing character, beyond ideological differences'.

In short, various members of grassroots organisations agreed on the movement's lack of wider ideological aspirations. However, this understanding contrasts with the point of view of other interviewees. For instance, a MEP of the Spanish party Podemos—who has actively stood up against EU-wide policies towards forcibly displaced people[5]—interprets the refugee crisis as one among multiple expressions of the declining ability of EU institutions to cope with challenges stemming from the demands for more accountable, inclusive, and deliberative politics in the

context of a neoliberal critical juncture (Interview TR4). From this perspective, social initiatives in solidarity with refugees are part of a broader left-wing political agenda, which is a consequence of the lack of (top-down) solidarity and the malfunctioning of representative institutions. In the words of this MEP (Interview TR4), mobilisations in solidarity with refugees prefigure the logic of 'Europe as solidarity' as opposed to the 'Europe as fortress' ideal.

A final challenge for creating a transnational social movement of solidarity with refugees is the fact that different organisational actors focus on different aspects and follow different working logics. Activism in solidarity with refugees includes groups working on the causes of the problem (mainly peace and anti-war groups), on the humanitarian consequences (such as the welcoming initiatives in many places in Europe), but also focusing on the period when refugees are in transit. These issues can be approached from different perspectives, ranging from the most politically confrontational standpoints to those centred on assistentialism. Diverging ideological and organisational features make collaboration challenging, as one activist from Stop Mare Mortum remarks:

> The fact that there are other groups in other places does not necessarily mean that we are coordinated. For example, there have been people that we met when we went to Lampedusa or when we went to Reggio Calabria in southern Italy. Some of them were related to religious organisations, others to the Red Cross, others were simply individual volunteers and we thought *'it would be wonderful if we could organise in Lampedusa something like Stop Mare Mortum'* and perhaps later the same in Greece, an organised platform to work politically beyond humanitarian help. But we did not find similarly-minded partners to do that. (Interview TR14)

However, the crisis of refugees might have opened a window of opportunity for increasing co-ordination and the potential for the development of a cross-national movement, which is to a limited extent in the making. Among the current instances of transnational co-ordination, several networks can be mentioned. First, the libertarian No Border network focuses on ensuring freedom of movement and has been operating for more than a decade now, with peaks of action in hot-spots such as Calais.[6] Second,

Migreurop is a European-African network of activists and researchers whose aim is to publicise and combat the confinement of foreigners and the multiplication of camps. Finally, the Coalition Internationale des Sans-Papiers et Migrants (CISPM) is a network created in 2012 in the preparation of a European march between Brussels and Strasbourg, which seems to be remerging.[7]

Apart from organised collective action, a particular feature of the social movement in solidarity with refugees is the number of individuals and groups who chose to volunteer in refugee camps, many of them in another country. As mentioned before, various co-ordination efforts among such volunteers emerged in places such as Idomeni or Calais. Among many other initiatives, Belgian activists went on to contribute decisively to creating Networking in Berlin, a (closed) Facebook group comprising groups of volunteers from various European initiatives (e.g. the Baobab Cultural Centre from Italy, Proactiva Open Arms from Spain).[8] Initially created to facilitate communication and share information among activists, they have also organised workshops to share their experiences in the field, particularly those involving transnational co-operation.

Several instances of such citizen-to-citizen collaboration have developed. The Spanish-based Plataforma Activista Social and the British Refugee Youth Service based in Calais have collaborated since 2016 with the aim of bringing 20 children to the Spanish region of Cádiz, thus opening a humanitarian corridor between the refugee camps and the host societies ready to welcome refugees.[9] Moreover, activists from the Barcelona platform Stop Mare Mortum consider that their most successful international campaign was devoted to raising awareness, which involved collecting hundreds of children's drawings on the refugees' issue:

> Here there has been international coordination, because these pictures have come from all over the world. It is very interesting because people when they made the drawing, it involved a lot of rising awareness of what is happening. They had to inform themselves, to feel pain, anger and helplessness, to transfer it to a drawing and send it to us. This has helped us contact new people and begin creating a network, which opens the door for a future mobilisation or protest event. (Interview TR14)

In order to investigate the challenges and opportunities for scale shift more in depth, we present in what follows the results of two key case studies that will allow us to shed light on scaling processes. Specifically, we have conducted fieldwork in two key settings, Brussels and Calais. On the one hand, we assess the extent to which local grassroots initiatives in Brussels are able to co-ordinate and perform advocacy and lobbying functions in order to translate their demands into the European political agenda and conflict moves upward. While none of the three distinct mechanisms associated with scale shift (broker-enabled, relational, and non-relational diffusion) brings about (yet) a clear pan-European arena of contention and mobilisation around the refugee issue, we find instances of scale shifts in the making. Specifically, we analyse to what extent international NGOs act as intermediaries of these transmissions of information between local grassroots and EU institutions. Although external organisations rarely play a role as brokers, activists have managed to gain some success.

Shedding light on the multi-level dynamics in the Belgian capital has two main advantages. First, Brussels hosts most of the EU institutions, and large lobbying organisations (not only but also) in the field of refugees have some representation. In this sense, Brussels is a hot-spot for multi-level interactions, as all dimensions (local, regional, national, and European) intertwine, and many initiatives to co-ordinate actions beyond countries' borders are launched. Second, the capacity of penetration of Brussels-based locally and nationally oriented groups in EU institutions gives some hints on the potential of transnational solidarity networks to have an impact on policy-making at the EU level.

On the other hand, Calais is a landmark of the 'Europe's fortress approach' to the migration crisis (Donaire and Urbán 2016). A wide military and police presence has allowed for an increasing externalisation of EU borders[10] and has kept forcibly displaced people away from their target destinations. The EU strategies towards refugees have caused security policies and the control over migration flows to prevail over respect for asylum seekers' human rights.[11]

Calais is a particular microcosm that concentrates most of the contradictions of current migration and asylum policies. Part of the Schengen frontier, it is a traditional hot-spot for asylum seekers in transit to the

United Kingdom. Paradoxically, here, refugees are trying to leave the Schengen area, not be granted access to it. However, the approach followed by the governments to deal with this issue is similar to what happens in other frontier points such as Ceuta and Melilla. The whole system of border patrols and detention centres has pushed displaced people to seek alternative, less heavily surveilled, but also more unsafe and risky, paths to entering the promised land. By means of fieldwork carried out between spring 2015 and autumn 2016, we study to what extent the witnessed flow of foreign (mostly UK-based) activists towards this border town (and in other similar places in the Pas-de-Calais region) has allowed for the development of a solidarity network of international (and local) activists.

Overall, there are remarkable differences between the two cases: while refugees and mobilisations around this issue have a long-standing record in Calais, they are a relatively recent phenomenon in Brussels. While Brussels is a hot-spot for analysing multi-level institutions and interactions, Calais is a landmark of Europe's fortress logic. While Brussels allows us to study the role of large organisations as brokers between social movement actors and EU institutions, Calais allows us to study how a local conflict transcended domestic boundaries, reaching an international dimension. Despite the remarkable differences between Calais and Brussels, some movement organisations in the two sites have played a crucial role in a process of scale shift of contention: while Belgian activists helped in bridging the European and local levels, the flow of international activists in Calais (especially Brits) contributed to the transnationalisation of collective action.

Brussels: Grassroots Activism at the Heart of Europe

Context and the Citizen's Platform

When looking at the number of asylum applications relative to population size, Belgium ranks above the EU average, falling just short of reaching the top ten EU countries most affected by the 'refugee crisis'. While

397 asylum applications were filed per 100,000 local inhabitants in 2015 in Belgium, EU member states received 260 applications year-round on average.[12] In addition, more than half of the applications had a favourable first-instance decision, with the refugee status officially—yet provisionally—recognised in at least 45 per cent of the total cases. However, Belgium has one of the lowest final acceptance rates. Whereas strong positive signals are sent to current and prospective asylum seekers by Belgian authorities in a first instance, the system then appears to become very closed: only about five per cent of the applications for refugee status that passed the first threshold had a favourable final outcome.[13] This has created a whole system of perverse incentives and dashed expectations among the asylum seekers in a country that is meant to stand at the very core of the European Union.

In fact, the relationship of the Belgian governments with refugee policies in general has historically been very much contested. Specifically, the poor management and conditions of the centres for asylum seekers as well as the police strategies aimed at deporting them have traditionally raised the alarm of NGOs and organisations in the sector, and also of the refugees themselves, who have reacted against them.[14] The situation of the network of reception that was meant to provide shelter to asylum seekers was 'dramatic' until 2011, as the Belgian Federal Agency for Refugees (Fedasil) concedes.[15] In the late 2000s, the flow of incoming applicants was larger than that of outgoing people. As a consequence, about 10,000 new places were created by the Belgian authorities after the beginning of the *crise d'accueil* in 2011. However, following a subsequent decrease in the number of incoming applicants, the Secretary of State for Asylum and Migration forced the closure of 5000 reception centres in 2012–2014, with an additional 1000 places eliminated right before July 2015, while asylum seekers fleeing war were *en route*. Due to the lack of state capacity to redress the situation, the grassroots initiative Citizen's Platform for Refugee Support was created, setting up a camp in the central Maximilian Park. As the Citizen's Platform claims in its website, in the summer of 2015, 'dozens and then hundreds of asylum seekers found themselves without accommodation and any assistance while they waited to be received by the Immigration Office'.[16]

About 300 activists gathered there every day in order to address refugees' pressing needs (meals, shelter, healthcare, education, legal and psychological support, etc.), and co-ordinated through assemblies and specific commissions. This platform was crucial, not only because of the hundreds of activists involved and the capacity to interact with more established organisations in the field but also because it contributed to spur further citizen endeavours and projects around the issue of refugees in the country and elsewhere. The Citizen's Platform welcomed volunteers and also the support of other NGOs and professional associations. For instance, Médecins du Monde provided medical services on the camp; Oxfam helped with clothing and infrastructure; SB Overseas organised activities for children and psychological attention; CIRÉ—together with Les Barreaux de Brussels—organised workshops and juridical training for volunteers and gave legal advice; and so on. As an activist of the Citizen's Platform stated: 'We could not have run the camp without them. I especially appreciate the material, organisational support and advice they gave to us. However, they did not want to hijack the citizen's initiative' (Interview TR1).

From these interactions, several initiatives aimed at increasing social movement co-ordination on a different scale developed. When the camp run by the Citizen's Platform was about to close in autumn 2015, some of the Brussels-based activists met with the Walloon branch of Médecins Sans Frontières in order to launch some joint initiatives. This organisation had been supporting the platform, giving logistical help, and sharing their expertise, but they were not physically present in the camp. At the meeting, it became clear that one of the challenges the movement was facing was the lack of international co-ordination. There was a clear attribution of similarity (i.e. actors identify themselves as sufficiently similar in different sites to justify common action), a traditional requirement for contention to scale up (Tarrow and McAdam 2005). In the words of a key activist at Maximilian Park:

> Many citizens were doing this [organising in popular assemblies and resorting to occupations in solidarity with refugees], they were proposing initiatives, with no prior expertise, no guidance … they were not talking to each

> other … We are facing the same troubles, we can share some of our best practices that might help other activists in other places. There was no information to give to the refugees, to the migrants on what's next for you? Who will be there to welcome you in the next country? I could not say: if you follow this route, you are going to meet this other initiative, this other people that will be able to help you out. It came out of this meeting that was necessary to map who is doing what and where. (Interview TR1)

Therefore, activists identified that getting to know who is working on the ground with refugees was a precondition for building cross-national co-ordination and developing collaborative strategies. MSF therefore committed to fund a project that would run for six months and involve four people from the Brussels-based Citizen's Platform in order to map these international networks. While MSF provided the money and some practical resources, activists were in charge of running and managing the project, and organising the route across Europe: they followed in the refugees' footsteps as backpackers in order to write a report and map the actors engaged in activities of solidarity with the refugees along the way.

Multi-level Scaling

Arguably a distinctive Brussels-related feature, all interviewed actors claim to have some sort of linkages with public authorities. While the representatives of the Citizen's Platform were welcomed by local councillors, MPs, ministers, and even the Belgian Prime Minister at some point, both CIRÉ and Vluchtelingenwerk are the reference actors in the field.[17] They have a long-standing record of activities, are able to secure both public and private funding, and encompass a number of smaller NGOs and organisations in the sector. Not by chance, CIRÉ is a 60-year-old platform that brings together 24 organisations. While they already have contact with and co-operate on various projects with grassroots initiatives, they are particularly interested in 'welcoming and supporting initiatives' and actively seek to reinforce the collaboration of social movement actors, as one member of CIRÉ mentions (Interview TR2). CIRÉ is actively seeking funding for improving collaboration with new civil society actors in the refugee sector in order to better 'co-ordinate' their actions and 'learn

from each other' (Interview TR2). Both CIRÉ and Vluchtelingenwerk are often interlocutors of the Belgian civil society initiatives with EU institutions as well.

One might expect that the largest and well-established international actors in the field could mediate the relationship between general grassroots initiatives emerging in different places in Europe on the one hand and the EU institutions and representatives (European Commission, Europarliament, MEPs, etc.), on the other. Specifically, the largest institutions, organisations, and foundations working in the field of refugees have official delegations to represent them in Brussels, engage with policymakers, and perform lobbying activities (e.g. Caritas, Jesuit Refugee Service, Save the Children, Oxfam, Amnesty International, Norwegian Refugee Council, Red Cross, Médecins Sans Frontières, etc.). Given their experience and available resources (i.e. professionalisation, networks and contacts, reputation, knowledge of the field, specialisation in advocacy and lobbying), one would expect these organisations to be able to act as intermediaries between civil society initiatives and EU institutions. This would allow them to become central nodes in the mobilisation arena, and also to influence and keep control of the public debates around the issue. Moreover, lack of cohesion and integration within the grassroots initiatives, which hamper the eventual movement's efficiency, would go against the large organisations' interests, bringing as a side effect a decrease in popular awareness and support.

However, most of the interviewees from both the grassroots and the Brussels-based NGOs lack open, direct channels of communication with these big actors. They very rarely act as brokers (enabling communication, facilitating channels and room for interaction between micro-organisations and macro-institutional EU actors) and are more focused on promoting their own agenda than on addressing the grassroots actors' priorities. In fact, they do not always welcome grassroots initiatives: broadly speaking, they do not consider social movement organisations as professional and trustworthy partners—given their lack of a broad perspective, limited experience, and informal organisational structures, as stated by the Head of the Advocacy Unit of one of the largest organisations in the field (Interview TR3). Given their privileged position vis-à-vis the stakeholders, based on the empirical material collected, large

organisations tend to oppose dramatic change in the field of refugees' policies. Moreover, in general, large organisations do not seem interested in promoting and building a more integrated, encompassing, and transversal movement. Hence, they did not lead many initiatives to promote social movement co-ordination in the sector of solidarity with refugees.

Nonetheless, most interviewed challengers do not refuse to engage with lobbyists and macro-organisations operating in the field. When asked about their opinion about these large organisations that have permanent representation in Brussels in order to engage with policy-makers, perceptions on the part of grassroots actors were not particularly negative. Yet, there is very little flow of communication between grassroots groups and large organisations working on the refugees' issue. Interviewee TR1 from the Citizen's Platform even commented: 'it is the first time I hear from the Norwegian Refugee Council. I did not know they were in Brussels'.

Brussels-based grassroots actors, however, targeted EU authorities and managed to make—to a limited extent—their voices heard within European institutions. Social movements found allies directly among elite actors (usually thanks to ideological affinity and through pre-existing network ties) who were keen to translate their claims into the institutional political arena and give them visibility. For instance, activists from the Citizen's Platform in Brussels had contact with the Spanish Podemos MEP Miguel Urbán and organised multiple joint activities—often together with other MEPs from the European United Left/Nordic Green Left European Parliamentary Group such as Marina Albiol, Xabier Benito, Malin Björk, Marisa Matias, Barbara Spinelli, Kyriacos Triantaphyllides, and Marine-Christine Vergiat.

Besides the more formal, routinised forms of action, such actors deployed a mixed tactical approach. Within the Europarliament, these MEPs opposed EU refugee policies in general, and specifically the EU resettlement programme, proposing initiatives in the European Parliament's Subcommittee on Human Rights.[18] They also used public performances, launched petitions, physically visited hot-spots and refugee camps across Europe, organised activities to raise public awareness and consciousness, but also resorted to non-conventional, disruptive, and confrontational tactics. Some of their protest activities were met with far-

right counterdemonstrators, and they have occasionally been threatened (mostly through social media). Importantly, MEP Urbán and colleagues organised at least three workshops (two of them in Brussels, one in Valencia) in order to share expertise, allowing civil society organisations to network, strengthen ties, and create room for co-operation. The main NGOs (e.g. Save the Children, Amnesty International, Oxfam) participated together with national- and regional-level semi-institutionalised civil society actors (e.g. CIRÉ), as well as representatives of other new, grassroots endeavours such as the Citizen's Platform in Brussels. In addition, policy-makers, journalists, experts, scholars, and other actors working in the field from different professional areas were invited to join the workshops, which consisted of conferences, thematic working groups, round tables, and so on.[19]

In short, based on the fieldwork conducted in Brussels, we cannot observe a clearly structured movement around the refugee issue at the European level. There is, however, a widespread awareness of the need to co-ordinate grassroots endeavours in solidarity with refugees, and multiple transnational initiatives are taking place in this direction. Although large organisations in Brussels do not act as brokers between grassroots actors and EU institutions, social movements have—arguably limited—capacities to translate their claims into the European arena through direct ties with MEP and personal networks. In the particular setting of Calais, we will next focus on how the international flow of activists can contribute to the scaling up of contention and the internationalisation of a local conflict.

Calais: International Flows of Activists into the Jungle

The mobilisation in solidarity with refugees in Calais has a longer history than most of the places that reached the news in 2015, including Brussels. The opening of a humanitarian centre in Sangatte in 1999 represented a turning point. This became the bone of contention in Franco-British relations, as the United Kingdom believed that its existence facilitated the

migrants' crossing of the border. Following its closure in 2002, new Franco-British agreements on co-operation against so-called clandestine immigration were signed. As a result, similarly to other border places (e.g. EU-Turkey, Spain-Ceuta and Melilla), the United Kingdom would finance most of the security measures applied by the French police in order to prevent the people in transit from entering the islands. In July 2009, after the eviction of the first informal camp in Calais, often named 'the jungle',[20] new agreements between the two countries ensured that the United Kingdom would cover the cost of securing the port of Calais with fences and high-technology surveillance. Meanwhile, people in transit to the United Kingdom continued camping nearby—especially in rest areas and petrol stations close to the channel. Consequently, the proliferation of camps was followed by the multiplication of (local) associations with a charitable and social vocation. In 2012 there were at least 20 such associations (Boillet 2012, p. 3).

In parallel to the evolution of the so-called refugee crisis in—and en route to—Europe, a new jungle in Calais again hit mainstream media headlines in 2015. As with other European hot-spots such as Idomeni, Lampedusa, or Ceuta and Melilla, the majority of people based in the Calais camps were in transit. In this case, their preferred destination was the United Kingdom (and Ireland). In March 2016, the French government dismantled half of the camp, but the number of residents kept increasing steadily until autumn (rising from 3000 in March to 10,000 in September 2016). A whole social movement of solidarity then emerged, with hundreds of local and international activists volunteering on a range of issues from humanitarian emergencies to political advocacy. At the end of 2016, the French government considered the 'crisis' over with a new media event: the total dismantlement of the camp.

The networks of solidarity in Calais are complex and diverse. They include government-funded agencies, humanitarian NGOs, grassroots groups, and left-libertarian activists. Taking advantage of the digital era, social media are crucial for their organisational dynamics and the diffusion of practices. In particular, activists organise themselves in an informal way through tens of Facebook pages. However, room for collaborative endeavours among SMOs from different countries, with different cultural and organisational traditions, has remained limited.[21]

While local activism of solidarity with migrants and refugees has a long history in the region, the international dimension is more connected to the refugee crisis, beginning at the end of 2015 and expanding during 2016. In particular, the Plateforme de Services aux Migrants, based in Grande-Synthe, aims at developing communication between volunteers, migrants, and associations to re-establish a counter-power in the informal camps; disseminate information on migratory paths, cultural differences, bureaucratic issues, and so on; and act as intermediaries with the different levels of the French administration and with a network of legal advisers (Interview TR19).

Together with dozens of SMOs from other towns within the Pas-de-Calais region (such as Arras Solidarité Refugiés), Brittany's Utopia56 was one of the key organisations coming from other regions in France that were active in the Calais jungle in the summer 2016. Although from many different nationalities, three main groups can be identified among the non-French activists: the Belgian activists, the British activists, and the transnational activists, some of them from the libertarian No Border network.

Coming mainly from Brussels, the core group of Belgian activists have family origins in the Maghreb countries, and most are able to speak Arabic, a valuable asset in the informal camp. Some groups relate to previous transnational experiences of activism, such as the Belgian kitchen created by the Citizen's Platform in Maximilian Park at Brussels, providing a good example of the diffusion of organisational dynamics. In Calais, they deliver thousands of free meals daily to camp residents. In general, the Belgian groups are better integrated with local activists than are the British ones. There are many examples of overlapping activism among the locals, as some people collaborate with Belgian SMOs and at the same time with French grassroots groups. In the words of two French activists in Calais, 'we decided to collaborate with them, because they seemed to us the most efficient group in the whole Jungle' (Interview TR21).

British activists, who arrive mostly through newly created organisations and grassroots groups such as Care 4 Calais, Calais Action, or CalAid, tend to be female, younger, and less politicised than their French counterparts. While the French activists typically target the French government, the British ones focus on the British government. As a British

activist in Calais without any specific organisational affiliation put it, 'we feel responsible for the situation here. It is the European Union, but it is also our government who has created all this mess' (Interview TR23). In Spring 2016, the main UK charity, Help Refugees, decided to merge with one of the main French humanitarian associations, L'Auberge des Migrants. According to the activists, this has also allowed improved co-ordination with other organisations, mostly focusing on the distribution of food and clothing in the camp.

In the context of the camps of Calais, some individuals effectively play a brokerage role between the (French) local activists and the international (mainly British) volunteers. These actors mostly operate on a digital basis, through various online platforms such as the influential (and bilingual) blog Passeurs d'hospitalités and the comprehensive (and bilingual) site Calaipedia, which also co-operate with each other.[22] Building on previous initiatives such as La Marmite aux idées, Passeurs d'hospitalités is arguably the best site to follow local (as well as broader) events; it is updated on a daily basis and publishes texts in languages other than French. According to the main author of this blog, 'some months ago a British guy asked me if he could translate the posts I was writing. Since then the blog publishes all the information in French and then in English, and I have more relation with international (mainly British) groups' (Interview TR22).

On the other side, Calaipedia is (resources-wise) likely the most useful website for UK-based volunteers. Founded in July 2015 by a British librarian, it aims to 'categorise and organise the plethora of information being provided across the various forums/sites' (Interview TR22). Sections include the latest news, current needs, how things work in Calais, how to volunteer/donate, camp initiatives, aid drop-off points, local support groups, first-hand accounts, media reports, gallery, reference material, and so on. Most of the information is in English, but there are also some sections in French. As an activist noted, 'in order to be updated, it is crucial that she has constant contacts with local activists. And I think they also should find the website useful' (Interview TR22).

Most of the British volunteers are young students who spend a period of time helping in various humanitarian tasks. For this reason, their presence in the summer is much higher than in the winter, something that is

seen with resignation by other long-term committed (mostly local) activists. Additionally, many people come (normally during the weekends) from the United Kingdom to bring food, clothing, and other materials that they have collected in their cities and towns. Activists of the No Border network criticise this kind of activity, however, as they 'bring about the long-term change required to tackle migration control at their roots' (CMS 2010). In some cases, they have actually used the term *activist tourism*, as 'brief consumption of an experience out of self- gratification or curiosity rather than a commitment to social change' (CMS 2010). In fact, No Border activists openly criticise the practices by the main organisations in the field: 'charity serves to reinforce hierarchies and privileges as well as entrenching the existing socio-economic order. [...] They define oppressed communities' needs in accordance with state policies, rather than letting those communities articulate their experiences and wishes for themselves' (CMS 2010).

Contrary to the traditional perspective on helping migrants and refugees, No Border challenges the division between the givers and recipients of aid. As the network puts it in a report, 'in Calais we've always viewed the majority of sans-papiers as comrades, and have developed closer friendships with a large handful' (CMS 2010). In fact, one of the main characteristics of their work is a horizontal model of solidarity, which explicitly refuses the top-down model of charity and prefers to engage in mutual aid through sharing skills, information, and material resources. No Border activists often engage in subversive and direct forms of action, including evasion and collective defence tactics. However, their repertoire is broader, as 'a confrontational attitude isn't appropriate for all occasions' (CMS 2010). In fact, activists admit that on some occasions a charity itself can become a radical act, particularly when supporting refugees is criminalised. In the words of a British activist in Calais, 'cooking and sharing a meal together is an act of rebellion' (Interview TR9). Eventually, they became well known in Calais for providing housing for asylum seekers through a network of host volunteers across the United Kingdom to help them once they manage to cross.[23] As the network activists state, 'our solidarity doesn't simply end at the physical border' (CMS 2010).

Concluding Remarks

In this chapter we have addressed the transnational dimension of the social movement in solidarity with refugees in Europe. We have shown how this particular case presents several challenges (ideologies, languages, organisational cultures, pressing needs and interests, etc.) to achieve an effective transnational co-ordination. In addition, the fact that the so-called refugee crisis in Europe is a relatively recent phenomenon might imply that the co-ordination of collective action beyond borders is still in progress. This could lead us to conclude that this movement is not as developed at a European level as other instances of mobilisation (e.g. the peace, feminist, and environmental movements). However, the movement of solidarity with refugees is tendentially—and essentially—transnational. In fact, most of the relationships between activists themselves, between refugees, and between activists and refugees imply a transnational dimension, because they involve people coming from different places. From this perspective, this is most likely the most transnational of all social movements existing in Europe. Indeed, the fact of moving to another country—which is a necessary prerequisite for an asylum seeker to be considered as such—is in itself a transnational act.

In the chapter we devoted particular attention to scale shift processes and transnational dynamics in two very different settings, the Belgian capital and Calais. Brussels is a central node for transnational collective action on refugee issues, similarly to other European social movements. While there is no confrontational relationship between grassroots groups and large NGOs, large organisations rarely play a bridging role between grassroots initiatives and European stakeholders. Grassroots groups have nevertheless managed to achieve some access on their own, for example, through direct ties to some MEPs who have participated in different local enterprises in solidarity with the refugees and even launched some initiatives in order to foster social movement co-ordination. The international flows of activists in Calais (Belgian, the international No Border network, and especially British actors) have contributed to give an international dimension to a specific, local issue and to open new avenues for further transnational co-ordination.

Interviews[24]

TR1: Activist at the Citizen's Platform at Maximilian Park (co-ordinator of logistics), now working for MSF, 23 November 2016, Brussels.
TR2: Member of CIRÉ, co-ordinator of volunteering and sponsorship, 22 November 2016, Brussels.
TR3: Interview conducted under Chatham House rules (Head of the Advocacy Unit, international NGO), 23 November 2016, Brussels.
TR4: MEP of Podemos (Grupo Confederal de la Izquierda Unitaria Europea/Izquierda Verde Nórdica), 30 November 2016 (via phone).
TR5: Member of the Norwegian Research Council, Geneva, 7 June 2016 (via skype).
TR6: Member of Fedasil, 9 November 2016, Brussels.
TR7: Activist at the Citizen's Platform at Maximilian Park, 22 November 2016, Brussels.
TR8: Spanish Fotomovimiento activist in Idomeni, 27 June 2016, Barcelona
TR9: British activist, 18 August 2016, Calais.
TR10: Member of Caritas, 8 November 2016, Brussels.
TR11: French activist, 20 August 2016, Calais.
TR12: Spanish activist from APDHA, 13 October 2016, Cádiz.
TR13: Stop Mare Mortum, Barcelona, 22 May 2016, Barcelona.
TR14: Stop Mare Mortum, International Commission, 28 June 2016, Barcelona.
TR15: Member of ELIN, 5 October 2016, Ceuta.
TR16: Founder of Prodein, 9 October 2016, Melilla.
TR17: Sudanese refugee in Calais, 20 August 2016, Calais.
TR18: Activist and researcher, 13 October 2016, Cádiz.
TR19: Founder of Utopia56, 22 August 2016, Grande-Synthe.
TR20: Joint interview with volunteers in the 'Belgian kitchen', 19 August 2016, Calais.
TR21: Joint interview with activists from École d'Art, 19 August 2016, Calais.
TR22: Author of passeursdhospitalites.wordpress.com, 23 August 2016, Calais.
TR23: British activist without any particular affiliation, 20 August 2016, Calais.

Notes

1. See https://www.sickofwaiting.org/index.asp?i=2&p=0, accessed 26 June 2017.
2. The objects and targets of claims are occasionally international agreements and practices, especially in cases outside the Schengen area. For instance, in Calais, UK and French activists tend to criticise their respective governments' policies and bilateral agreements and co-operation strategies due to the humanitarian conditions at the border.
3. For different conceptualisations of transnational activism, see Keck and Sikkink (1998), Parks (2015), Tarrow (2005), and della Porta and Parks (2014).
4. We collected a dozen similar quotes from activists in every place where we conducted interviews, including Brussels, Calais, Ceuta, Melilla, and Madrid. They are available on request.
5. Founded in March 2014, Podemos succeeded in the May 2014 European election (winning 1.25 million votes, which amount to almost eight per cent of the total valid votes cast). The party joined the European United Left/Nordic Green Left European Parliamentary Group.
6. The No Border network consists of loose associations of autonomous assemblies, individuals, and organisations that take initiatives in different—mostly European—settings (e.g. controlling international border camps, delivering direct actions, demonstrations, etc.) to oppose migration policies and stand up for freedom of movement. See http://www.noborder.org/
7. See http://cispm.org/
8. Berlin stands for the city where the network met for the first time.
9. See https://plataformaactivistasocial.wordpress.com/ and https://www.calaisjungleyouth.com/
10. According to Frelick et al. (2016, p. 193), *externalisation of migration controls* involves 'extraterritorial state actions to prevent migrants, including asylum seekers, from entering the legal jurisdictions or territories of destination countries or regions or making them legally inadmissible without individually considering the merits of their protection claims'.
11. According to Nshimbi and Moyo (2016), 'several European countries that previously had open door policies have shifted their position on refugees and migrants who attempt to reach their shores from Africa'.
12. See http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34131911

13. See information on the distribution of final decisions on (non-EU) asylum applications across European countries, 2015. Source: Eurostat (http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_statistics).
14. See, for example, https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/1999/09/belg-s01.html
15. See https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/1999/09/belg-s01.html
16. See https://www.bxlrefugees.be/en/qui-sommes-nous/
17. In the Belgian case, CIRÉ (Coordination et Initiatives pour Réfugiés et Étrangers, which groups all organisations in Wallonia) and the Vluchtelingenwerk Vlaanderen (Flemish Refugee Action) are the two key umbrella and well-established organisations in the sector of asylum seekers and migrants (regardless of the latter's legal status). Similar to Vluchtelingenwerk, much of CIRÉ's work is devoted to research, putting pressure on policy-makers to put the issue of refugees and their needs on the agenda, raising awareness and disseminating knowledge through, for example, drafting reports, organising workshops, delivering educational activities in schools, and so on. These organisations also carry out important work on the ground. For example, CIRÉ is managing a welcome centre that hosts up to 1000 asylum seekers; it also runs language schools, supplies information points, provides professional training and counselling, and so on.
18. For instance, many of these MEPs promoted resolutions 'on the latest tragedies in the Mediterranean and EU migration and asylum policies' and 'on migration and refugees in Europe' in April and September 2015, respectively.
19. See http://www.solimed.info/
20. We use the terms 'informal camp' and 'jungle' interchangeably throughout. Note that 'jungle', which comes from the Pashto word 'zanggal', is a recurrent term used by activists in the interviews.
21. For example, despite the widespread presence of British volunteers, until July 2016 co-ordination meetings in Calais took place (only) in French. Accordingly, British activists complained that most of the individuals and groups from the United Kingdom were thus excluded.
22. See passeursdhospitalites.wordpress.com and www.calaidipedia.co.uk
23. See https://naccom.org.uk/
24. All interviews were conducted face-to-face, unless otherwise noted.

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10

Europeans, Shut the Borders! Anti-refugee Mobilisation in Italy and France

Pietro Castelli Gattinara

Introduction

The influx of refugees that reached Europe over the summer of 2015 quickly came to be represented as a 'crisis' by the mass media. The public experienced high levels of anxiety about immigration and asylum across Europe, especially throughout that summer (Berry et al. 2016). While many factors explain the emergence of negative attitudes towards immigrants, these feelings are arguably partly due to the rising popularity of the far right and its anti-immigrant rhetoric (see, e.g. Ceobanu and Escandell 2010). Scientific literature and mass media commentators have noted that economic strains, and concerns over terrorism and the cultural assimilation of immigrants, have encouraged the growth of populist anti-immigration parties throughout the last decades.

More broadly, the events that have been portrayed as a 'refugee crisis' have brought about discussions on the borders of Europe, triggering a diverse spectrum of views on how societies must be organised, primarily in terms of who is to be included and who, instead, is to be excluded.

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While governments tend to dominate the political debates on migration, their main opponents are often represented by anti-immigration actors challenging government policy on asylum and migration (Berry et al. 2016). Representing migrant populations and refugees as aliens who infiltrate Europe to corrode its social and cultural fabric, these actors challenge the solidarity movement by voicing concerns about 'unlimited' and 'uncontrolled' migration (Ataç et al. 2016).

The long summer of migration in Europe was characterised by two major developments in anti-immigration politics. On the one hand, it contributed to further shifting the debate to the right, transcending the boundaries of far-right politics and reaching into the political mainstream (Richardson and Colombo 2013). On the other, it triggered an upsurge in far-right and anti-immigration street politics (Mudde 2016). While the far right in Western Europe has long been considered as exclusively a party phenomenon, the events of 2015 saw the emergence of a variety of new organisations engaged in extra-parliamentary activities and hybrid forms of mobilisation, paving the way for the development of a broad, European, anti-immigration movement. Given its emergent nature, however, we still know remarkably little about the motivations, choices, and repertoires of action of this movement. Not only have very few scholars studied anti-immigration mobilisation at the level of street politics, but even fewer studies have been grounded on original face-to-face interviews with militants and party officials involved in anti-refugee activities (e.g. Busher 2015; Meleagrou-Hitchens and Brun 2013; Benček and Strasheim 2016; Castelli Gattinara et al. 2013). Understanding how anti-refugee street politics unfolded, and how opposition to migration is framed, reveals a great deal—not only about the anxieties of European public opinion but also about the construction of mainstream political debates on migration that the mobilisations in solidarity with refugees had to address. The goal of this chapter is thus to investigate anti-immigration street politics in the wake of the refugee crisis, unveiling the main strategies of contention deployed by anti-refugee actors and the main frames by which they attributed meaning to the events.

We shall focus on two carefully selected national settings: France and Italy. Veugelers and Chiarini (2002) suggest that the main difference between far-right politics in the two countries is crucially linked to

opposition to migration and nativism, which are considerably more politically viable in France than in Italy. Over the past decade, however, both countries have been characterised by electorally successful right-wing populist parties, even though they also present significant differences in terms of public policies on immigration, as well as in dominant discourses about ethnic diversity and the integration of migrants. Moreover, while they are located at different stages in the EU migratory map, they are both affected by the phenomenon of transit migration (Council of Europe 2014). By exploring the connection between mobilisation at the street level, on the one hand, and the framing of migration, national identities, and diversity on the other, we thus aim to compare anti-immigration mobilisation in France and Italy in the shadow of the so-called European refugee crisis. To this end, the chapter starts by presenting the data upon which the study is based, and then moves on to contextualise far-right politics and opposition to migration in the two countries. We then analyse the crucial features that have come to characterise activism against refugees over the long summer of migration in Italy and France, with a specific focus on their practices of mobilisation and predominant frames of collective action.

Methods and Data

This chapter is based on 23 semi-structured interviews with activists engaged in anti-refugee initiatives and high-ranking officials from far-right and anti-immigration political organisations. Thirteen interviews were conducted in four Italian cities between January and March 2017 (Rome, Milan, Ferrara, and Treviso), and ten interviews in France (Paris, Calais, and Versailles). This is a remarkable feature of our study, considering that research on anti-immigration groups has been mainly based on secondary data (Blee 2007; Goodwin 2006) due to longstanding problems of access to far-right officials and their reluctance to share internal information with academics and journalists (Mudde 2007).

With the goal of overviewing the different types of actors comprising the anti-refugee front, we addressed three different types of actors engaged in opposition to migration. First, we approached people working as local

representatives for established far-right political parties and organisations. Second, we addressed members of movements and pressure groups campaigning against refugees. And third, we considered unaffiliated activists who took part in grassroots assemblies that were formed ad hoc by citizens to challenge the settlement of camps in their local territory. The organisations were contacted by phone or email using information retrieved from mass media reports of anti-immigration protests and from previous knowledge about the network of mobilisation against refugees in Europe. Unaffiliated activists were then contacted through other participants, the Facebook pages of local anti-immigration collectives, and personal contacts developed during the fieldwork.

Concerning social movement organisations, we addressed activists engaged in the grassroots politics of the extremist right Forza Nuova in Italy and Génération Identitaire in France, including local militants and activists in charge of external communication as well as high-ranking national officials. Both groups normally engage in electoral as well as street politics, and articulate their political mobilisation primarily against immigration, globalisation, and Islam. Forza Nuova displays an enhanced propensity for confrontational forms of political contention, especially in recent times, while Génération Identitaire has agreed on a strategic division of labour with the Front National, withdrawing all candidates for the 2017 French presidential elections and explicitly endorsing the campaign of Marine Le Pen. In France, I then considered two political associations opposing immigration but located at opposite ends of the French secularist cleavage: the traditionalist Catholic far-right Civitas and the outspokenly Islamophobic secularists of Riposte Laïque. In addition to these groups, we addressed local officials and elected representatives who are regularly involved in routinised and conventional politics. This includes members of far-right political parties, such as Lega Nord in Italy, as well as local representatives from municipal lists, such as in the case of Versailles Familles Avenir in France.

When relevant, we asked for prior authorisation of the group leadership to conduct interviews with activists. Prior to the interview, we briefed participants about the main purpose of the study, underlining that the research covered solidarity groups and anti-refugee organisations alike. Subsequently, interviewees were asked to reconstruct the

mobilisation against refugees in which they participated, discussing their personal involvement in the initiatives. We then approached their main understandings of migration and their relationship with other actors in the same context or political area. Although participants were left free to discuss the aspects of the issue that they deemed most relevant, they were asked their personal and collective assessment of how the mass media and politicians dealt with the crisis, their proposed solution, and the policy proposal and dissemination material that they had developed throughout the campaigns.

All but three of the interviews were conducted face-to-face and recorded, and on most occasions the interviewees were happy to be given the opportunity to share their personal experiences. On several occasions across the two countries, however, the interviewees presented themselves under pseudonyms, declining to share their biographical and professional details. Overall, there was a certain degree of variation among the people who took part in the study, especially in terms of employment and level of education. The interviewees were aged from their mid-20s to more than 50 years old. In Italy, younger activists were university students, with some experience with far-right youth movements and organisations. While older respondents generally held lower levels of education, the activists engaged in knowledge production for the anti-immigrant movement generally possessed university degrees. In contrast, the interviewees belonging to established political parties, as well as local representatives, were mostly professional politicians. Unaffiliated activists were often unemployed and described other participants in the protests as either unemployed or outside the labour market. Perhaps most strikingly, only two of the participants we could interview are females.

Comparing Opposition to Migration and Asylum in Italy and France

The comparative perspective requires examining the conditions under which anti-refugee mobilisation is articulated by strategic political entrepreneurs. The migration history of the two countries is crucially different: while France can be considered a traditional country of migration, Italy

has turned from origin to international destination more recently. Hence, public debates on migration are based upon considerably different conceptions of citizenship. The French republican model, dominated by a 'universalistic' understanding of integration which stigmatises cultural specificity (Scrinzi 2010), generated debates on the wearing of religious symbols in the public sphere (Lemière 2007; Scott 2007). The Italian model is instead generally appraised as 'familistic', in that it is based upon belonging to the national community by descent (Zincone 2006). This creates a crucial demarcation between insiders and outsiders, since increasing numbers of people living, working, or studying in Italy are devoid of citizenship due to the ethnic imprint of the legislation and public debate on the matter (Zincone and Basili 2013). Overall, therefore, Italy should display a more clear-cut demarcation between 'insiders' and 'outsiders', especially with respect to second- and third-generation residents.

Since 2015, moreover, Italy has been one of the countries most directly affected by the migration crisis, and most heavily involved in search-and-rescue operations in the Mediterranean. Of the one million refugees who arrived in 2015, more than 150,000 landed in Italy, resulting in a 31 per cent increase in the yearly asylum application rates (Eurostat 2016). This triggered much public controversy, especially on the scale and cost of the Italian involvement in patrolling operations and on tensions with migrants escaping from temporary hosting facilities (Berry et al. 2016). In France, the impact of the inflow has been considerably more limited in terms of asylum applications, as well as political and mediatic clamour. While initially the government rejected the European Commission proposal to locate 40,000 asylum seekers in France, based on the argument that the country had already taken its share of the 'burden', it subsequently endorsed the German proposal for a European relocation scheme (Tardis 2016).

The two countries also display remarkably different scenarios in terms of negative attitudes on migration and asylum. According to a recent Pew Research Center survey, by 2016 a majority of Italians believed that refugees represented a major threat. In France, the share of concerned respondents was much lower, among both left-wing and right-wing respondents (Pew Research Center 2016). Furthermore, 60 per cent of Italians and

'only' 47 per cent of French were concerned that refugees would increase domestic terrorism, whereas 65 per cent of respondents in Italy and 53 per cent in France believed that refugees would have a negative economic impact. In Italy, finally, 47 per cent of respondents believed that refugees were more to blame for crime than other groups in their nation, a figure that is 15 per cent higher than the European median and twice that of France (Pew Research Center 2016). Accordingly, Italy is likely to offer many more opportunities to mobilise on refugee issues, as these pertain to multiple dimensions of migration including access, transit, residence, and exit. In contrast, much of the public debate in France focused exclusively on the management of migrants stranded by the North Sea in the so-called Calais *Jungle*.

Against this background, the nature of anti-immigration politics in Italy and France is highly comparable. The two countries display a neat distinction between institutional and street politics, which is likely inherited from the historical experience of the New Right, resulting in the double mobilisation of far-right parties as well as movements oriented towards more unconventional forms of activism (Mammone 2015). In this respect, anti-immigration parties have had a considerable impact on immigration politics and policy in both Italy and France for at least two decades (Carvalho 2014; Castelli Gattinara 2016). In France, the authoritarian-populist Front National (FN) enjoys remarkable influence in the political, mediatic, and electoral arena, even though it does not count on a stable representation in parliament. Especially since the beginning of Marine Le Pen's project of 'de-demonization' of the party (Mayer 2013; Crépon et al. 2015), the FN's agenda on migration, security, and Islam (Smith 2010; Odmalm 2011; Maler and Salingue 2016) represents a crucial resource for anti-immigration movements, which are otherwise constrained by laws forbidding religious, ethnic, and racial discrimination (Camus 2009). Similarly, in Italy, right-wing social movements enjoy a privileged channel of communication with the electoral and media arenas thanks to the significant electoral relevance of Lega Nord (see Caiani and Parenti 2013). The blurred distinction between mainstream and far right led to the polarisation of political conflict on migration, with mainstream actors promoting openly xenophobic vocabularies and thus legitimising radical anti-immigration movements in national

and local political landscapes since long before the current crisis (Castelli Gattinara 2016). Accordingly, it is reasonable to anticipate a certain degree of similarity in the choice of anti-refugee narratives, as well as main forms of mobilisation against immigration, across the two countries.

Mobilising Against Refugees in France and Italy

Today, Italy serves as the main point of entry to Europe for migrants and refugees, together with Greece. Refugees transiting through Northern Africa and taking the road of the central Mediterranean usually arrive in Italy through Sicily, and then move to the French border in the attempt to reach the United Kingdom. The enhanced border controls throughout Europe, however, and the lack of appropriate structures to accommodate asylum seekers, resulted in the emergence of several illegal settlements in different areas in Italy and France, especially in border towns like Ventimiglia and Calais. In both Italy and France, thus, law enforcement authorities have been heavily involved in the relocation of asylum seekers in dedicated structures and camps distributed over the national territory. Still, the choice of locations and the identification of the structures for hosting them soon became a major source of political disagreement and conflict.

Since the beginning of summer 2015, anti-refugee protests have emerged under the initiative of actors claiming to be unaffiliated with the far right. Rather than configuring a homogeneous protest movement concentrating on nationwide events, thus, mobilisation took place at the local level and coalesced around specific situations and grievances. Furthermore, anti-refugee protests combined conventional activity in the institutional arena with grassroots mobilisation by assemblies of citizens that emerged to address local problems. In this respect, the repertoires of protest of the movement opposing immigration and asylum politics were differentiated among spontaneous grassroots mobilisation, institutional intervention by organised parties and local authorities, and various forms

of street politics. As outlined below, we could identify a similar pattern of protest in the two countries, characterised by three main forms of mobilisation: (1) direct interventions and confrontational protest, which are not only aimed at escalating conflict but also at exerting control over the territory to prevent the settlement of migrants; (2) 'whistle-blower' actions, or media-oriented events, with the goal of denouncing malpractice by state and refugee aid organisations, and creating alternative knowledge about the 'crisis'; and (3) institutional or administrative acts promoted by members of political parties or local authorities and mayors, with the goal of inhibiting the settlement of refugee centres or temporary camps.

Direct Intervention and Confrontational Actions

A first prominent form of political engagement concerns direct interventions and confrontational actions against the settlement, displacement, and management of migrants. This type of action includes interventions to ensure security at the neighbourhood level, the squatting of buildings predisposed to hosting immigrant families, and street blockades and confrontations with police to prevent the settlement of migrants. We likened these to the concept of direct social actions, as they differ from traditional forms of engagement addressing third parties (e.g. the state, the media) and demanding their mediation to solve a public problem (Bosi and Zamponi 2015; Froio and Castelli Gattinara 2016). Rather, they offer a direct contribution against something perceived as dysfunctional, in this case migration and insecurity. While often focusing on socioeconomic emergencies, far-right actors also make use of direct actions when dealing with immigration and law and order issues (Froio and Castelli Gattinara 2016).

In Italy, this took place primarily by means of blockades against the transfer of refugees—or supplies for refugees—from one location to another, organised either by local grassroots assemblies (e.g. Abano dice No in Veneto) or street movements and parties (Forza Nuova, CasaPound). In France, the predominant form of action was vigilantism (by Calaisiens en Colère and Génération Identitaire). Still, examples of both forms of

engagement could be observed in the two countries. In general, interviewees state that the starting point of all protests is the concerns of citizens, who feel abandoned by the state and thus mobilise seeking a 'concrete' answer to their grievances:

> Our group was formed in response to the aggressions that took place in Calais over the past months: there were thefts and rapes, some houses were squatted. There was degradation: some animals were stolen, eaten, killed. We don't have proof it was them, but well, we know it anyways. (Interview FR1)

> When the citizens saw the truck with the people from the cooperative approaching, they startled, they took on the street and blocked it. I think we can say it was basically an uprising. […] There were no clashes with the police. The cooperative workers ran away, and left the camion with the supplies there … and then someone set on fire the televisions and the mattresses. (Interview IT1)

Despite much emphasis on the spontaneity of the protest, however, direct actions benefit from the expertise and resources of organised far-right groups. While local party leaders have been keen to ensure that no recognisable political symbols or flags were shown to the media, far-right militants from Forza Nuova consistently underlined that they provided logistical support, information, and personnel to local committees, as these were principally composed of citizens with little, if any, prior experience with active politics (Interview IT3). One example of this is the numerous 'permanent pickets' that were built in front of buildings supposed to host refugees in northern Italy:

> The picketing started when the people that had gathered there informed us that they [the police and the NGO] were about to come to survey the building. We [Forza Nuova] went there and brought in more people in front of the building, so that we could prevent the survey by the cooperative and gardening companies that would have to take over the place. We were not too many, but we warded them off, pacifically. (Interview IT2)

Furthermore, activists promoted vigilante and patrolling activities. Grounded in the belief that state executives and the police failed to

defend citizens from migrant criminality and violence, they decided to engage on their own to protect the citizenry. While similar practices are also common among the far right in Italy (Forza Nuova, CasaPound Italia; cf. Froio and Castelli Gattinara 2016), this experience was most notable in Calais, where local inhabitants joined groups of vigilantes patrolling the streets and looking for illegal campsites. Gathering support, resources, and volunteers through Facebook, the Calaisiens en Colère claim to be 'complementary' to the activities of the police:

> When there was the Jungle, our main goal was precisely to avoid aggressions, rapes, or migrants squatting houses, and even more so to prevent roadblocks on the highway. […] Now that the Jungle has been dismantled, our mission is to look for the new camps that have been formed, and at the same time to prevent aggressions in highway parking, where they frequently squat some space. (Interview FR2)

> If we get there at the right time, we use some very strong flashlights—much stronger than the ones used by the police—which might be upsetting for them. […] We flash them so that they believe that we are the police. It often works, but when it doesn't we have to call the police with the tear gas and the uniform. (Interview FR1)

In this respect, 'dissuasion' stands out as a crucial dimension in various forms of direct activism. This is most evident in the 'Defend Europe' campaign, promoted by the French Génération Identitaire in co-operation with groups in Italy and other European countries. The goal is to set up a search-and-rescue mission documenting the (mis)behaviour of NGOs engaged on the Libyan coast, exposing their illegal activities and collaboration with smugglers (Defend Europe 2017). This type of activity directly relates to dynamics of movement-countermovement action. In fact, most interviewees reported that their intervention had the ambition, or the effect, of dissuading opponents (especially NGOs) from pursuing a project, action, or criminal activity. Dissuasion is also at the core of vigilante activity, as activism is framed as a form of dissuasion against migrants willing to commit criminal offences:

> We make some tours by cars, in four or five people. Sometimes we have several cars and we are equipped with walkie-talkies. We look around and

> see what goes on. […] It is dissuasive … because after all, concretely, we cannot do much: we cannot beat them up, we cannot arrest them, we cannot do anything. We can only scare them, that's all. (Interview FR1)

In Italy, anti-immigrant organisations correctly understood that law enforcement agencies and NGOs in charge of the resettlement of refugees would not proceed with the actual transfer of guests if there was a risk of confrontation with citizens. Accordingly, anti-refugee protestors formed grassroots assemblies (e.g. Treviso ai Trevigiani) and then organised permanent pickets blocking the entrance of buildings, with the logistical support of Forza Nuova. On one occasion, while the direct action was successful in dissuading the police from pursuing the transfer of refugees, the picketing continued for several months, as activists from Abano dice No feared that the plan would be implemented as soon as public attention decreased:

> When DIGOS [political police] arrived, and saw that we were many and that we had blocked the access, they simply decided not to try and enter the building. Still, we started the permanent picketing, from September until now, day and night. We are equipped with a television, and a generator to warm us up. Now we have organized shifts, but we are still there. (Interview IT2)

Overall, French and Italian anti-refugee activists share a similar approach to direct and confrontational interventions, anticipating their positive impact on local communities coping with the negative consequences of migration. Direct activism is thus framed as productive of material results and concrete solutions to urgent problems. At the same time, direct and confrontational actions also have broader consequences, in that they attract the attention of the media by showing that citizens are 'exhausted', and give local authorities leverage to ask more engagement by the police or to reconsider refugee management projects. Both in Italy and in France, therefore, we found a certain degree of co-ordination among various actors, including self-organised groups of citizens, local mayors and council members, and activists from extremist right-wing parties. As we shall see, these are crucial elements to understanding the choice and nature of anti-refugee mobilisation in Italy and France.

Whistle-Blower Actions and Knowledge Production

The second form of mobilisation against refugees concerns actions primarily oriented at attracting the attention of the mass media and the public. Since media attention is a crucial resource for any movement seeking to influence public policy, anti-refugee protestors resorted to this type of action to generate a reaction, increase awareness, and create a moral panic. While the mobilisation choices are similar across the two countries, as we shall see, the accompanying narratives are considerably more radical in France than in Italy: if anti-immigration actors in Italy must balance out between the legitimate and illegitimate areas of political competition, French social movements seem to have more leverage and legitimation in developing their own discursive repertoires.

A first form of media-oriented intervention can be categorised as whistle-blower actions: the promoters—either individual activists or social movement organisations—stage communicative or protest acts to signal situations they consider unjust and raise awareness about them. In this respect, a French interviewee from Génération Identitaire explicitly mentions that:

> Our political engagement is very peculiar: our activism is like Greenpeace. The way we express ourselves, staging spectacular actions, has the goal of imposing a debate and the terms of this debate in the political sphere. We want to build the political agenda based on our issues and our words. (Interview FR4)

The main objective of these actions is thus to change public discourse on migration. The Italian anti-immigration movement mobilised against corrupt NGOs, the mass media, and 'multiculturalist' elites that have strategically constructed the concept of a 'refugee crisis' to soften public opinion and legitimise the 'invasion'. Similar narratives have widespread resonance in the Italian public sphere, as demonstrated by a 2017 intervention by former PM Matteo Renzi, who stated that immigration control is incompatible with 'philosophical do-goodism and universalist utilitarianism' (L'Unità 2017). A more radical interpretation emerges among French activists, who accuse NGOs and the governments of

colluding in a project of 'replacement' of European populations: white nations are progressively repopulated by non-European migrants, and European values are replaced by foreign cultures and faiths:

> We must create awareness that what we are facing is not a crisis. It is an invasion. We can't call it an emergency either, it has been lasting for too long. Every day there are new arrivals. And they don't come from war-ridden countries. (Interview IT4)

> I believe that it there is no refugee crisis. What we are facing is primarily the mediatisation and acceleration of a phenomenon that has been going on for years, with the goal of pointing the finger at European populations and making them feel guilty. (Interview FR4)

Both in Italy and in France, moreover, the anti-refugee movement contests the entitlement of applicants to refugee status. The idea is that asylum seekers, rather than being 'real refugees', are instead irregular economic migrants. In Italy, Forza Nuova and Lega Nord tried to promote this interpretation by retrieving and diffusing documents and material from established organisations and public institutions. In the following examples, this repertoire is drawn upon to question the actual numbers making up the refugee crisis, using information from institutional sources:

> They land in Italy claiming the status of asylum seekers, but the estimations of the ministry of Internal Affairs say that only 2% are real refugees … And I wonder whether even that 2% is made of real refugees. Anyways, 98% of them are just Africans looking for a job or a life opportunity. (Interview IT13)

> The numbers provided by the police headquarters are very clear: the nationalities of people making up the so-called 'refugee emergency' are the same of the people making up what we called 'illegal immigration', when we could still call it with its real name. (Interview IT8)

The quotes suggest that the mass media may be imposing the use of a certain terminology, thus denying the problem that 'bogus' refugees are immigrants who act dishonestly and attempt to stay in the country illegally. A similar approach is seen in France, especially with groups like

Civitas and Riposte Laïque accusing the mass media of silencing the truth about immigration and Islamisation. In the following example, activists point out their struggle for a correct representation of the immigration phenomenon, stressing the importance of the alternative media for producing new channels of information beyond the political mainstream:

> First, we engage at the intellectual level. Against propaganda media, we publish articles on our website and inform the French citizenry on immigration, Islamisation and its wrongdoings. Information is crucial. We also give arguments to people, producing summary dossiers for people, so that they can use them to discuss with, and convince, people around them. (Interview FR9)

> Today, when the mainstream media report of an aggression by an immigrant, they will write 'aggression by a young man'. We must be able to read between the lines. If we suspect that perhaps there is more to it, we start looking for testimonies, or photos etc. […] It's what we call the *reinfosphere:* the field of re-information. It's a series of non-professional media which offer semi-journalistic enquiries on taboo issues. (Interview FR4)

Knowledge production thus benefits of the interplay and exchange of information between organised groups and individual citizens. On the one hand, supporters and social media provide the material to deconstruct public narratives about migration. On the other, anti-refugee groups produce their own information and material, offering arguments that people can use in discussions about the crisis. The willingness to create 'alternative' knowledge on migration and asylum is a crucial dimension of mobilisation against refugees, and it is based on the long-lasting idea that multiculturalism constrains public debates by refusing to acknowledge social and security problems (Vertovec and Wessendorf 2010). In this sense, much anti-refugee activism in Italy and France has concentrated on diffusing and amplifying the problems brought about by the arrival of immigrants and refugees, challenging the cultural hegemony of multicultural values.

Numerous forms of production of alternative knowledge could be found in France, most notably by Riposte Laïque and Génération Identitaire. These range from the production of alternative news to in-depth studies of the Quran and reportages on the Islamisation of Europe. The most notable

example was the production of informational dossiers by Génération Identitaire, entitled 'How to answer to the lies about migrants?', with data to contrast statements such as 'there is no link between immigration and delinquency', or 'there is no link between immigration and terrorism' (Les Identitaires 2016a). The dossiers offer an overview of the main argument proposed by their political opponents, a discussion of 'why they say so', and a list of elements confirming that 'it is not true'. Concerning refugees, the documents suggest that:

> The term 'refugee' defines individuals who have suffered persecution in their country of origin, and thus qualify for the right of asylum. This right has been perverted and transformed in a new channel of immigration in Europe. By speaking of 'refugees' instead of 'illegal migrants', the aim is to deceive the European people by encouraging them to pity the fate of the millions of immigrants who flood their continent. (Les Identitaires 2016b)

In Italy, a similar function was served by activities aiming at denouncing malpractices by refugee aid organisations. Targeting primarily the national and local media, for instance, Forza Nuova and Lega Nord activists produced small documentaries, or journalistic reportages, denouncing degradation, criminality, and illegality in refugee hubs. The material is then circulated via social media and local news agencies, with the goal of coalescing dissent and possibly triggering the intervention of law enforcement agencies. The underlying idea is that the refugee crisis is the result of a 'business of hospitality':

> We promote investigative activities: we produce photos, documents, testimonies confirming that the living conditions of the asylum seekers hosted there were at the limit of human decency. Thus, the day after, the cooperative in charge of the building transferred all guests to another location. […] The problem is that when we do this type of things, they accuse us of racism. But our protests are also aimed at increasing awareness on the living conditions in refugee centres, and on the business of hospitality. (Interview IT8)

> When we can make an investigation, we do not necessarily have to take on the streets and make the barricades. Our enquiries on the apartments that were given to refugees, or on [name refugee aid organization], originate from our collaboration with employees in the municipality, as well as

> with people working in the NGOs that have realised the problems in this system. (Interview IT9)

Institutional and Administrative Actions

The third form of intervention is institutional in nature: with the goal of inhibiting the settlement of refugee camps, members of political parties, local authorities, and mayors promoted administrative acts addressing law enforcement agencies and national political actors. This brought together local officials from different political areas, including members of radical right and centre-right parties, and was based on a variety of administrative devices including municipal votes, issuing of local referendums, and the temporary bans on the distribution of food to migrants. Perhaps because the institutional experience and representation of Lega Nord is considerably greater than that of Front National, however, this repertoire was much more prominent in Italy. Contextual factors also explain cross-national variation in anti-refugee narratives, as opposition to migration in Italy focuses primarily on sanitary and corruption issues, in France on security and terrorism.

In Italy, administrative interventions by Lega Nord members in municipal assemblies generally aimed at slowing down the procedures for the settlement of refugee centres. This included formal procedures inhibiting the use of allegedly 'dangerous' or unstable structures designed to host refugees, as well as legal initiatives against the cooperatives in charge of the hosting facilities. Institutional actions primarily addressed local health authorities, with the goal of certifying that refugee centres were unhealthy or sanitarily unsuited to host guests. Lega Nord and Forza Nuova administrators, as well as local members of mainstream right- and left-wing parties, tried to demonstrate that a given town was unsuited to hosting refugees, focusing on potential harm to the local economy or damage to the natural environment, health, or tourism. At the same time, they argued that their local territory had already paid its 'price' (also in relation to pre-existing burdens, e.g. economic crisis, natural disasters, etc.):

> Our greatest problem is that [our town] lives from tourism. If they build a refugee hub here […], our wellness tourism is doomed, it's hopeless. I have

been in touch with the hoteliers and I was told that tourists that have been coming for holiday here for twenty years have cancelled their reservation once they heard the news. The refugee hub would be our tombstone. (Interview IT2)

We said no to the prefecture's request to welcome refugees on our territory. About 10% of our citizens are regular migrants. Moreover [our town] is earthquake-stricken and about 600 people, 5% of the population, are still unable to go back to their house. Hence, we must be exempted from the obligation to host refugees, and we are struggling with the regional council who is willing to disattend the agreement. (Interview IT7)

The idea that local communities have done 'enough' is crucial in these narratives, which often contrapose a lack of resources for locals to the new ones made available to refugees, generally articulated in terms of 'locals must come first'. This has paved the way for the emergence of many local assemblies lobbying on the need to prioritise the interests of locals, such as Treviso ai Trevigiani, Como ai Comaschi, and so on. In France, the focus is on the need to protect the local citizenry, endangered by irresponsible, or dysfunctional, immigration policy. For instance, local council members from Versailles Familles Avenir present themselves as mediators between the government, or law enforcement agencies, and the citizenry. In this way, the contestation of the decision of welcoming refugees is not based on an explicit, ideological opposition to immigration but rather on pragmatic argumentation, which associates resettlement choices with security threats to the local population and the French nation:

As an elected official, I must cope with this subject and with the anxiety of my fellow citizens. I am not ideological: certainly, I am a conservative, but I do not consider myself as extreme right-wing. Not everyone who deals with immigration must necessarily be associated with that political area. Migration is a subject that should concern all political parties. (Interview FR6)

We learned that the Prefect wanted to open a welcoming platform—some sort of desk—ten meters away from the entrance of a private school. The most important college in our town. […] I sent him an official letter, saying that I would file a complaint against him to the public prosecutor, for any harm to public order, be that theft, rape, or aggression. […] It was

> very simple: the day after, the prefect communicated that he would not pursue with the construction of the desk. (Interview FR5)

Local administrators thus present themselves as engaged in the grey zone between the representatives and the represented. Located in between these two poles, they act as defendants of the interests of the local citizenry, against central authorities. While they cannot be blamed for immigration policy, they have the means to minimise the negative impact of the current crisis by deploying strategies to deny shelter to refugees, by slowing down the administrative procedures, and by giving visibility and legitimacy to citizens' concerns. Thus, local politicians often merge an ideological opposition to immigration per se, with a more pragmatist argumentation about the unsuitability of their own territory to hosting refugees.

In Italy, this is done primarily—albeit not exclusively—by mobilising on sanitary issues linked to public health and living conditions in the buildings hosting refugees. This allows them to shift the focus away from Lega Nord's and Forza Nuova's anti-refugee attitudes while placing attention on the misconduct of pro-refugee organisations and the inappropriateness of the welcoming system in Italy. This is perhaps the most striking form of movement-countermovement interaction in the field of refugee politics, collapsing into a single category the government, progressive left-wing parties, transnational human rights associations, as well as antiracist networks. The underlying idea is that immigration is a business for these groups, as corrupt NGOs make profits from the current crisis. Local authorities thus have the responsibility of protecting the safety of citizens (especially in terms of health and sanitary issues):

> People come to me and tell me something like: 'there are thirteen people that are sleeping here and there'. Once I know this, I mobilize on their behalf: I send a letter to the health authorities and they immediately intervene, […] which they would not do if they were informed by a citizens' assembly only. (Interview IT9)

> The Lega Nord […] took care of the more institutional side of the protest: they organised the monitoring by local health authority, and tried to put pressure taking advantage of their position within the institutions. (Interview IT1)

In France, collective action frames link terrorism, physical insecurity, and the presence of refugee camps and migrants, because migrants are a 'population with a high criminal proclivity' (Interview FR5). If the authorities plan to build a camp in proximity to a school, there is a risk that migrants may rape children or students; if the camp is close to the water factory, Jihadists might poison the water supply; if a camp is near a computer science institution, it risks jeopardising national defence and intelligence. Actors thus stress the public responsibility of local authorities versus the political irresponsibility of the government that is mismanaging the inflow of migrants. In this understanding, the government and the police are putting the nation in danger, either because they are unprepared to cope with the crisis or because they are corrupt. Local authorities thus have a moral obligation to intervene before migrants become a physical threat to citizens:

> 90% of the time these people are denied the status of refugees. Yet, they remain here, in a juridical 'no man's land'. […] They have no official status; the police do not even take their fingerprints; we don't even know how old they are! The public authority is simply incompetent in dealing with this problem. If migrants are refused the status of refugees, well, they must go back to their country. (Interview FR6)

> First, they wanted to construct the camp at the entrance of the factory in charge of the water distribution in the whole region, while the Jihadists had threatened that they would poison France's water supply! It would be a camp with 5000 guests, and there could be a commando of 100 persons attacking the factory just in front. […] I filed an action against the prefect mentioning that he handed parts of the national territory to a group of migrants—which could be under the influence of a foreign power or organization. […] In case of a terrorist attack, he could be charged with high treason. (Interview FR5)

Conclusions

In France and Italy, the long summer of migration triggered not only the wave of solidarity analysed in other chapters within this volume but also a cycle of anti-refugee protest of considerable size and impact. By placing borders at the core of the public debate, the so-called refugee crisis paved

the way to a social process of moral panic, where exclusionary actors could benefit from crucial symbolic resources to perform their privileged role of entrepreneurs of fear. On the one hand, mobilisation against migrants was fuelled by the fear of terrorism and physical threat, the idea that the newcomers were culturally incompatible with the values and traditions of Europeans, and the perception that political elites had betrayed the social contract with the people. On the other, anti-refugee mobilisation had to do with movement-countermovement dynamics, especially in relation to delegitimising narratives against NGOs and the solidarity movement.

By observing the practices of mobilisation and the framing of collective action in Italy and France, we were also able to detect important departures from traditional anti-immigration politics. First, there has been an upsurge in street politics: facing the unresponsiveness of national public authorities to growing discontent with immigration policy, anti-refugee activists engaged in the protest arena, exerting pressure on policy-makers and offering immediate answers to problems perceived as urgent. Second, there has been a variation in the nature of the mobilisation, which now brings together a variety of different actors ranging from local representatives to grassroots citizen assemblies and organised far-right parties. As a result, throughout the long summer of migration, activists have organised a broad range of actions, including conventional actions within the institutional arena, confrontational and direct actions in the protest arena, and cultural struggles aimed at creating alternative forms of knowledge.

Furthermore, despite considerable differences in the patterns of opportunity for mobilisation in Italy and France—and the different locations of the two countries along the migration route in Europe—our analysis shows much similarity in the way in which opposition to immigration was articulated, confirming the crucial role played by far-right actors in the two countries. At the same time, this implies that exclusionary politics are built on a set of common elements which, at least according to the promoters of the protest, define the phenomenon of immigration at the local, national, and European levels. In their protests and networks, there are at least two main ways in which anti-immigration movement opposed the arrival of refugees. Mobilisations organised by allegedly non-partisan and grassroots groups at the local level focus on the contingent situation

of a specific territorial area, suggesting its inappropriateness to hosting migrants and refugees, but not openly opposing the politics of hospitality towards refugees per se. In contrast, the engagement of far-right actors generally implies that protests turn against immigration and refugees in general. Irrespective of this, however, the logic underlying both types of protest is similar, suggesting the interpenetration between grassroots citizens' initiatives and far-right mobilisation on migration affairs. Finally, anti-immigration activists have engaged in a cultural struggle to challenge the idea that migrants arriving in Europe deserve the status of refugees. They accuse them of acting dishonestly, to the detriment of people who truly deserve to receive refugee status, and they accuse the political establishment of hypocrisy for turning immigration into a business. Corrupt NGOs, the mass media, and multiculturalist elites are accused of having strategically constructed the concept of a 'refugee crisis' to legitimise the invasion and destabilisation of Europe.

In so doing, the anti-immigration movement has effectively updated its repertoire based on a simple dichotomy between truth and untruth, in the attempt to increase the legitimacy of their discourse in the public sphere. True refugees deserving hospitality are opposed to fake refugees who dishonestly apply for status; real data by independent organisations is opposed to the fake information circulated by the mainstream media; real humanitarianism 'at home' is opposed to false humanitarianism of money-seeking NGOs; and real facts about Islam and terrorism are opposed to the self-defeating ideology of multiculturalism promoted by the corrupt elites of Europe. By mobilising on notions of respect for human rights strategically, by describing anti-refugee protest as a wide popular uprising against unresponsive political elites, and by rejecting the language of racial superiority, in conclusion, the anti-refugee movement can be broadly situated within the turn to 'civic' values that has characterised much exclusionary politics in Europe in recent times.

Interviews

IT1: Activist in anti-refugee mobilisation at the local level and member of Forza Nuova, Treviso, 17 January 2017.

IT2: Activist in anti-refugee mobilisation at the local level, Abano (PD), 17 January 2017.
IT3: Activist in anti-refugee citizens' assembly, Volpago sul Montello (TV), 18 January 2017.
IT4: Activist in anti-refugee citizens' assembly, Volpago sul Montello (TV), 18 January 2017.
IT5: Member of *Forza Nuova*—national level, Rome, 23 January 2017.
IT6: Activist in anti-refugee campaign at the local and national level and member of Forza Nuova, Milan, 24 January 2017.
IT7: Local administrator and member of Lega Nord, Bondeno (FE), 30 January 2017.
IT8: Regional administrator and member of Lega Nord, Bondeno (FE), 30 January 2017.
IT9: Activist in anti-refugee campaign at the local level and member of Lega Nord, Bondeno (FE), 30 January 2017.
IT10: Member of Forza Nuova—local level, Ferrara, 31 January 2017.
IT11: Activist in anti-refugee campaign at the local level, Ferrara, 31 January 2017.
IT12: Activist in anti-refugee campaign at the local level, Ferrara, 31 January 2017.
IT13: Member of Forza Nuova—national level, Rome, 6 February 2017.
FR1: Activist in anti-refugee campaign at the local level, Calais, 17 March 2017.
FR2: Activist in anti-refugee campaign at the local level, Calais, 17 March 2017.
FR3: Member of Civitas—national level, Paris, 19 March 2017.
FR4: Member of Génération Identitaire—national level, Paris, 20 March 2017.
FR5: Local administrator, independent, Versailles, 21 March 2017.
FR6: Local administrator, independent, Paris, 21 March 2017.
FR7: Activist in anti-refugee campaigns at the national level, Paris, 21 March 2017.
FR8: Member of Riposte Laïque, Paris, 24 March 2017.
FR9: Member of Réponse Républicaine, Paris, 24 March 2017.
FR10: Activist in anti-refugee campaigns at the local level, Paris, 25 March 2017.

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11

Mapping Protest on the Refugee Crisis: Insights from Online Protest Event Analysis

Massimiliano Andretta and Elena Pavan

Introduction: Shifting the Focus from Solidarity Initiatives to Protest Fields

The refugee crisis had a huge impact on the European political landscape. While many civil society organisations and social movements have dealt with this issue by helping and supporting refugees and migrants in general, other political actors and counter-movements have jumped on the

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crisis to politically exploit what has been often publicly portrayed as an uncontrollable siege at the European borders.

At the crossroads between solidarity manifestations and harsh opposition, the flows of refugees and asylum seekers traversing the European territory have rapidly become a controversial issue. In this chapter, we use a protest field approach in order to investigate precisely this element of controversy and to understand more in detail the main facets of the contentious dynamics triggered by the refugee crisis. A protest field is defined as the social space in which actors make their claims by means of protest; its structure is composed of the organisations and the social actors who enter its space, the claims they make, their repertoires of action, and their interactions—both co-operative and competitive. When addressing protest dynamics in a given (often, but not exclusively, domestic) context, social movement scholars typically use the concept of 'protest space' (Hutter 2014) or 'arena' (e.g. Jasper 2015)—thus giving particular prominence to the contextual factors (primarily, rules and resources) that facilitate or hamper the unfolding of collective endeavours. As we look at protests around migration and refugees, we prefer instead to speak about 'protest fields', as this concept implies the existence of a peculiar strategic action field that is a 'constructed mesolevel social order in which actors (who can be individual or collective) are attuned to and interact with one another on the basis of shared (which is not to say consensual) understandings about the purposes of the field, relationships to others in the field (including who has power and why), and the rules governing legitimate action in the field' (Fligstein and McAdam 2012, p. 9). The concept of field, in Bourdieu's earlier elaboration (e.g. Bourdieu 1993), overcomes the traditional dichotomy between agency and structure and redirects our attention towards the interactions between and within fields that develop as actors try to reinforce or transform hierarchical and power relations (Hilgers and Mangez 2014). Hence, a perspective that is centred on protest fields allows us to switch from a view of collective endeavours as a 'set of discrete cases' to one in which collectivities are seen as 'complex bundles of multiple social relationships […] that connect individual and organisational actors, as well as non-agentic elements such as events or cultural forms, and [that evolve] over time' (Diani and Mische 2016, p. 307).

Against this background, our focus is set on three South European countries—Greece, Spain, and Italy—that have been particularly exposed to the migration process and within which protests on refugee flows have

unfolded in different ways, involving different actors and protest practices, targeting different subjects and nurtured by different frames. More specifically, drawing on the political process approach, we relate the peculiarities of the political environments characterising the three countries with the configuration of their protest fields (della Porta and Diani 1996; Tarrow 1989; Kriesi et al. 1995). Following the theoretical assumptions that underpin the research effort crystallised in this book, we explore how the three countries did provide different *political opportunities* for protest on migration issues to emerge side by side with solidarity initiatives that were reconstructed in the previous chapters; for different *actors*—from Greek, Spanish, and Italian citizens to the migrants and refugees themselves—to network and engage in the struggle over the dichotomy between inclusion and exclusion; for different *action repertoires* to be pushed forward in this struggle; and, ultimately, for the *concept of citizenship* to be reframed and redefined. We do so by employing protest event analysis, a method that is often adopted in social movement studies to explore the relations between protest and the political environment as well as to reconstruct the protest field (Hutter 2014; Kriesi et al. 2012). However, in comparison to traditional applications of this method, we introduce an element of innovation: we make systematic use of Google News as a new and powerful source for news on protests for or against immigration issues. Starting from online news, we reconstruct the protest field in each country under observation and show how the specific dynamics of protest on migration and refugees tend to vary according to the political context.

While we make systematic use of media discourse as an entry point to explore the contentious dynamics accompanying the refugee crisis, we do not elaborate on the active role that the media played in these circumstances. We certainly acknowledge that traditional and digital media have been fundamental in creating a public space of awareness and legitimisation for the manifestations of solidarity with and/or rejection of refugees. However, the extent to which public media discourse endowed pro- and/or anti-immigration initiatives with different discursive opportunities (Koopmans 2004; Ferree et al. 2002), the ways in which traditional and digital media practices have come to constitute acts of resistance in their own right (Cammaerts et al. 2013), as well as the modes in which digitally enabled mass self-communication and narratives (Castells 2011)

have contributed to mobilisation dynamics in the different protest fields are all aspects that we do not address directly in this work.

The remainder of this chapter is organised as follows. We begin by providing a short overview of the three political contexts of Greece, Spain, and Italy. While more detailed reconstructions of the situations in the three countries are provided in other chapters in this book, here we aim at sketching a background picture to support the reconstruction of each protest field. We then move on to illustrate how we have employed protest event analysis with specific reference to the Google News repository and the main results that emerged from the content analysis of news items retrieved. In the last section, we conclude by discussing our results in connection with the background picture we provided and in light of our methodological choices.

The Background Picture: Political Contexts of the Refugee Crisis in Greece, Spain, and Italy[1]

During the 'long summer of migration', Greece provided a crucial transit point for refugees and asylum seekers. The management of the refugee crisis in the Greek territory occurred within a context of nested political opportunity structures (Meyer 2003), with grassroots solidarity initiatives constrained by the decisions of the national government which, in turn, was constrained by the political management of the crisis at the European level. In this context, the EU–Turkey agreement in March 2016 signalled a turning point at various levels. First, it entailed a change of state for the whole Greek territory, which shifted from being a place for transit to a forced place of arrival. Second, it affected the role played by the Greek government, which eventually took over solidarity initiatives during rescue and shelter operations. Finally, it significantly affected the scope and the margins of manoeuvre of solidarity initiatives, which needed to shift their actions from care and assistance tasks to the defence of refugees' rights. Thus, informal and collective solidarity initiatives were forced to face what Oikonomakis in his chapter calls the 'dilemma of becoming official' in order to be able to maintain their active stand. However, many groups refused to

abide by the new rules and openly entered a conflictual relationship with the government.

Italy constitutes another hotspot of the refugee crisis. Open towards the south to the routes from Africa and, at the same time, bound at the northern border by the increasing control of neighbouring countries, Italy struggled to manage what Lorenzo Zamponi calls the 'complexity of the refugee crisis'. Requests to comply with the Dublin regulation clashed with the intricacies of a government-co-ordinated reception plan. In this context, a loose and highly heterogeneous '*polycephalous* network' (Diani 2003, p. 308) of solidarity initiatives emerged in the country, lacking central control, incorporating already existing initiatives as well as new collective subjects, and aimed at providing onsite support to refugees and migrants reaching Italian shores but also at defending their rights. However, the manifold difficulties that have characterised the unfolding of the refugee crisis in Italy have also boosted the diffusion of strong anti-immigration feelings—catalysed by far-right subjects such as Lega Nord, a political party represented in both the Italian and the European institutions; Forza Nuova, a renowned Italian far-right political movement; or CasaPound, another Italian extreme right political movement—but also fuelled by the rapid multiplication of informal local groups opposing the reception of refugees in local facilities and claiming a priority for Italian citizens' rights (see Castelli Gattinara's chapter in this volume).

Finally, Spain is the sole European frontier with the African context, and dynamics related to the refugee crisis have been highly dependent on this strategic location. The high level of surveillance at the southern border limited the intensity of migration flows towards the country. In this context, the rhetoric of the 'migrant invasion' that permeated the Italian context did not get a foothold, and mobilisations in the country mainly adopted a pro-immigration stand. Committed to ensuring the safety of the southern border and, at the same time, pressured to participate in the management of the refugee crisis at the European level, the Spanish government adopted what Alcalde and Portos call in their chapter an 'ambiguous position'. Solidarity initiatives were organised within the space of civil society and yet developed in a scattered manner and mainly within the boundaries of single localities, seizing more or less favourable local opportunity structures, connecting to various extents to previous mobilisation

waves in other areas (e.g. anti-austerity protests), and opposing targets at different levels (both nationally and at the European level).

Comparing Protest Fields in Greece, Spain, and Italy

In this work, we investigate the configuration of the Greek, Italian, and Spanish protest fields by means of a method that is known in social movement literature as protest event analysis (henceforth, PEA). PEA draws on traditional content analysis, which generally uses media content to gather, codify, input, and statistically treat information on research objects—that is, protest events (henceforth, PEs). This specific method allows for cross-time and cross-space comparison of mobilisations and has become particularly prominent in social movement and protest studies (Hutter 2014). Indeed, over time, PEA has been employed as a fruitful tool in the analysis of the birth of contemporary social movements during state-building process as well as in the study of the evolution of violence and strikes in modern states by Charles Tilly (Shorter and Tilly 1974; Tilly et al. 1975). It has supported the examination of the unfolding of the US civil rights movement (McAdam 1982) and the robust study on the long '68 in Italy (Tarrow 1989). PEA has also been applied within one of the few comparative works on new social movements in France, Switzerland, Germany, and the Netherlands (Kriesi et al. 1995). As the works cited here demonstrate, PEA has proven to be central in studies focusing on the political process approach, as the dynamics and features of protest events can be contrasted with changes in political opportunities and structures over time and across space (Hutter 2014).

Most of the scholars working with this method use newspapers as sources to gather information on protests, especially when the aim is to cover a relatively long time span (Franzosi 1987). Through newspaper articles, it is indeed possible to collect useful information about several properties of PEs: the organisations staging the protest, the type of social actors involved, the claims and the issues of the protest, the forms of action used, the targets of the protest, its scope, and other relevant information. Such information is then codified through a codebook, which

defines the variables and labels for each protest property, and the resulting data are translated within a matrix that is treated statistically.

In spite of its potentialities, newspaper-based PEA has also been criticised for internalising the biases that are part of media news coverage (Rucht and Neidhardt 1998). Broadly speaking, 'newspapers *selectively* report on protest events, and do not provide a representative sample of all events taking place' (Hutter 2014, p. 338). Differences exist amongst different newspapers in their tendency to cover protest, with local and liberal or leftist newspapers tending to cover comparatively more PEs (Rucht and Neidhardt 1998). Moreover, within their discretional coverage, newspapers tend to provide a biased portrayal of protest, as they are more likely to report and detail large or radical protests that address issues that are already at the centre of media attention (McCarthy et al. 1996).

Newspaper articles are not the sole source used for PEA. News agency reports have also been employed, as they tend to be 'more inclusive' than final edited news (Koopmans and Rucht 2002, p. 238). However, for their specific format, news agency reports have been found to be inadequate to cover longer time periods and quite far from 'what is seen by the average citizen as a consumer mass media' (ibid.). Outside the media space, police archives have also been used, as they allow for systematic protest coverage (McCarthy et al. 1996). However, these archives are not always accessible to researchers, and the information reported by the police is generally very poor and schematic. Moreover, police archives are rather decentralised, and, for this reason, they do not prove particularly accessible when it comes to collecting protest information at a national level (Hutter 2014). Finally, just as the media introduce their own bias in generating information on protest, police do as well, providing information framed according to their own organisational or even political goals (Hutter 2014).

Those important biases notwithstanding, four arguments have been pushed forward to support the employment of PEA as a research strategy: first, any kind of information source produces biases that political and social scientists must deal with; second, within comparative and longitudinal research, the negative effects of biases can be mitigated by keeping biases constant (as much as possible); third, PEA allows for large amounts of data collection that would otherwise prove impossible or too demanding; fourth, only if they receive media attention are protests likely to enter

the public debate, become known by the public and, in the end, influence elites and decision makers (Hutter 2014).

Online Protest Event Analysis Through Google News

To reconstruct and compare the protest fields of Greece, Spain, and Italy, we perform a PEA starting from news items contained in Google News (henceforth GN). GN is a news aggregator launched in beta version by Google in 2002 and released officially in 2006. As a news aggregator, GN collects and constantly updates web syndicated contents—for example, news, blog and vlog posts, or podcasts—and displays them on a web page in response to users' queries. Not only does GN cover news coming from a variety of professional and nonprofessional informational services, but users themselves can indicate the sources to be included in the catalogue, thus contributing to an ever-evolving effort of news indexing. Moreover, because news coming from GN is displayed amongst the first results proposed by Google, GN also constitutes a widely diffused information source that internet users check, even if only cursorily, quite regularly.

To be sure, leaning on GN as a repository to perform PEA grants the same advantages that have been associated with the use of electronic databases: the possibility to search for more than one source at a time and thus to minimise the effects of newspapers' selective coverage; the ease of reading news from different sources in a consistent visual style; and the possibility of retrieving relevant texts in 'non-news sections'—that is, above and beyond headlines, captions, or first and last sentences (Maney and Oliver 2001, p. 137).

However, the enormous variety of sources crawled and the extreme automation of news indexing exacerbates the shortcomings that are typical of digital searches. A first criticality relates to the very large number of results that are generated in response to a search query in GN. While a typical search for information would require a user to browse the first pages of results proposed by the service (typically, the first two), the identification of actual PEs entails assessing the pertinence of all news retrieved by GN in response to a query. As the service returns hundreds of result pages, each of which contains dozens of news items that need to be

opened in new web pages, the identification of relevant news stories becomes extremely challenging. In this context, electronic search strategies become even more crucial for identifying pertinent events, as does the identification of timeframes for the investigation (Maney and Oliver 2001).

Moreover, while it is acknowledged that electronic archives also do not contain all possible PEs on an issue (ibid., p. 136), the wide variety of sources crawled and the global scale of GN make any attempt to triangulate sources virtually unmanageable. Consequently, it is impossible to estimate how many events are not indexed within GN and, therefore, to assess the actual representativeness of the selected pool of events.

Finally, the specific materiality of GN introduces unprecedented sources of bias. Most notably, GN does not provide a neutral platform for research activities (Rogers 2013). Indeed, GN functions in highly personalised ways—arranging and proposing results depending on users' preferences and browsing history. In this sense, GN differs from other electronic databases that have previously been employed to perform PEAs (e.g. digital newspaper archives), as it actively intervenes in the research process by allowing researchers with different starting points to perform their tasks.

In order to exploit the potentialities of GN while minimising the shortcomings connected to its use, we identified PEs in the three countries through a multi-layered research strategy. First, to grasp the broader context of the refugee crisis above and beyond the sole 'long summer of migration', we set our observation period from January 2015 to March 2016. Within this 15-month time span, we further identified what could be called 'moments of issue salience'—that is, moments in which there seems to be more interest in the refugee crisis and, more broadly, in the issue of migration. To do so, we employed Google Trends—a Google service which, on the basis of a representative random sample of user searches, allows an exploration of how public interest on a specific topic has unfolded over time.[2] On this platform, we searched for the keywords *migrants* and *refugees* translated by native speakers in Greek, Spanish, and Italian and singled out the so-called spikes—that is, moments in which online searches for these keywords were more frequent than usual. When a spike in search volume was found in a specific week, we considered the

whole month as a moment of issue salience and searched on GN for news published online during that month.[3]

To avoid the biasing effects of service personalisation, we accessed GN through a clear research browser and logged out from any Google account (DMI 2015). News were searched through a 'generic event descriptor' (Maney and Oliver 2001, p. 138) in the form of a Boolean search—that is, *(migrant OR refugee) AND protest*. The query was translated into Greek, Spanish, and Italian and used to retrieve news items that were eventually deemed pertinent if they showed any of the three terms either in the news headline, caption, or short preview and if the news referred to a protest event that occurred on the national Greek, Spanish, or Italian territory.[4] Pertinent news items were saved and stored offline to be read, classified in relation to PEs, and codified according to the codebook.[5] Ultimately, we obtained a dataset of PEs that occurred in various points in time in the three countries.[6] Although this pool of events cannot be deemed complete or representative, it does capture a range of PEs on migration and refugee issues that have certainly entered public debate and catalysed public attention.

To elaborate on the configuration of the protest fields in Greece, Spain, and Italy, we search for similarities and differences amongst the three contexts, looking at some key features of PEs that are indicative of the main analytical dimensions explored by this volume:

1. the different numbers of protest episodes and their different reach, in order to explore the extent to which different *political opportunities* have been seized by either pro- or anti-immigration activism;
2. the issues at the core of the protest, to investigate the *thematic components* around which opposition, solidarity, and resistance have been organised;
3. the type of actors involved in contentious episodes, in order to elaborate on the aspect of the *networked nature of the struggle*;
4. the type of actions supporting contentious episodes and the targets opposed through protest, to shed light on the variety of *protest repertoires* that fed opposition to and solidarity for refugees but also sustained protest actions organised by refugees themselves.

Seizing Different Opportunities: Features and Contents of the Pro- and Anti-immigration Protests in the Three Fields

With regard to the different numbers of protest episodes and their reach, a first interesting element is the fact that in Italy, levels of conflict on the issues of refugees and migration seem to have been higher than in the other countries (Fig. 11.1). Here, the fact that both radical Right and Left parties are sitting in the opposition in the parliamentary arena seems to have triggered contentious actions in the protest field, as 123 PEs related to the refugee crisis took place over the three moments of salience we identified, with a mean of 41 for each spike month. In Greece, where three moments of salience were also identified, 56 protest episodes were found, with a mean of about 19 per spike month. Finally, in Spain, only 15 protests occurred in the only moment of salience we could identify.

Not only did the three protest fields differ in relation to the number of protest episodes they hosted but, more importantly, they are characterised by different thematic orientations. Indeed, amongst the 123 events that occurred in Italy, 64 protests had a pro-immigrant frame, while 59

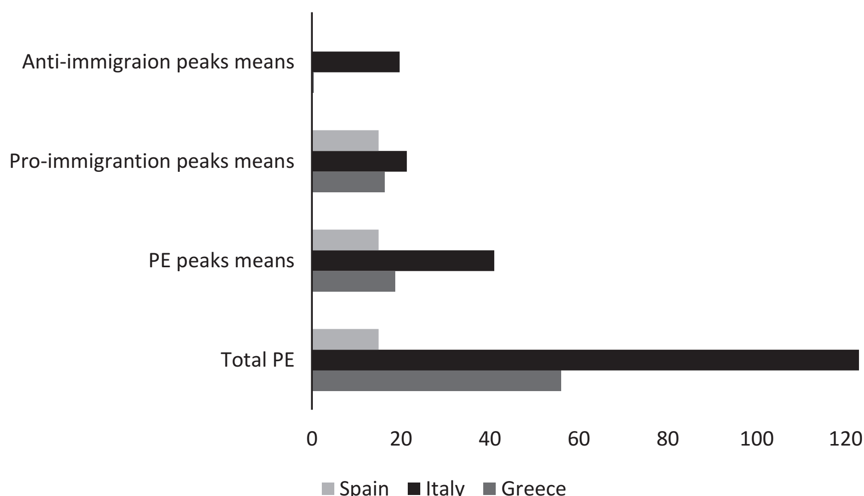

Fig. 11.1 Protest events in Italy, Greece, and Spain (absolute numbers)

were against immigrants, refugees, or reception policies. Conversely, in Greece, 49 of 56 PEs were pro-refugee, while in Spain no single protest event adopted a hostility frame against refugees or migrants (Fig. 11.1). Moreover, while in Greece the few anti-immigration protests aimed mainly at criticising the perceived policy openness towards migrants and refugees, in Italy as many as 85 per cent (50 out of 59) of protests against migrants and refugees were expressed in a racist or xenophobic way.

Quite indicative in this respect are protests organised by far-right groups in several Italian cities. For example, at the end of April 2015, Forza Nuova organised a local protest in Torino di Sangro (Abruzzo) to repatriate a group of African refugees hosted in one of the city's hotels. Banners were hung denouncing the 'business of hospitality', deemed to benefit refugees with 'food, shelter, clothes, cigarettes, phones, charge cards, recreational and educational activities' at the expense of impoverished Italian citizens.[7] At the same time, CasaPound hung banners stating 'No Al Centro di Accoglienza' (literally, 'No to the reception centre'), opposing the choice to host asylum seekers and refugees in hotel facilities in various localities in the province of Chieti. Along the same lines, in August 2015, a group of skinheads belonging to Veneto Fronte Skinhead (VFS) moved into a refugee location in Verona and showed a banner reading, 'State property: private for the Italians, public for illegal immigrants'.[8]

On the pro-immigrant side, protests raised claims against general policy directions towards refugees and immigrants that were considered too restrictive—especially with regard to border controls and residence rights. In the immediate aftermath of the agreement between EU and Turkey on the closure of the borders, about 50 protestors engaged in a sit-in at the train lines at the Idomeni camp, in the neutral zone between Greece and Macedonia. The group comprised refugees and immigrants of diverse ages and nationalities who promised to continue the sit-in as well as the occupation of the train line until the borders reopened.[9]

The tragic image of a Syrian child's drowned body lying on a Turkish beach, which shook the world in early September 2015, was a triggering event for protest actions in Spain.[10] Specifically, Alan Kurdi's death pushed hundreds to mobilise following the call of activists linked to the Plataforma de Inmigrantes de Madrid,[11] which spread mostly through social media platforms. In order to oppose European policies in the wake

of the refugee crisis and criticise the Spanish government's lack of commitment to respond to the pressing circumstances, participants gathered in front of the European Commission's headquarters in Madrid. On this occasion, participants blamed Europe's lack of solidarity and defined its policies as 'shameful' and 'outrageous', claiming for a change in policy-making driven by 'humanity' and 'solidarity'. Moreover, they criticised the attitude of public authorities (but also of media and of civil society more in general), often referring to migrants and asylum seekers as 'illegal human beings', which violates various international treaties.[12]

In Italy, protests against border controls spread across the country in support of the permanent 'no border camp' established in Ventimiglia (Liguria) in June 2015 after a group of migrants was blocked in their attempt to cross the border with France and climbed on the rocks to protest police eviction.[13] In September 2015, more than 400 people protested against border controls in front of the central train station in the city of Bologna. On that occasion, activists supporting the camp in Ventimiglia participated side by side with migrants, who provided direct testimonies on the difficulties of their lives in Italy. As reported on the website of a local Italian radio station, one of the participants justified on Facebook the choice to gather in front of the train station: 'We are here, few meters from the tracks, those tracks walked upon for hundreds of kilometres, through Serbia and Macedonia by Syrian refugees, from the tracks which, together with the cardboard suitcases, are so prominent in our memory of migrant people'.[14]

Common to the three contexts seems instead to be the reach of protest actions, which tend to be local almost everywhere. However, in Italy, decentralisation is a bit higher than elsewhere: here, 111 events (about 90 per cent of the total) had a district or town scope, whereas only two were organised at the regional level and ten at the national one. A different balance can be found both in Greece and in Spain. Whereas in both contexts a great bulk of events took place locally (respectively, 60 per cent in Greece and 50 per cent in Spain), a meaningful amount of protest also occurred at the regional level (40 per cent of Greek events and 15 per cent of Spanish)[15] and nationally (35 per cent of Spanish PEs).[16] If in general anti-immigrant protests are a bit more local than pro-immigrant ones,[17] the small differences disappear within countries.

Figure 11.2 reports PE statistics on the types of organisation present in the three protest fields. It is worth noting that about 52 per cent of the total PEs were carried out with no formal or informal organisation, most of them being relatively spontaneous protests by citizens or by migrants themselves. Unorganised PEs seem to be more associated with a pro-immigration frame in Greece and Italy, especially when migrants themselves protest against the border controls that block their journey towards other countries.[18] Particularly illustrative in this sense is the above-mentioned occupation by refugees at the Idomeni camp train lines as well as a 'march' staged by a group of about 30 refugees in the surroundings of the Italian city of Udine. After leaving the reception centre in which they were hosted outside Udine, they walked in the rain to reach a bus station, travelling to the Red Cross headquarters in the city centre, where they asked to be updated on their document situation and protested against the municipality's decision to employ them for free during their residence in the reception centre.[19]

On the other hand, political parties, including radical left- or right-wing parties, and sometimes local political institutions, have staged about 25 per cent of the total PEs with a dominant anti-minority frame (about

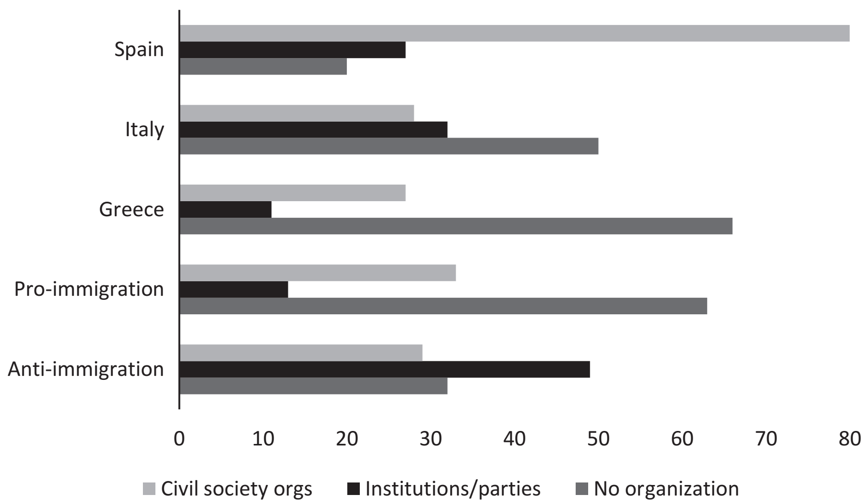

Fig. 11.2 Types of organisation by type of protest and country (%)

49 per cent of anti-minority protests and only 13 per cent of the pro-minority ones).[20] In this case, as well, the situation is different within the three protest fields: the presence of political parties is rather low in Greece (11 per cent of PEs), close to the overall mean in the pro-minority protests in Spain (26 per cent), and higher in Italy (32 per cent).[21] It is worth noting that in Italy, institutions and parties are present in only 11 per cent of pro-minority protests and in as many as 54 per cent of the anti-minority ones,[22] while in Greece and in Spain, political parties participated in pro-minority protest only.

Emblematic in this respect is the involvement in the anti-immigration front of the Italian Lega Nord, a prominent right-wing party represented in both the national and the European parliaments. Local leaders and supporters of the party have been involved in a series of protests against the reception of migrants within local facilities, claiming that help and support should be given to 'Italians first'. For example, in April 2015, one of these events was organised in the city centre of Como (in the north of Italy),[23] while in August of the same year, the Lega Nord organised a demonstration and a sit-in in Temù (a town in the northern province of Brescia) that saw the participation of hundreds of citizens who joined in the attempt to 'stop the migrants' invasion'.[24] Most notably, the leader of the Lega Nord, Matteo Salvini (also a member of the EU Parliament), fuelled the anti-immigration front with his almost daily declarations to the media. Particularly during the electoral campaign for the regional election (which took place in May 2015), Matteo Salvini took a stand against the sheltering of refugees—for example, advocating for the razing of a large-scale building where several migrant families were living, and denouncing the complicity of left-wing parties in hosting terrorists on the national territory.[25]

On the contrary, in Greece, radical left parties such as the Communist KKE actively engaged in supporting refugees, both with solidarity actions such as food distribution (as in Idomeni, October 2015)[26] and using protest mobilisation (Thessaloniki, March 2016)[27] directly in the hotspots. It is worth noting that Syriza, at that time the ruling party, also mobilised to support refugees' rights, criticising the contested EU–Turkey agreement.[28] In Spain, as well, leftist parties actively supported pro-immigration protests, as on September 2015, when Podemos, Izquierda Unida, and

the same PSOE protested for increased refugee rights at the European level, both in Madrid and in Barcelona.[29]

Finally, civil society organisations—including trade unions, social movement organisations, and NGOs—staged about 31 per cent of the total PEs, with no statistical differences between pro- and anti-immigration protests: they were present in 29 per cent of the anti-immigration protests and 33 per cent of the pro-immigrant ones. Spain is the only country in which civil society organisations have been dominant in the protest field (12 of 15 PEs), while in the other two countries their protests comprise only about 27 per cent of the total PEs.[30] In most of the protest events organised in Spain, in fact, semi-institutional actors (e.g. NGOs such as CEAR and Amnesty International) that work in the migrant and pro-refugee area have played an important role. Most mobilisation campaigns that unfolded in the country during the refugee crisis were in fact led by broad coalitions and platforms that involved various civil society actors, ranging from unions and NGOs to more autonomous activists and social movement organisations (e.g. Plataforma Somos Migrantes in Andalusia).[31] Alliances of this kind were built not only in the largest cities of the country but also in other medium-sized and smaller towns. For instance, the pro-human rights local organisation Iruñea ciudad de acogida (Pamplona, city of refugees)[32] launched a call for a demonstration in September 2015 with the support of relevant organisations and NGOs such as the Coordinating Network of NGOs in Navarra, Oxfam, Médicos del Mundo, and SOS Racismo.[33]

The specificities of the three protest fields also emerge by looking at the forms of protest action used by the protest actors (Fig. 11.3). Overall, the action repertoire was dominantly demonstrative: actors expressed their claims mainly by recurring to rallies, strikes, sit-ins, or similar forms of action in 67 per cent of the cases (about 65 per cent in Greece and Italy and 93 per cent in Spain). Generally speaking, activists engaged in anti-immigration protests were more likely to adopt these repertoires than were those active in pro-immigration protests (74 per cent against 63 per cent). However, several protests were also radical and have resorted to blitz, disruption of public events, occupation of squares, and even violence[34] in 25 per cent of the cases: 20 per cent in Greece, 27 per cent in Italy, and 33 per cent in Spain. These types of actions tended to characterise pro-immigration

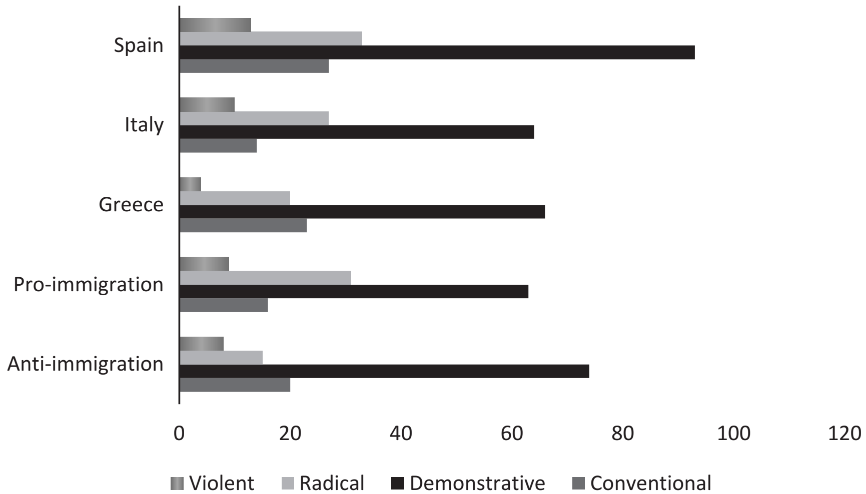

Fig. 11.3 Forms of action by type of protest and country (%)

claims (30 per cent), especially when carried out by immigrants themselves, while anti-immigration mobilisation has been much less radical (only 15 per cent of its protest was disruptive).[35] An exception is represented by the violent destruction of facilities identified as temporary shelters, a common strategy employed in Italy to oppose the hosting of refugee groups—for example, in the assault on the reception building in Licola, near Napoli, by 30 people armed with bars.[36]

As mentioned above, Italy has also witnessed several protests carried out by groups of refugees. Most of these protests were motivated by the reception conditions they have encountered or by their inability to leave the facilities in which they were located to continue their journey towards their intended destination. In August 2015, for example, refugees hosted at the hotel 'Di Franca Park' in Giugliano, a city in the province of Naples, threw mattresses and small pieces of furniture out of their windows to protest the conditions in which they were kept, particularly the overcrowding of rooms, the poor hygienic conditions, the lack of any medical assistance, and the missed delivery of the daily pocket money—a minimum amount of 2,50€ that the local prefecture was supposed to grant to the facility's hosts. Overall, the protest lasted less than four hours and was

resolved after the (pacific) intervention of police forces and mediation by the organisation providing reception. However, the event had a certain resonance within the media discourse, which insisted in particular on the act of 'trashing' the space where refugees were hosted.[37] In the same period, near Milan, a group of approximately 80 refugees blocked a trafficked street near the reception centre to protest the delays of the identification procedures. As police forces intervened, some tensions arose, but no one was injured or arrested. The protest harshened the overall discussion, though, with members of the institutions, particularly in the far right, stressing the illegitimate character of the protest and blaming the Italian government for the 'poor handling' of the migrant situation.[38]

Conventional forms of action, such as petitions, leafleting, press conferences, or assemblies have been used relatively less frequently (about 18 per cent), with no relevant differences between countries (Fig. 11.3). Violence, clashes with police, riots, fire-setting, or similar events have all remained rare: while they account for only 8 per cent of all PEs, they comprise only 4 per cent of Greek, 10 per cent of Italian, and 14 per cent of Spanish events—with no significant difference between pro- and anti-immigration types of protest.

Finally, protests have predominantly targeted political institutions (85 per cent of the cases in Greece, 92 per cent in Italy, and 100 per cent in Spain), with no differences between pro- and anti-immigration protests. Only in Italy have migrants and refugees themselves become the actual targets of the protest, in at least 38 per cent of cases as opposed to about 5 per cent in Greece and Spain. It is worth noting, however, that the level of the institutional targets varies between countries and between types of protest (Fig. 11.4). Pro-immigration protests have been much more oriented towards EU or other international institutions than were anti-immigration mobilisations which, consistent with their mainly local nature, were directed mainly towards local (regional or town) institutions. In Spain and in Greece, protests targeted mainly the EU or other international institutions, but while in Spain protests also targeted national governments, Greek protestors directed their claims towards local institutions and their representatives. The configuration of the Italian protest field is atypical in this regard, as the EU and other international institutions have been substantially ignored.

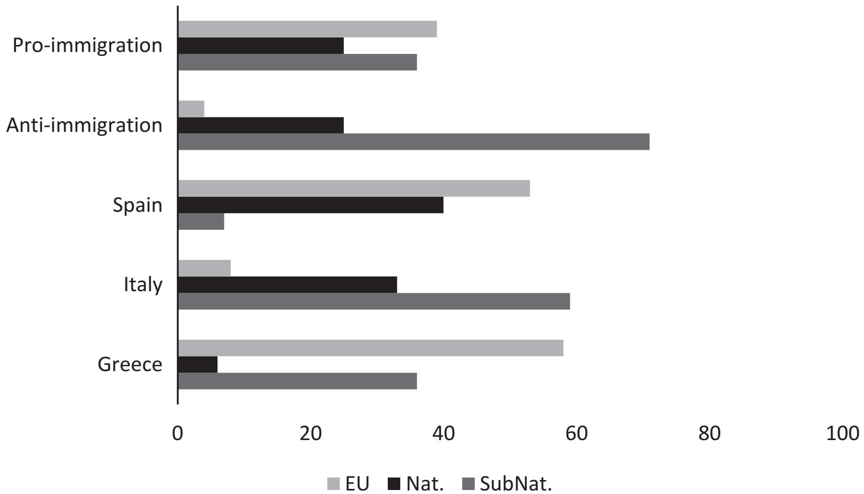

Fig. 11.4 Target levels by countries and types of protest (%)

Discussion and Conclusions

In this chapter, by leaning on the concept of protest field, we reconstructed different patterns of actors, frames, repertoires, targets, and interactions that characterised protest dynamics in Greece, Spain, and Italy around the refugee crisis.

Results from our analyses substantially confirm our initial hypotheses that protest fields were shaped by specific domestic political opportunities that somehow bound the strategies of the actors involved. In Spain, a very peculiar geopolitical situation minimised the migration trajectories and resulted in a less contentious field, where civil society actors and their solidarity actions and protests have been substantially unchallenged by counterparts. As reported in Alcalde and Portos' chapter in this book, the immigration issue did not polarise too much in Spain, and, as a result, protest on this topic has been very limited, with few protest events staged mainly by trade union, voluntary, and campaign organisations claiming for less restriction and more inclusive policies towards refugees, especially targeting EU institutions.

On the contrary, in Italy different contextual factors combined to shape a highly contentious field. Not only did we find a higher amount of protest on the immigration issue, but we also saw also a conflictual dynamic between pro- and anti-immigration actors. The exposure of the country to the migration trajectories during the refugee crisis has been politicised, albeit not exclusively, by more or less radical right-wing parties and organisations whose activists have been found at the front lines of (allegedly) spontaneous citizens' reactions in particular to refugee and migrant allocation and territorial distribution. At the grassroots level, far-right movements and organisations such as CasaPound and Forza Nuova mobilised wherever a refugee camp or hotspot was located. However, at the institutional level, the Lega Nord, free from government responsibilities and confronting a centre-left government, both exploited and radicalised the issue by exacerbating citizens' frustration towards top-down and undebated policy measures via media channels.

On the other side of the field, migrant and grassroots organisations have been left alone in mobilising a counter-frame based on inclusion and integration. Our data showed that party mobilisation is significantly associated with an anti-immigration frame, while spontaneous protests with a pro-immigration frame have often remained confined to the solidarity initiatives aimed at providing immediate and longer-term shelter to refugees reaching Italian shores and cities. As the crisis in Italy unfolded in tight connection with the government-led effort to enact a decentralised and yet top-down management of migration flows, it is not surprising that the targets of the protest have been prevalently national and local institutions, deemed simply incapable of governing the crisis and of countering the dominant anti-immigration frame.

Finally, we found the Greek protest field in between these two opposite situations, but a bit closer to Spain in several respects. On the one hand, here the anti-immigration frame received little support from the protest field actors. Even political parties, when they engaged in the field, mobilised for refugees and migrants. On the other hand, EU institutions were the main targets of the protests, especially after the EU–Turkey agreement. Moreover, the national government, which took over solidarity initiatives during rescue and shelter operations, has rarely been targeted, while local institutions, mainly in Athens, have been criticised when they

have been perceived as closed towards refugees and migrants. Nonetheless, the Greek protest field resembles the Italian one in one important aspect: in both cases, migrants and refugees have mobilised—sometimes on their own and sometimes side by side with grassroots networks and activists on the front lines.

Ultimately, results from the protest event analysis we performed allowed us to highlight several similarities and differences amongst the three contexts. Certainly, the multi-layered strategy though which we approached Google News as the main repository to identify protest events affects the generalisability of the portrayal that we sketched in this work. Moreover, a more detailed understanding of the mechanisms that regulated the unfolding of protest dynamics in the three protest fields would definitely benefit from qualitative analyses such as in-depth interviews or document analysis. However, we believe that, read in conjunction with the insights provided by the other chapters in this book, the analysis we performed provides useful insights into the systemic nature of the refugee crisis and offers a first and useful step towards a more genuine understanding of its inherent heterogeneity, dynamism, and complexities.

Notes

1. This section draws extensively on the chapters on Greece, Spain, and Italy authored respectively by Leonidas Oikonomakis, Javier Alcalde and Martin Portos, Lorenzo Zamponi, and Pietro Castelli Gattinara, to whom we are sincerely grateful.
2. https://trends.google.com/trends/explore
3. For Greece, we found three spikes (i.e. August and October 2015 and March 2016); for Spain, we found one (September 2015); in Italy, we found three (April, August, and September 2015). Notice that in June 2017, Google News substantially changed its interface (see https://www.blog.google/topics/journalism-news/redesigning-google-news-everyone/), limiting the ability to search news within specific time spans.
4. To circumvent the problems derived from the shutting down of GN España (Google 2015), we searched for Spanish news starting from the Spanish homepage of the search engine and using the tab 'Noticias'.
5. The codebook is available upon request to the authors.

6. We are grateful to Leonidas Oikonomakis and Martin Portos for their implementation of the research strategy in Greek and Spanish. We are also grateful to Paola Imperatore and Luca Scollo, who collected and codified part of the PEs for Italy. The whole process of the research strategy implementation was prepared by training sessions and followed by our constant supervision.
7. Original article available at http://www.primadanoi.it/news/cronaca/558969/Profughi-a-Torino-di-Sangro-.html
8. Original article available at http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/macedonia/12019712/Clashes-between-migrants-and-police-break-out-on-the-Greek-Macedonian-border.html
9. http://www.protothema.gr/greece/article/563733/eidomeni-prosfuges-prospathisan-na-autopurpolithoun/
10. Original article available at http://www.huffingtonpost.es/2015/09/02/ninos-turquia-refugiados_n_8077636.html
11. See the Facebook page of the Plataforma at https://www.facebook.com/Plataforma-de-Inmigrantes-de-Madrid-143193942511267/
12. Original article available at http://www.eldiario.es/desalambre/Centenares-personas-refugiados-Espana-ilegalidad_0_427308222.html
13. See the Presidio Permanente No Borders – Ventimiglia Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/pg/Presidio-Permanente-No-Borders-Ventimiglia782827925168723/about/?ref=page_internal
14. Original article available at http://www.radiocittadelcapo.it/archives/bologna-no-borders-presidio-ventimiglia-164551/
15. The regional level of administration is different in the three countries, although it always refers to an administrative level located between the town and the national level. In Greece, the term used to define this level can be translated as 'province', while in Spain and in Italy, it should be read as 'region'.
16. The Phi of the table crossing countries and level of protest action is .58 (significant at .001 level).
17. The Phi of the table crossing level of protest and type of protest (pro and anti-immigration) is .19 (significant at .05 level). Spain is excluded, as no anti-immigration protest has been reported there.
18. The Phi of the cross-tabulation between the absence/presence of an organisation and the type of protest (pro and anti-immigrant) is .29 (significant at .001 level).
19. Original article available at http://www.ilgazzettino.it/nordest/udine/profughi_marcia_palmanova_protesta_prefetto_udine-1243700.html

20. The Phi of the cross-tabulation between the absence/presence of institutions and parties in PE and the type of protest (pro or anti-minority) is −.38 (significant at .001 level).
21. The Phi of the cross-tabulation between countries and absence/presence of institutions and parties is .22 (significant at .01 level).
22. In Italy, the Phi of the cross-tabulation between type of protest (pro or anti-minority) and the absence/presence of institutions and parties in the migration protest field is −.47 (significant at .001 level).
23. Original article at http://www.laprovinciadicomo.it/stories/Cronaca/il-carroccio-protesta-in-via-borgovico-no-ai-profughi-in-caserma_1128209_11/
24. Original article available at http://www.bresciatoday.it/cronaca/profughi-solidarieta-a-san-colombano-di-collio-tensione-anti-accoglienza-a-temu.html
25. Original article available at http://www.imolaoggi.it/2015/04/27/hotel-house-occupato-da-quasi-2000-immigrati-salvini-questo-e-il-terzo-mondo/
26. Original article available at http://www.avgi.gr/article/10842/5945069/antiphasistike-synkentrose-apopse-ste-lesbo-anepithymete-e-chryse-auge-sto-ne
27. Original article available at http://www.902.gr/eidisi/ergatiki-taxi/77684/eidomeni-kilkis-maziki-apostoli-me-eidi-protis-anagkis-stoys-prosfyges
28. Original article available at http://www.avgi.gr/article/10842/5945069/antiphasistike-synkentrose-apopse-ste-lesbo-anepithymete-e-chryse-auge-sto-ne
29. Original article available at http://www.rtve.es/noticias/20150912/toda-europa-sale-calle-solidaridad-refugiados/1217341.shtml
30. The Phi of the cross-tabulation between countries and the absence/presence of civil society organisations in the protest field is .30 (significant at .001 level).
31. For more information, see http://www.observatoriodesigualdadandalucia.org/iniciativas/plataforma-somos-migrantes
32. For more information, see https://erabaki.pamplona.es/processes/9/f/35/proposals/31?feature_id=35&locale=es&participatory_process_id=9
33. Original article available at http://www.eldiario.es/norte/navarra/ultima_hora/manifestacion-Pamplona-refugiados-inaccion-instituciones_0_454604699.html

34. Violent actions included acts of vandalism, fire-setting, and clashes with the police. Those forms of action are included in what we qualify as disruptive: they account for 8 per cent of the total PEs, about 3 per cent in Greece, 10 per cent in Italy, and 13 per cent in Spain.
35. This is the only statistically relevant difference found on the forms of action: the Phi is .17 (significant at .05 level).
36. Original article available at http://corrieredelmezzogiorno.corriere.it/napoli/cronaca/15_aprile_28/con-spranghe-contro-migranti-devastato-centro-accoglienza-1e19cf80-ed72-11e4-8c01-3d3dc911e641.shtml
37. On this episode, see, for example, http://www.ilmessaggero.it/primopiano/cronaca/immigranti_devastano_hotel_rivolta_soldi-1183911.html; https://www.salernonotizie.it/2015/08/07/immigrati-devastano-hotel-in-campania-dateci-soldi-e-condizioni-migliori/
38. Original article available at http://www.lastampa.it/2015/08/24/italia/cronache/protesta-dei-migranti-traffico-in-tilt-verso-milano-MZ1FBZu1s6cKTxjeObsdKK/pagina.html

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12

Contentious Moves: Some Conclusions

Donatella della Porta

Throughout the course of our research, we aimed at combining social movement studies with migration studies, with particular attention to critical theories (Garelli and Tazzioli 2013), in order to address continuities and ruptures in the mobilisation in solidarity with refugees during the long summer of migration. In this final chapter, I will summarise the results of our work along the four dimensions presented in the introduction: the contextual threats and opportunities during a critical juncture within late neoliberalism; the acts of resistance and acts of solidarity that challenged those threats and created opportunities; the organisational resources for the protests; and the framing of refugees' rights and citizenship.

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The Context: Beyond Citizenship Regimes

The mobilisations in solidarity with refugees were influenced by some contextual characteristics: first and foremost, by the politics of migration within a critical juncture characterised by a crisis of neoliberalism (della Porta 2015) and the specific conceptions/conditions for migration it brought about. The contentious politics around migration during the 'crisis' has been affected by the specific migration regimes produced by the social formation that regulated the interactions between state and market. While always heterogeneous—addressing different forms of migration simultaneously—migration politics has also been influenced by some specific characteristics of the conditions for migrants. This has been often synthetised in the terms used to address them: from the migrant workers and naturalised migrants of the Fordist society to the illegal (undocumented) migrants of the crisis of that model, and the asylum seekers (but also deported), forced migrants—exiled, *desaparecidos*, corps—produced by the neoliberal need for cheap labour in the global trend towards what Harvey (2009) referred to as 'accumulation by dispossession'.

Our research looked at a specific moment, often defined as a crisis. While the term 'crisis' is not new, it tended to be generalised in 2015 even in countries that had criticised its previous use (see Kleres' chapter on Sweden). While refuting the definition of the crisis as stemming from the number of refugees, we noted that the long summer of migration exposed the weakness of the neoliberal migration regime in a moment in which the forced migration of many individuals interacted with the long-lasting consequences of the financial crisis. In our research model, we distinguish in fact between *time of continuity* and *time of change* as addressed, with attention to macro, structural conditions, within neoinstitutional analyses of critical junctures as sudden disruptions of routines. As noted by Kenneth Roberts (2015, p. 65), as forms of change endowed with some specific characteristics, 'critical junctures are not periods of "normal politics" when institutional continuity or incremental change can be taken for granted … They are periods of crisis or strain that existing policies and institutions are ill-suited to resolve'. In fact, they produce changes described as abrupt, discontinuous, and path dependent (della Porta

2017). In the long summer of migration, action and debates on migration accelerated, with the wave of people crossing European borders and travelling a long route all over Europe. Migration then emerged as a central concern.

The relevance of crises has often been mentioned in analysis of poor people's movements. Research on the movements of the unemployed has indicated that, although their prevalence is not directly correlated with unemployment rates, such protests have increased in times of economic depression (della Porta et al. 2015a, b). Similarly, movements on migrants' rights have developed around some critical moments. In general, capitalism triggers a racially structured society, as 'the global expansion of capitalist modernity (intertwined with questions of race) did not produce a homogenisation or a levelling of world economy and labour, but rather a ceaseless proliferation of differences, heterogeneities and hierarchies' (Mellino 2016). The protests around the long summer of migration are embedded in a neoliberal critical juncture.

Movements on migrants' rights have in fact been triggered by a shifting balance of opportunities and threats. In Europe as well as North America, contentious politics developed after World War II around migrant workers' claims for citizenship rights. Later on, protests increased as, faced with economic crisis, governments started to restrict migration, illegalising migrants. Within this exclusionary trend, prospects for regularisation also fuelled contentious moments (Laubenthal 2007). Neoliberalism then made integration of legal migrants more difficult, with state strategies towards migrants developing around a mix of ethnic management and territorial encapsulation, but also co-optation and depoliticisation (Nicholls and Uitermark 2017). At the same time, an 'active citizenship agenda' has been oriented to 'transform migrant and indigenous populations into productive citizens through policy innovations such as nationalistic education programs, "forced volunteering"' (Tyler and Marciniak 2013, p. 146).

In the period we analysed, different political opportunities and threats emerged at multiple levels, with strengthening but also fragmentation of borders. Politics of selective assimilation (e.g., Coutin 2003a, b) have been accompanied by growing criminalisation, as 'Migrants are increasingly cast as the *objects* of securitized fears and anxieties, possessing either

an unsavoury agency (i.e., they are identity frauds, queue jumpers, people who undermine consent in the polity) or a dangerous agency (i.e., they are criminals, terrorists, agents of insecurity)' (Nyers 2003, p. 1070). Political opportunities and, especially, threats then developed at different territorial levels, as borders were blurred and fortified at the same time.

At the local level, our research points at the specific constraints and opportunities related to specific places along the route of migration. In particular, localities at the borders became important (such as Lampedusa or Lesbos) as points of arrival, but also as blockages along the way (such as in Ventimiglia or Calais). At points of passage or destination, particular locales were devoted to the containment of migrants through camps or as spaces of forced residence (as in Austria or in Germany). The control of migration in fact created camps as 'the space that opens up when the state of exception starts to become the rule', turning from a 'temporal suspension of the state of law' into a 'permanent special arrangement that, as such, remains constantly outside the normal state of law' (Agamben 2000, p. 39). Camps are spatial sites of exclusion: spaces of exception, 'places apart from the law, whose exclusion from the polis serves to legitimise sovereignty as a power to "ban" from belonging'. However, they are also centres for encounters and resistance. Moreover, informal camps were created by the migrants along their way—such as near the railway stations in Budapest or Vienna or in the parks of Serbia—or while waiting for crossing options, in Ventimiglia or Calais.

As the chapters on Greece or Italy or even Austria show, different territorial regimes have applied even within the same countries, as the domestic geography is fragmented into places of arrival but also of transit and final destination. Local opportunities have emerged, with a symbolic and practical role played by some mayors—as the chapter on Spain indicates, the very open opportunities in cities like Barcelona depend on the prominent role that issues related to migrant conditions (such as housing) and migrants themselves have played in the 15M, which supported the new city administration. In particular, the network of the so-called fearless cities or cities of change spread a welcoming message, even if concrete politics are still to be developed. Very closed opportunities, like in Ceuta and Melilla, also influence movement frames and strategies. As the chapter on the anti-migrant activities has

shown, mayors from the radical right have used their position to jeopardise the location of migrants in their territories, and movement–countermovement dynamics have developed.

However, the local conditions in terms of creation and re-creation of borders were often dictated at the transnational level: EU decisions impinged on the influx of migrants and their management, but individual countries also chose to close their borders, generating emergencies as those decisions reverberated in other countries where migrants were deported or forced to stay. EU politics—mainly Dublin 3, Frontex, and then the agreements with Turkey—had a strong impact. Dublin 3 constrains migrant routes, with deportation to so-called secure third countries, which are often unwilling or unfit to accept refugees. Frontex is accused, in particular, of imposing dangerous routes that often end in tragedy for migrants, thousands of whom have lost their lives in the Mediterranean Sea. The lack of capacity of the EU to govern the influxes of people also left countries free to introduce their own turning points, either closing their borders or letting migrants pass through. The alternance of opening and closing of borders in different countries affected the mobilisation, often with temporal sequentiality—observed in the Hungarian and Serbian cases, but also relevant in Germany or Austria. As in the cases of the accords with Turkey or Libya, authoritarian regimes with appalling human rights records receive EU supports in order to keep migrants in their territories, even if in inhuman conditions. The so-called safe third countries—far from safe from the point of view of human rights violations—surrogate the lack of political capacity of the EU to distribute migrants across countries, producing what has been called a 'crisis of Europe'. As particularly the chapters on Greece and Turkey indicate, the agreement between Turkey and the EU strongly affects the context for the mobilisation, as does the evolution of the civil war in Syria.

At the national level, political opportunities changed, related with governments' different strategic uses of the crisis. The comparison of Serbia and Hungary (in Milan and Pirro's chapter) shows the importance of contingent opportunities in countries of passage with, on the one hand, the Hungarian leader Orbán using exclusive national appeals and, on the other, the Serbian leader Vučić (himself a refugee) playing the opposite role, opening up opportunities for the refugees. In addition, shifts in

opportunities emerged in the time covered by our investigation. So, in Turkey the failed attempted coup d'état against the regime, and the successful coup d'état by the incumbent leader Erdogan (which transformed 'Turkey into Syria', as Celik notes in his chapter), drastically reduced the opportunities for pro-migrant solidarity, if not in the limited forms of charity admitted by the dictatorship. Vice versa, in Greece the left-wing Syriza party in government co-opted some of the pro-migrant, solidarian actors.

In the countries of arrival and transit, but also in those of destination, the presence of migrants interacts with the definition of national sovereignty in the neoliberal crisis, as exclusive positions are mobilised by right-wing populist leaders. National pride and offended sovereignty dominated the discourse in the countries of first arrival (such as Italy and Greece) but also in those of transit (such as Serbia) in the critique of other countries' refusal to share responsibility, given the lack of capacity—or willingness—of EU institutions to manage hospitality to people in need.

As for the countries of destination, we saw that the different balances of rights and constraints on migration played a role. However, this did not necessarily play out in line with the traditional regimes of nationhood: counterintuitively, the 'exclusive', blood-based German regime emerged as more open, with multicultural United Kingdom and civic France instead sealing their borders. Rather, we saw the capitalist diversities affecting different migration strategies: the neoliberal United Kingdom is attractive because of the possibility to work without documents, Sweden for the opposite reason. However, asylum regimes also have an impact on migrants' moves, with very limited opportunities in countries like Turkey or Hungary, and more available prospects in Germany or Sweden. From the cultural point of view, the rooted conceptions of (domestic and international) solidarity fuel the link of national pride and migration, as Kleres' chapter argues for the Swedish case.

National differences notwithstanding, in time, all countries seem to converge towards increasing criminalisation of illegal migration and even solidarity activities, challenging the very principle of asylum rights (as in Austria). Repression in fact broadened from increasing detention and deportation of migrants, to the legal persecution of activists from grassroots groups but also NGOs. Legal provisions for regularisation and the

granting of asylum have been limited, and terms for expulsions eased even towards authoritarian regimes. As the chapter on anti-migrant activities indicates, radical right groups work as entrepreneurs of xenophobic closure, fuelling fears of what is defined as an invasion by dangerous 'others', accused of putting an entire civilisation at risk (see also, e.g., Devetak 2004; McKenzie and Hasmath 2013). Although percolating all over Europe, the rhetoric of the 'siege at the European borders' did not result in a general and uniform protest against migrants and refugees in all EU countries. As shown in the chapter about protest events, countries like Italy and Greece, two hotspots of the crisis, were nonetheless characterised by different protest fields—the former, highly contentious and split between protests in solidarity with refugees and public expressions of harsh, sometimes violent, were refusal, the latter, less contentious but largely animated by initiatives endorsing a pro-migration frame. Where migrants' flows limited, as in Spain, protest hardly emerged, but, when it did, it complemented solidarity actions carried out at the local level with mostly peaceful demonstrations in defence of refugees' rights.

The Repertoire of Action: Between Resistance and Solidarity

While structure counts, there is agency as well. In fact, migrants reacted to those conditions with their own acts of citizenship. While contextual threats developed through what Zamponi defined as forced emergencies, imposing constraints upon acts of solidarity, migrants resisted those limits by their moves, crossing borders and breaking fences or, as Milan reminds us, marching for hope in more or less visible and organised ways. In Turkey, the migrant barefoot march was a most eventful act of resistance, which affected activists as well as the migrants themselves. Solidarity actions followed these double moves, adapting to the needs of the human beings in transit.

Critical citizenship studies have pointed at the importance of various, visible and invisible, acts of resistance through which the very denial of rights is challenged by migrants through the appropriation of the 'right

to have rights'. Refugees' struggles are defined as acts of citizenship, bringing on new actors as activist citizens, creating new sites and scales of struggle (Isin 2008, p. 39). They are actions of appropriating citizenship (Moulin and Thomaz 2016) or transgressive citizenship (Rygiel 2016). As social movement studies remind us, in poor people's movements as well, resources are developed throughout the mobilisation itself, as each event empowers people, strengthens collective identification, and triggers further action (Piven and Cloward 1977). As observed with reference to the precarious movements, consciousness rarely precedes action—it is rather its outcome (Mathieu 2011).

Historically, the contentious politics of migrant rights has taken different forms according to the different migration regimes and acts of resistance to them. Migrant workers have participated in industrial strikes, house occupations, rent strikes. More and more, 'due to their vulnerable status, refugees employ spatial strategies to create visibility against the exclusionary nature of policies, but also as a means to create political conflicts' (Ataç 2016, p. 632). Invisibility as illegality is challenged by making oneself visible. Undocumented migrant students in the United States mobilised under the slogan 'undocumented, unafraid', organising 'coming out of the shadows' rallies, sit-ins in congressional offices, hunger strikes, and mocking graduations all over the country. Migrant activists have used hunger strikes against deportation. Grief activism developed in the Caravan for the 70,000 *desaparecidos* at the Mexican borders, or in the rituals of solidarity around those who died crossing the Mediterranean (Kron 2016)—at least 3072 migrants in 2014 and 3700 in 2015 (Rygiel 2016). This was expressed in Canada by the slogan 'Lift your faces in pride, for they have stolen everything but our dignity'. Similarly, the Caravan tour in Germany spreads feelings of pride; the same is true in France, where the march from Paris to Nice is recalled as 'something exceptional' as 'there is a need to act, to march in order to generate ideas and foster a spirit of initiative; it is often during action that things are built, developed and done at their best' (in Monforte and Dufour 2011, p. 203). Protest per se represents a challenge to invisibility since, as an activist noted, 'We have made ourselves visible to say that we are here, to say that we are not in hiding but we're just human beings' (cit. in McNevin 2006, p. 144).

Besides the political geographies, repertoires of action are specifically influenced by the spatial construction of camps and borders, fences and corridors in countries of arrival, transit, and destination. During the long summer of the refugees, acts of solidarity, but also of resistance, have developed inside and around the camps: those created to imprison the migrants, but also those built by the exiled at the voluntary or forced stops along their routes. As Zamponi noted, especially in the beginning of the long summer of migration, there was much social direct action moved by emergency, especially at the (many) borders. While addressing the pressing needs absorbed all energies in the peak of the critical moments, political claims were later put forward in more or less disruptive forms of protest. While solidarity activities took time in the beginning, involvement in them then provided the basis for the legitimacy, as ties of trust are built in struggle (Cappiali 2016a, b). So, if direct help was most needed at the moment of arrival, civil disobedience accompanied migrants along their route, and demonstrative protests for the integration of migrants emerged at their destination.

Our research has shown the transitoriness in space and time of the acts of resistance as well as those of solidarity. Besides the influence of the closing and opening of political opportunities on the repertoires of action (with, e.g., more insider strategies in the 'cities of change' and more direct action in Ceuta and Melilla), the research also points at an evolution over time, moving from help in crisis to political calls for the recognition of rights as citizens. As shown in detail in the chapters on the Greek and Italian experiences, the emergencies of the massive arrivals, but also the dramatic conditions of the people walking long and dangerous routes, prompted a focus on social direct action oriented to helping the people in need through food and clothing, but also rituals of welcoming. In countries of destination, welcome initiatives aimed at providing housing but also legal information and language skills.

The very criminalisation of solidarity often transformed these acts into civil disobedience, increasing their disruptiveness—as on several occasions in Italy where, as shown in the chapter by Andretta and Pavan, protest consisted of taking over or even trashing reception facilities to prevent the temporary hosting of refugees' groups. While activities of

advocacy for migrant rights and the development of alternative knowledge oriented to influence public opinion did remain relevant, the development of more politically oriented claims through marches and protest campaigns tended to become more significant over time. So, with the passing through of migrants, solidarity groups created to provide first help then moved on to helping migrants elsewhere (such as in the case of the Austrian solidarity groups built at the borders following the refugees deported in Croatia) or organising more political forms of claims making with those who remained (as with the occupation of hotels in Greece). Politicisation of solidarity also developed in countries like Sweden in order to oppose restrictions on refugees' rights. In particular, the social movement organisations (such as the No Borders) organised international camps and international protests at symbolic locations such as Lesbos or Calais.

The Organisational Structure: Between Nets and Fragments

Social movement studies have stressed that organisations are important for protest, especially when social bases are more difficult to mobilise. The potential for the mobilisation of poor people's movements is strengthened by the capacity of the various groups to generate or be part of societal networks, something that is eased during cycles of protest (Tarrow 1989). Given the refugees' lack of material and symbolic resources, protest requires broad networks of different social movement organisations. The resource mobilisation approach has seen social movement organisations as often formed by committed activists who take up the concerns of social constituencies to which they do not belong (McCarthy and Zald 1977), but for which they act out of a sense of solidarity (Giugni and Passy 2001). Different collective actors (voluntary associations, social movement organisations) might support different types of mobilisations. As critical citizenship studies have suggested, however, the challenge to the existing order is often developed by the excluded, who trigger the building of coalitions for an extension of rights.

In the historical evolution we have mentioned above, complex networks of activists have claimed rights for migrants. In various moments, immigrant rights organisations have interacted with innovative union activism, developing strategies for gaining support in working communities, not just the workplace (Nicholls and Uitermark 2017). While formal organisations (from left-wing to religious) have certainly been influent in supporting migrants—especially since the 'sans-papiers' struggle in the 1990s (Simeant 1998)—research has pointed at the growing importance of self-organised groups, with informal organisational structures. In autonomous migrant organisations, speaking-for-oneself also aims at establishing a political practice 'through which these social actors escape their normalising representation and paternalistic treatment, as especially NGOs were often criticised for' (Ataç et al. 2015, 8).

Our research has confirmed that the organisational structure of the solidarity movement is characterised by a segmented net of nets, of old and new groups. Not only did already existing organisations mobilise in solidarity with the refugees, but the neoliberal critical juncture triggered the emergence of new groups: less politicised (at least initially) collectives of concerned citizens in places of arrival or blockage, but also new umbrella organisations for the co-ordination of more experienced activists. As in Lesbos or Pantelleria, but also at the Austrian border with Croatia, the Italian border with France, and the French border with the United Kingdom, people with no previous experiences in solidarity activities converged in bringing blankets and food, in some cases helping at border crossings by providing information or supporting the march by providing train tickets or car rides (such as between Hungary and Austria). In transit like the migrants themselves, the movement structures seem to be in the making, with resources constructed in action, through the addressing of pressing needs and the building of trust.

Like the action repertoires, the organisational structure is also influenced by the location within the migrant route. In the places of first arrival, we found a most dense field of action. Large (professionalised) NGOs are present together with more horizontal (politicised) social movement organisations, but also local (non-politicised or differently politicised) groups. Lesbos and Lampedusa have been major spaces for encounters between these different actors, endowed with different

organisational strategies and structures. The complex set of actors that mobilised at refugees' arrivals, which we found in our own research, is thus described in ethnographic research on the Lesbos Island:

> tourists who overstayed their visit and became volunteers; others who travelled from various European countries specifically for that purpose; solidarians from all over Greece; and local volunteers who have been active for years. Volunteers waited on shore and welcomed newcomers as they stepped out of water. People distributed sandwiches, bottles of water, dry clothes, shoes and hats to people on the move. Others visited camps and delivered food, clothes and medicines. Finally, people cleaned up encampments and beaches of the remains of life vests and torn dinghies. Informal, mostly, groups coexist and, sometimes, cooperate with renowned national and international NGOs and intergovernmental organisations (INGOs) who have turned Lesvos into their new 'field'. (Rozakou 2015, p. 194)

Here, free spaces are created in which several different actors interact. These are spaces of encounters, with co-operation but also competition between varied groups, with different preferences in terms of strategies of action and organisational structures, linked to different material and symbolic reforms. This is most visible in the structures of the various camps where migrants are located. Again in Lesbos, it has been noted that refugees are spread throughout three camps with different orientations, each comprising 'a set of structures—medical "room", tents, ISO containers, utensils—cramped into a few hundred square metres, that provide the necessary facilities for cooking, sleeping, storing, providing (medical) care etc. The camp is bounded, clearly demarcated in space, with its own entrance, assembly point, signboards etc. and markers of its separate identity' (Papataxiarchis 2016, p. 3).

At the local level, rainbow alliances might develop, notwithstanding some tensions. This was illustrated in Austria, with the mobilisation of first-timers, but also in Greece, Italy, or Spain, where solidarity practices develop at very decentralised levels—in barrios or neighbourhoods—oriented towards direct action of help by providing food and shelter, but also sensitising the public against a vision of migrants as dangerous others and, sometimes, physically opposing the actions of

vigilantes or the radical right and the moral panic, which Castelli Gattinara describes in his chapter.

While the organisational structure of solidarity is in transition—as are the migrants themselves (see, e.g., Lesbos)—in general, the networks along the route are influenced by the presence of previous social movements, with specific national traditions in dealing with migrants and refugees (as emerged from the comparison of Germany and Sweden). As Zamponi noted for the Italian case, however, the mobilisation is only partially rooted in historical tradition, given the continuous emergence of new groups. Additionally, the intensity of previous waves of protest seems reflected in the degree of commitment to migrant rights on the left—with similar forms of horizontal mobilisations in Greece and Spain, but also in Turkey, notwithstanding the enormous differences between these countries in terms of the numbers of migrants arriving during the long summer of migration (with, e.g., Lesbos as an entry point for large numbers and Ceuta and Melilla instead sealed by high fences). The 'professionalisation of the borders', in Greece as in Austria, produces a constant reshuffling in the relations between the various actors in the solidarity field.

Migrants and refugees themselves engage in the struggle, particularly in the crisis hotspots like Italy and Greece, thus pointing to the progressive construction of a new collective subjectivity raising claims for fair and just reception conditions, but also manifesting the signs of strong frustration arising from the impossibility of completing the coveted journey towards the final destinations. On some occasions, migrants' protests merge, reinforce, or find support in those of local activists; but more often they are carried out autonomously and through the adoption of radical repertoires. This, on the one hand, directs attention towards migrants' grievances and gives visibility and resonance to their messages; but, on the other, it is taken as a sign of 'ungratefulness' and quickly becomes a strong argument to support actors in the anti-immigration front and their view of the 'enemy in our houses'.

Co-ordination beyond the local level is also 'on the move' (and in the making). The heterogeneity of organisational structures and visions, as well as the lack of reciprocal acknowledgement between grassroots groups and NGOs, increases the challenges to the construction of a transnational

movement. While there is no relevant national co-ordination, transnational ties emerge as networks of national groups and cross-national exchanges between near and distant places. In these emerging interactions, the cross-national exchanges are influenced by the specific characteristics of the national groups—for instance, in Calais between the less political UK activists and the more political French activists, or the more multinational Belgians. While some groups, like No Borders, are more committed to the creation of international ties through various transnational activities—as Alcalde and Portos stress in their chapter on scale shift—the migrants' very presence makes the contentious politics on refugees inherently transnational. Some important institutional resources for transnational brokerage are moreover provided by the left-wing members of the European Parliament.

The Framing: Between Citizenship and No Borders

Mobilisation relies not only on relational structures but also on the activation of cognitive and emotional mechanisms. An injustice frame must be created, assigning responsibility for unjust situations to a political authority. This also happens mainly 'in action', as activism itself supports the development of a positive vision of the self (Maurer 2001). As for other 'poor people's movements', the refugees' protests must challenge the common definition of a stigmatising identity by constructing an insurgent conception of citizenship, detaching citizenship rights from territorial belonging. As critical citizenship studies have stressed, the acts of citizenship performed by activist citizens empower the 'excluded' by bringing about counter-hegemonic visions of the self and the other. Opposing a vision of citizenship as naturally exclusive, acts of resistance point out that it (as well as the borders) is fundamentally contested (Ataç et al. 2016).

In the historical evolution we outlined, the rights of migrant workers were initially claimed in the name of their integration into the national economy. Later on, claims for regularisation, for naturalisation, and against deportation have also been justified by the long-lasting relations of the migrants with the host country and their assimilation into it

(Laubenthal 2007). The weaker the resonance of these claims, the more attention has shifted to the legal rights to protection—the rights to refugee status, asylum, or at least safety from deportation. While legal definitions also point at special conditions, neoliberal displacement led to the development of frames of resistance pointing at common humanity. So, in Hamburg in 2013–2014, slogans and banners reminded the public that refugees were survivors of war due to past and present colonialism ('We did not survive the NATO war in Libya to die on the streets of Hamburg' and 'We are here because you destroy our countries') (Meret and della Corte 2016).

Our research showed that the framing of the issue cleaves the pro-refugee field between hospitality and solidarity, between humanitarian and political visions, between claims for integration and for the right to move. While there is agreement that the crisis is not produced by the number of refugees but rather by the lack of willingness/capacity of institutions at different levels to address the arrivals, there are differences in the diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational framing.

In terms of motivations, as in other 'poor peoples' movements', those on migrant rights have mobilised emotions in action and framing. Research on protests against deportation has shown the importance of moral emotions as 'anger over a political decision form[s] the emotional basis that has to be transformed into morally loaded emotions like moral outrage' (Rosenberger and Winkler 2014, p. 168). The emotional work takes on different characteristics at different stages of the protest:

> at the very beginning of case related protests, negative emotions like anger, fear, and disappointment, as well as the more morally loaded emotion of outrage, function as a catalyst for moral shocks in order to draw people into action. Yet, at a later protest stage, positive emotions of joy and happiness are better able to keep people motivated for further actions by attributing success/effectiveness to past protest efforts and generating hope for future success, such as the suspension of the deportation order. (Rosenberger and Winkler 2014, p. 175)

In the mobilisation of refugees, however, tensions within the networks of support have been noted with reference to the very understanding of

the motivations for collective action. Various groups converge on a concept of solidarity, although the understanding of that concept varies. As noted for Lesbos, 'NGO and INGO employees embrace a professional rhetoric, whereas solidarians, rather than defining their activities in terms of 'service' to 'beneficiaries', abide by the principles of egalitarian and empowering relatedness … 'solidarity drivers', solidarians and volunteers overtly challenged these assumptions and introduced sociality as a rehumanising process' (Rozakou 2015, p. 194). While the humanitarian narrative promotes a compassionate welcome against oppression, groups such as No Borders criticise the very organisation of food distribution, which they see as promoting the identification as victims. Reciprocity as hospitality overcomes a humanitarian vision of the act of giving as expressing compassion (Fassin 2005). In a critique of humanitarianism, calls for offering compassionate hospitality to refugee victims are overcome by claims of solidarity across borders. In this analysis, 'At sites like Calais, an ethos of solidarity (as opposed to hospitality) is shown to open new avenues for collaboration and engagement, by attending to such moments of disruption, rather than reinforcing specific representations of the outsider' (Millner 2011, p. 322).

Our research confirms the different (and contested) conceptions of compassionate help or right to hospitality (Squire and Darling 2013). As the chapter on Austria indicated, as did the one on Spain, motivations to mobilise in solidarity with refugees are favoured by moral shock linked to private or public experiences, but are also often embedded in sensitivity to issues of displacement, often coming from a personal history or (as in Lesbos) from the history of a place. Memories of direct or indirect experiences of migration as well as direct knowledge of refugees intensify mobilisation. However, even within a common moral shock for the violation of human dignity and the spreading of compassionate feelings and injustice frames—as highlighted in the comparative chapter about German and Swedish activists—tensions emerged between emotions such as compassion and pride, fear and pity, as feeling rules developed around discourses of crisis and emergency, solidarity but also national identification. We also noted emotional shifts, with negative emotions of anger and outrage triggering activism, but also positive feelings of joy and empowerment keeping mobilisation alive. From Turkey to Sweden,

chance encounters with migrants triggered strong emotional responses from previously non-mobilised citizens but also from activists. In Turkey, in particular, after the emergency laws, the shared status of refugeehood strengthened linkages between migrants and local activists, which are also subject to strong and arbitrary restrictions in their activity and movements. In Greece, the historical experiences of flows from the countries (for instance, for the Muslim Cretans) also create empathy—similarly to the personal experiences of those in Austria who had entered the country as refugees themselves during the wars in former Yugoslavia.

In terms of the diagnostic frames, the degree of politicisation varies among the different groups and countries. So, in Greece, solidarians acted on a highly politicised vision of solidarity, volunteers expressed a sense of agency, humanitarians held a professional vision of commitment, local citizens acted out local habits and knowledge (Papataxiarchis 2016). The tradition of involvement of social movements on migrant rights and the embedding of the long summer of migration in recent waves of protest support the presence of political groups, more visible, for example, in Greece, Italy, or Spain than in Hungary or Serbia. In addition, political visions might be more integrated in a denser network such as in Sweden, and less so in a polarised one like in Germany.

In terms of prognostic frames, especially within a more politicised vision, a tension emerges between claims for integration and for freedom of movement. While citizenship has always been 'two faced'—'the bearer both of subjection to sovereign power and of individual liberties' (Agamben 1998, p. 125)—a dilemma between assimilation and autonomy has been highlighted in the literature:

> The immigrant protests that have erupted across the globe in the last decade are a response to the 'exclusions, inequalities, hierarchies, securitizations' which have been affected by this refashioning of citizenship. Yet, inevitably, one of the main strategies of migrants and pro-migrant activists is to demand the rights of citizenship, however problematic or precarious this citizenship may have become. Driven by immediate humanitarian considerations, many migrant advocacy movements focus on challenging existing legal and political frameworks in order to gain migrants' rights and access to legal aid, welfare, and education … immigrant protests are 'acts' against

> the exclusionary technologies of citizenship, which aim to make visible the violence of citizenship as regimes of control. However, in order to effect material changes, protestors are compelled to make their demands in the idiom of the regime of citizenship they are contesting. (Tyler and Marciniak 2013, p. 146)

There is, however, another emerging vision that detaches rights from citizenship, developing within 'the autonomy of migration which understands migration as a social and political movement forming against attempts to control and govern it' (Ataç et al. 2015, p. 10). The definition of migrants, especially the separation between 'forced' and 'economic' migrants, is challenged by the claim that all humans move in order to survive. So, 'undocumented migrants are to be regarded as the true political activists in Calais, since in the act of crossing the border they assert a claim to a polis which includes all migrants … In fact, in a reversal of humanitarian and policy vocabulary, the economic migrant (who pursues a viable livelihood) is considered the most political of movers, for actively seizing what has been refused'.

Our research also points at the cleavage within the solidarity fields between different visions of inclusion, with the right to movement particularly cherished in countries of first arrival and transit, and integration stressed in countries of destination. As Oikonimakis' chapter shows for Greece and Zamponi's for Italy, there is also a shift in time, with the right to stay in dignifying conditions becoming more and more central with the passing of time. As Celik's chapter shows, in Turkey the barefoot march, that claimed the right to move, was also important for the promotion of the right to stay was the development of a shared identity in ethnic (Kurds) and/or religious terms.

Concluding Remarks

Our research took a snapshot of a specific—even if intense—moment in the contentious politics of migration. Further work is certainly needed in order to see how the potential threats and opportunities developed in that moment consolidated or mutated in the time to follow.

However, we see our contribution to social movement studies not only in the empirical investigations of a social movement that has rarely been studied through its toolkit of concepts and theories but also in addressing the ways in which this particular movement introduced challenges to those concepts and theories. In particular, we propose an analysis of an intense moment in which, in response to contextual threats, resources have to be created in action through the interactions of various players within densely populated arenas. By broadening the field of the actors observed, we hope to contribute to critical citizenship studies an analysis that considers but also goes beyond what have usually been seen as acts of solidarity, looking more broadly to what Monforte and Dufour (2013) call 'acts of emancipation' and Walters (2008) labels 'acts of demonstrations'. Looking at how acts of resistance interact with acts of solidarity, we point at the complex interactions in the contentious field of citizenship.

The research has singled out some tensions that need to be investigated further. First, we noted that in the struggle between closing and opening borders, citizenship remained a contested field. As has been noted, in fact, 'Whether we attempt to think citizenship "beyond the state" or reject citizenship as the constitutive ground of the political by highlighting alternative forms of political solidarity, and cultivating alternative vocabularies, what is clear is that citizenship is historically contingent and subject to disruption, rupture, and transformation when its contingency is exposed' (Tyler and Marciniak 2013, p. 154).

In this struggle, a tension is maintained between visibility and invisibility. As the very moves by migrants are defined as 'special disruption generated by the movements of the others' (Tazzioli 2015) or 'migrants' incorrigible presence' (de Genova 2016), producing visibility, visibility itself becomes:

> a crucial and contested matter in the government of migration. Indeed, both techniques for controlling and containing migrant movements and the possibility for migrants to escape mechanisms of capture often entail a struggle over visibility. Detecting 'clandestine' migrants, dodging identification procedures, abandoning migrants to die, becoming visible in order to be rescued at sea: all these actions, performed by states and non-state actors to govern migration and by migrants to escape controls or to avoid dying, are part of the daily 'border struggles'. (Tazzioli and Walters 2016)

Further, while the long summer of migration produced new collective resources for mobilisation for migrant rights, a tension remains between the autonomy of migrant struggles and the convergence of various struggles against neoliberalism. In fact, 'The plurality of subjectivities includes workers, the unemployed, different categories of immigrants (political and economic refugees, undocumented and documented immigrants, expatriates, etc.) and less obvious groups such as the indebted or what has been labelled the "precariat" and reflects the new economic and social divisions caused by capitalism'. In this situation, concepts such as refugees, migrants, and citizens are considered as divisive as they 'create borders between people. The division of people and countries by borders kills human beings daily. Abolish all borders! Stop the killing!' (March for Freedom 2014; in Agustín and Jørgensen 2016). The tension between integration and movements thus challenges the very definition of borders and citizenship, calling for further research.

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