Giovanna Di Matteo

MIGRANT SUPPORT VOLUNTEER TOURISM IN BORDER-ISLANDS

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Cover image: "Il mare alle spalle" *(Photo by Giovanna Di Matteo)*

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Introduction

I am finishing writing this book during an unique time in our history, following two years of the first global pandemic of the modern era, during which all human beings on the planet were forced to reconfigure their ability to travel. During this period, we faced the creation of unexpected (and unimagined) borders, confining us at various times to our houses, cities, regions and countries, while at the same time strengthening those already in place. Thus, to begin this introduction with the statement «we are living in the age of mobility» is truer than ever before, as confirmed by its facilitation of the rapid spread of Covid-19, followed by the even quicker resumption (at least in the West) of global mobility. However, it is simultaneously a dystopian declaration due to the confinement experienced in varying degrees between 2020 and 2021.

Moreover, the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic has increased the distance between those individuals who can (or must) keep moving and those who can (or must) remain immobile. This has raised the issue of what it means to possess freedom of movement, alongside the right to a secure home. Although these conundrums do not specifically form the topic of this book, I recognise that, as my focus is primarily on people on the move, these are aspects I cannot ignore.

This project originated in the idea that tourism and human migration are among the greatest manifestations of contemporary human mobility in a globalised world. At the same time, it is necessary to constantly bear in mind the interconnection between mobility and immobility – as summarised by Sheller (2018, p. 74) with the expression «(im)mobilities» –, as well as the relationship to justice and power. I have therefore framed this work in relation to the issues arising concerning mobility and, including: firstly, the scholarly debate from the mobility turn onwards (i.e. Cresswell, 2006; Sheller and Urry, 2006; Cresswell and Merriman, 2011; Merriman, 2012a; Faist, 2013; Sheller, 2018); and secondly, critical tourism studies,

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including those of Borghi and Celata (2009), Mostafanezhad and Hannam (2104) and Gibson (2021).

Numerous previous studies have considered the relationship between tourism and migration from various points of view, primarily viewing tourists and migrants as belonging to the same social group: firstly, tourism generated by return migration (Cerase, 1974; Bennett, 1979); secondly, multi-residence tourism (Ming, 1977); thirdly, tourism and entrepreneurial migration; fourthly, tourism and retirement migration and second homes (Williams and Hall, 2000a); fifthly, tourism as an aspect of diaspora; and finally, tourism as a migratory pretext (Dehoorne, 2002). Others have explored migration in relation to tourism development; for example, in the context of labour migration to a tourist destination, or by comparing both types of mobilities (Schapendonk, van Liempt and Spierings, 2015). However, apart from sporadic references to the contraction of tourism arising as a consequence of the presence of migrants, little research has been undertaken into the interaction between the arrivals of both tourists and migrants within a single geographical location (Turco, 2019).

In this book, I therefore attempt to initiate an analysis of this issue. At the core of this work lies the phenomenon of volunteer tourists, and more specifically those travelling to practice those activities I have termed "migrant support volunteer tourism". This book therefore focuses on defining those who travel to a border space outside their usual place of residence, for purposes that can be seen as self-centred and/or altruistic, with the aim of supporting migrants, either as independent volunteers or affiliated to an organisation or association.

There has recently been an increase in scholarly interest in volunteering within places of migrants' arrival, transit, reception and/or detention. However, the approach to this phenomenon has generally been to consider it as humanitarian work and a response or volunteerism, primarily producing studies and criticism from this perspective (e.g. Hyndman, 2000; Pallister-Wilkins, 2017b, 2018a). Why, then, did I decide to analyse this phenomenon utilising the lens of tourism studies?

Firstly, because we are in the "tourism age" (D'Eramo, 2017), when tourism has become (in economic terms at least) one of the most important industry of our time. Concurrently, there has been an increased focus on "kinder" forms of tourism, i.e. sustainable, ethical, slow and alternative. For a number of years, scholars have advocated the need for a more sustainable form of tourism, although, as noted by Butcher (2003), this "new moral tourism" has attracted similar criticisms as that directed towards mass tourism.

Secondly, the specific form of tourism examined in this book, unlike the "conventional" types, tends to cross and intersect the other major kind of human mobility, i.e. migration. I feel that this intersection, which has so far remained underexplored, opens up future possibilities and perspectives within the field of tourism and mobility studies. Consequently, this lens can focus attention on the mobile aspect of the act of volunteering abroad, i.e. holidaying in the context of migrant support. Tourists are such because they move; they are bodies (often accompanied by a fair number of objects) on the move, while volunteer tourists are specifically bodies on the move who are looking for the (im)mobilised bodies of the "less fortunate".

Moreover, tourist mobility enacts performative practices, impacting and transforming places; they cross stories and memories of places, and mobilise their assets (Giubilaro, 2016). Tourism is capable of creating «places to play» and «places in play» (Sheller and Urry, 2004, p. 207), demonstrating how space can be fluid and relational (Massey, 2005). This is true also for forms of serious leisure (Stebbins, 1996), i.e. volunteer tourism.

For this reason, I decided to explore the intersection between tourism and migration in terms of mobility, in particular as these produce and transform spaces with their practices (Lefebvre, 1991), as «tourism is not just a mental or intellectual engagement but an embodied or physical one» (Macdonald, 2008, p. 10). This is strictly correlated to its mobile nature. In fact, mobilities encompass a number of embodied practices, while the space in which they take place is not a neutral, blank and fixed background, but as argued by Cresswell and Merriman (2011, p. 7), should rather be considered as an ongoing process of «spacing», «placing», and «landscaping», thus giving form to the world.

Conceptualisations of specific types of spaces, such as borders, have developed and transformed over time, in accordance with this logic. The idea of the border as a line has led scholars to conceive them as borderlands, followed by the introduction of bordering as a dynamic process. Moreover, the space of the border only becomes a borderscape when it is recognised as traversed by bodies and relationships, discourses and practices, that reinforce (but can also counter) the logic of the border (Dell'Agnese, 2005; Brambilla, 2015a, 2015b).

European examples of spaces that have undergone this process of borderscaping include: Lampedusa; Lesvos; Idomeni; Calais; Ventimiglia; Ceuta; and Melilla. It is within all of these spaces that we find humanitarian actors working to support migrants. This raises the issue of the role played by volunteer tourists in this process, including, in particular, the impact of their role as tourists – besides that of volunteers –, along with the practices

involved. To answer these questions, I have focused on two case studies: the islands of Lampedusa and Lesvos. Over the previous two decades, islands on the southern and eastern borders of Europe have become emblematic places of migration dynamics, a process applicable from the Mediterranean Sea to the Canary Islands. Lampedusa, being situated in the central Mediterranean Sea, and Lesvos, in the Aegean Sea, have become the main stage of the European "border play", i.e. for a theatrical performance of a "borderisation" process (Cuttitta, 2012, 2014).

I have employed Cuttitta's (2014, p. 199) statement that «Lampedusa is more "border" than other border spots […] And yet, the geographical context alone would not suffice to explain why […]» to guide me while designing this work, as well as directing my choice to use these two islands as case studies. The island of Lesvos seems to have followed a similar path to that of Lampedusa, in particular between 2014 and 2015, when its borderness increased. This was not only in response to an increase in the number of migrants arriving on its shores, or from the point of view of policies, practices and discourses, but due to the unprecedented mediatic attention it received, both nationally and internationally.

These reflections raised a number of further issues, including the following: firstly, how and why has the phenomenon of migrant support volunteer tourism developed on these two islands? Secondly, once there, what representations of the islands do volunteers carry, and what direct experience of the islands' spaces do they live? Thirdly, how do they contribute to the borderscaping of Lampedusa and Lesvos? Finally, how does volunteer tourism generate a situated lived experience of space? I have thus commenced this book with an introduction to the core focus of my research: volunteer tourism.

In Chapter 1, I examine the broad definition given by Wearing (2001), before exploring both the positive and negative aspects of volunteer tourism. I then focus specifically on those aspects I conceive as "migrant support volunteer tourism", including identifying the main characteristics differentiating this from other more "conventional" forms of volunteer tourism. Finally, after defining the meaning of this term, my focus turns to volunteers and the spatial dimension of their experience.

In Chapter 2, I undertake an in-depth discussion of the theoretical and methodological framework of this book, focusing on the view of these phenomena as expressions of human mobility. I therefore retrace the conception of resistance and the possible forms and tactics of resistance against "Fortress Europe". I then contextualise these into the definition of the borderscape (Brambilla, 2015a, 2015b), followed by an examination of the role of space

in terms of (and beyond) its relational nature. The last section of Chapter 2 focuses on the methodology and methods employed.

In Chapter 3, I establish the context of the research, beginning with outlining the development of tourism on these islands. The second part of the chapter then outlines the migration policies and management as the basis of understanding the presence and work of volunteer tourists on both Lampedusa and Lesvos.

In Chapter 4, I present the fieldwork carried out for each of the two case studies. I start with a description of how volunteer tourism developed in Lampedusa and Lesvos, followed by my personal experience of participant observation. I then outline the specific organisations for whom I worked, explaining the reasons influencing my decision to select these in particular, and describing a volunteer's time both when engaged in volunteer work and during the accompanying periods of leisure. My aim is to present, from an insider's viewpoint, the setting of the experience of volunteer tourism on the two islands. This is then the starting point for the analysis of both the questionnaires and interviews I employed to gather the data for this study. Finally, I outline the profile of the volunteers who took part in my research. The general overview of the case studies and my research participants allows me to examine in further detail the relationships they created with the spaces of these two islands.

In Chapter 5, I investigate how, and on what terms, Lampedusa and Lesvos can be considered lived spaces (Lefebvre, 1991) for the volunteer tourists involved in migrant support. I chose to focus particularly on the spaces the volunteers inhabit outside their work, both during outings, as well as where they generally chose to spend their spare time. I found that volunteers worked almost exclusively within dedicated spaces, such as reception centres or facilities managed by NGOs, and therefore were only in contact with the remainder of the islands' spaces during their free time.

In the final chapter, I discuss whether volunteers tend to perceive their presence and work on these islands as forms of resistance to injustice. I analyse (also on the basis of participant observation) if, and under what conditions, volunteer tourism can be associated with some forms of resistance to the violence of the border, the injustice of unequal mobility, or to the political system through which they are produced. The analysis considers Lampedusa and Lesvos separately, while at the same time contrasting the context of each island and the related practices of volunteer tourists, with the goal of identifying how the different types of volunteer work, relationships, spatial practices, and enacted and lived spaces, can lead to potential for resistance to the border system called "Fortress Europe".

1. Migrant Support Volunteer Tourism

The new millennium holds promise of being both the "Century of Tourism" and the "Century of the Refugee". Never in history have there been so many refugees and tourists crossing international borders. (Russell, 2003, p. 833)

Currently, the clearest manifestations of current globalisation[1] and human mobility are tourism and migration. The two are closely interlinked, but present a number of complexities for researchers, as noted by Boyle, Halfacree and Robinson (1998):

At first glance, writing an introductory text on migration seems to be a relatively straightforward task. Migration [*or tourism*] is a simple concept. People move between places and we are interested, as geographers, in describing and understanding these patterns. However, when you think about and study the topic in detail, it becomes clear that migration [*or tourism*] is, in reality, extremely complex and multifaceted. This explains why there is such a large literature on migration [*or tourism*] in geography and other disciplines, and perhaps the hardest task is to order systematically such a diverse set of material in a logical and coherent manner. (Boyle, Halfacree and Robinson, 1998, p. 1)

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[1] According to the United Nations, the number of international migrants globally reached an estimated 272 million in 2019 (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2019), in the last International Migration Report (2017) they counted 258 million in 2017, up from 220 million in 2010 and 173 million in 2000. Of these, according to UNHCR 25,9 million are refugees and 3,5 million are asylum seekers. Furthermore, there are 41,3 million Internally Displaced People (UNHCR, 2019a). As for tourism, the UNWTO states that «international tourist arrivals grew 5% in 2018 to reach the 1,4 billion mark. This figure was reached two years ahead of UNWTO forecast» (UNWTO, 2019). In 2017 the total of international tourist arrivals was 1,32 billion, some 86 million more than in 2016 (UNWTO, 2018). The current situation concerning tourism has deeply changed due to the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, with UNWTO reporting a drop of 70% in arrivals during the first eight months of 2020 (UNWTO, 2020).

Any discussion of migration and tourism needs to consider the variety of forms in which they appear. Some individuals migrate in search of employment, as well as in response to: firstly, wars or political unrest; secondly, securing a retreat (i.e. in rural or coastal areas); thirdly, to escape the consequences of climate change; and fourthly, to improve their lifestyle. In addition, there are nomadic people for whom mobility is a way of life. Those impelled by these various motivations are then categorised as either legal or illegal, as well as; "economic migrants" (high-skilled or low-skilled labour); "asylum seekers"; "internally displaced"; and "environmental migrants".

Tourists also travel for a wide variety of reasons, and in search of various types of experiences, including: firstly, recreational purposes (e.g.: "Sun, Sea, Sand" tourism, rural and mountain tourism); secondly, educational or cultural reasons (e.g. sightseeing in urban areas, visiting museums, monuments, heritage and memory sites); thirdly, health (e.g. medical and thermal tourism); fourthly, business; fifthly, to undertake pilgrimages for religious reasons; and finally, to work in a voluntary capacity (e.g. volunteer tourism, au pair experiences, and woofing). At the same time, tourism has been analysed from a number of viewpoints, i.e. inbound, outbound, internal, and international. It has also been categorised in various ways, including as mass tourism, alternative tourism, sustainable tourism, and ethical or moral tourism.

A wide range of research has previously been undertaken into these two phenomena, both within and outside academia, as reviewed in depth in Chapter 2. However, little attention has been focused on the connections and interaction between the two phenomena and the groups of people involved. In this study, I therefore explore my contention that "migrants' support volunteer tourism", with the aim of adding to the current literature on this complex and multifaceted relationship. The current chapter defines the core element of my research, i.e. volunteer tourism. This is followed by an examination of the aspect I conceive as consisting of migrant support volunteer tourism.

1. Volunteer Tourism and its Critiques

The practice of travelling abroad as a volunteer commenced at the beginning of the twentieth Century (Wearing, 2004; Brown, 2005; Guttentag, 2009). It was subsequently developed on a larger scale with organisations including: the Voluntary Service Overseas in the United Kingdom (1958); the Peace Corps in the USA (1960); Australian Volunteers Abroad in Australia (1963); the Dutch SNV (1965); the Japan Overseas Corporation

Volunteers (1965); and the Canadian Executive Service Organisation (1967). Volunteer tourism has now become the fastest growing niche tourism market in the world (Vrasti, 2013).

The most widely recognised and widespread definition of volunteer tourism was given in *Volunteer Tourism. Experiences that make a difference* (Wearing, 2001), as follows:

> The generic term "volunteer tourism" applies to those tourists who, for various reasons, volunteer in an organized way to undertake holidays that might involve aiding or alleviating the material poverty of some groups in society, the restoration of certain environments or research into aspects of society or the environment. (Wearing, 2001, p. 1)

Such volunteering takes place largely (although not exclusively) in the global South, while the majority of volunteer tourists originate from Western Europe, the United States and Australia. The four main aspects characterising differing types of volunteer tourism are: firstly, the categories of those who volunteer; secondly, the goal (or object) of volunteer work; thirdly, the subject promoting the project; and finally, the funding system sustaining the project. When it comes to the goal of volunteering, such work has traditionally addressed two main categories of projects: environmental and community-based.

However, a number of organisations and companies also offer volunteer work programmes with refugees, and it is this type of volunteer tourism that lies at the core of the current study. This has enabled me to introduce a third group that cannot be included either among those who travel abroad to offer their voluntary services, nor to the local community that volunteers support with their work. Thus, some volunteer tourists are attracted to join projects working with refugees or migrants. A number focus on those already in the process of settling in to their new country, while others (as in Lesvos or Calais) are faced with a more complex situation, particularly as this work is frequently undertaken with those who have no intention of settling in where they are, but are attempting to reach other destinations. This issue is addressed in more detail in the following sections.

Since its first definition, scholars have increased their focus on volunteer tourism[2], touching on a number of different fields. Nonetheless, McGehee (2014) affirmed the need to instigate new approaches and theories, including

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[2] See monographic international journal issues such as *Tourism Recreation Research*, 28:3, 2003; *Annals of Leisure Research*, 12:3-4, 2009; or *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 22:6, 2014.

those drawn from geography. The growing number of critiques of mass global forms of tourism during previous decades have led to an increased demand for "alternative" forms, with volunteer tourism placed under various labels, including "niche tourism" (Novelli, 2005) and "new moral tourism" (Butcher, 2003). Some have labelled volunteer tourism in terms of "charity", "justice", "pro-poor" or "goodwill" tourism (Butcher, 2003; Scheyvens, 2007; Theerapappisit, 2009; Butcher and Smith, 2010; Rogerson, 2011). However, it is largely considered a form of alternative tourism (e.g., Wearing, 2001, 2004; Uriely, Reichel and Ron, 2003; McIntosh and Zahra, 2008; Guttentag, 2009). This distinguishes it from what is generally considered a less sustainable form, i.e. mass tourism. In addition, some researchers have defined it as ecotourism (Wearing, 2001; Coghlan, 2006; Gray and Campbell, 2007). Lyons and Wearing (2008) recognised that the reality of alternative tourism is complex, and can lead to potential inequities and challenges. Drawing on the views of Butler (1990) and Wearing (2002), they summarised it as follows:

Alternative tourism reconfigures the tourist destination as an interactive space where tourists become creative actors who engage in behaviours that are mutually beneficial to host communities, and to the cultural and social environment of those communities. From these alternative tourism interactions, tourists take home an experience which is potentially life-changing and, at minimum, impacts on the self in some way. (Lyons and Wearing, 2008, p. 6)

At the same time, Lyons and Wearing (2008, p. 6) argued that volunteer tourism is increasingly viewed and marketed «as a creative and non-consumptive solution to a wide range of social and environmental issues that manifest in diverse communities globally».

Wearing (2001) argued that one of the main characteristics of volunteer tourism is that each project or programme includes a certain degree of involvement with the local population. Participants thus seek «a tourist experience that is mutually beneficial, that contributes not only to their personal development but also positively and directly to the social, natural and/or economic environments in which they participate.» (Wearing, 2001, p. 1). This indicates that volunteering abroad can lead to self-development and offers an opportunity «to engage in an altruistic attempt to explore "self"» (Wearing, 2001, p. 3). However, there are also number of impacts on the local communities or environments.

Wearing (2001), advocated volunteer tourism as a means of addressing the issues arising from tourism taking place in local communities. In

particular, he suggested communities wishing to create a sustainable form of community-based tourism should include the principles and programmes of volunteer tourism, since they facilitate community ownership and control of both its management and resources. Volunteer tourism is also intended to facilitate cross-cultural movement of information, resulting in enhanced understanding. Wearing (2001) suggested that communities should therefore be made aware of the potential of volunteer tourism, through the assistance of volunteer tourism projects themselves, which can provide training and education to local communities.

The discussion on volunteer tourism can be included in the moral turn in tourism (Mostafanezhad and Hannam, 2014), which Caton (2012, p. 1907) stated «was long overdue, for those of us working in tourism studies operate on loaded moral territory, confronting a phenomenon that at once speaks of light-hearted pleasure and heavy social consequences». Caton (2012) also argued that the current increase in cultural studies focusing on tourism (including the application of postcolonial theory) have also examined the related ethics. This has included research into forms of tourism that tend (at least in part) to be ethically oriented, and have been considered as potentially counteracting the negative impact of mainstream tourism.

Moral Encounters in Tourism (Mostafanezhad and Hannam, 2014) undertook an in-depth analysis of morality and tourism, emphasising the existence of a wide range of literature concerning the ethics of travel and ethical experiences, as well as research into tourism itself (Castañeda, 2012). However, there has been little academic discussion of the role of morality (see Butcher, 2003). Castañeda (2012) noted that the representation of tourism has changed over time, in particular being no longer viewed as either completely good or totally bad. Thus, by the 1990s: «we started to define how to make tourism ethical instead of asserting that it was morally good or bad in all social contexts» (Castañeda, 2012, p.48). In addition, subsequent scholars, rather than giving generalised moral remarks, concentrated on the role of ethics in relation to various experiences. This resulted in tourism studies starting to raise issues concerning its potentially unethical nature, with Butcher (2003, p.2) highlighting the following question: «wouldn't you be better off at home?».

Some key characteristics of this new phase in tourism are those described in works exploring increasingly mainstream tourism practices, such as sustainable tourism, responsible tourism, fair trade tourism and ethical tourism. At the same time, new niche markets have now developed, including volunteer tourism. Wilk (2001) argued that:

The moral issues raised by consumption therefore have a dual nature (at least); they are both grounded in common human experience, in practical reason, and at the same time they are part of public discourse about morality, a discourse that has a broader cultural, symbolic and political context. (Wilk, 2001, p. 255)

At the same time as the emergence of these theorisations concerning ethical tourism, a number of critiques have also arisen, arguing the need to distinguish a tourism that is ethical, and against which all other forms should be considered.

A number of authors have taken a separate approach. For example, the concept of volunteer tourism has been widened and complexified, as in Daldeniz and Hampton's (2011) distinction between "VOLUNtourists" (whose main motivation is more strictly connected to helping out and contributing to a project in conjunction with the local community) and the "volunTOURIST" (whose main motivation is the holiday in itself). In addition, Brown (2005) underlined this distinction, employing the terms "volunteer-minded" and "vacation-minded". Furthermore, Uriely, Reichel and Ron (2003) considered a more inclusive notion of volunteering in relation to tourism, based on the literature of postmodern tourism. They argued that this could be seen as part of the horizontal de-differentiation processes (Munt, 1994), in which differences considered "conventional", between various fields of social activity are progressively diminished. In particular, they attempted to demonstrate the breadth and complexity of the phenomenon, and work on the definition of the boundaries of volunteer tourism, including its influence on selfhood, and on the nature of guest-host relationships. Thus, volunteer tourism can be seen to challenge the dichotomies rooted in traditional tourism studies, i.e. work/leisure, host/guest, and outsider/insider.

The above discussion may suggest volunteer tourism can be viewed as a panacea. However, there are also a number of potentially negative impacts, which I analyse in further detail in the next section. Wearing (2001) and authors such as Uriely, Reichel and Ron, (2003) recognised that volunteer tourism may not always result in positive outcomes and can face a number of challenges. However, others including Campbell and Smith (2006), appear to overlook this aspect, while further scholars have undertaken far stronger critiques of the generally positive perception of this type of tourism.

One of the main critiques concerns the tendency of researchers to ignore the potentially negative impacts of volunteer tourism. As with every other form, volunteer tourism can lead to problems that must be taken into account when considering the topic. Guttentag (2009) attempted to draw attention to this subject, including individuating five main negative impacts potentially

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resulting from volunteer tourism. Firstly, he underlined the clear deconstruction of the concept of volunteer tourists as being motivated solely by altruism. Scholars have found that volunteer tourists have a variety of motivations, with most of these tending to be self-centred. Guttentag (2009) emphasised that tourists' wishes are generally considered before the needs of host communities, in particular when the project or programme is managed by a for-profit organisation. This can be true also for NGOs, with Guttentag (2009) highlighting that it cannot always be assumed that NGOs consult closely with local communities.

A further possible negative impact concerns the fact that volunteers often have little (or no) experience in the fields for which they volunteer. This can therefore hinder the progress, and effective completion, of a project. Often there are low requirements for participating in volunteer projects, including simply asking for good will and a desire to help. Thus, Hutnyk (1996, p. 44) argued that «volunteer tourists are able to experiment with their identity and take on varying roles within the host community with little or no attention paid to their (lack of) qualifications other than that of being an enthusiastic volunteer» This highlights the danger that the cost of having volunteers might well outweigh the benefits, while some volunteers may produce unsatisfactory work.

A further impact identified by Guttentag (2009) concerns a decreased demand for labour in the local community, as well as the creation of dependency, which can lead to a disruption of local economies. Thus, if volunteers undertake activities that can be completed (and in some cases to far a higher standard) by local workers, they will end up undercutting local labourers' competitiveness, particularly since volunteers work for free, and sometimes pay to perform the job. Thus, the provision of unpaid labour can promote a cycle of dependency inside the host society. An additional risk relates to a strengthening of the concept of the "other" and validating existing stereotypes concerning poverty, despite (as discussed above), the intercultural exchange being seen as one of the main benefits of volunteer tourism (Guttentag, 2009).

Furthermore, Simpson (2004) argued that there remains the risk of reinforcing stereotypes that promote simplistic images of the host culture. She specifically examined students in their gap years, suggesting that such projects often create a publicly accepted "mythology" of development, noting that the concept of the "Third World" is central to the appeal of gap year programmes. Moreover, the programmes themselves are based on the idea that European (or "First World") young people not only have the ability, but also the right, to meet the needs of the Global South, and are therefore encouraged to "do development". Simpson (2004) stated the following:

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I argue that the gap year produces a "geography" (a construction of the world where there are simplistic boundaries between two places, i.e. that of the north and south) that perpetuates a simplistic ideal of development. This ideal, in turn legitimizes the validity of young unskilled international labour as a development "solution". (Simpson, 2004, p. 683)

Therefore, under certain conditions, volunteering can both produce, and reproduce, specific misleading ideas of the "Third World", of the "other" and of "development" (Simpson, 2004; Guttentag, 2009).

Traditionally, tourism was not considered negative *tout court*, but mass tourism was criticised. Butcher (2003) observed that: «critics of tourism are as old as tourism itself» (p. 1). However, some types of tourism tend to be more heavily criticised than others. Mass tourism has been accused of having a destructive impact on host societies, but as noted by Butcher, 2003, p. 8): «there is a growing market of more ethical tourists who are rejecting mass-produced, homogeneous tourism products, in favour of tailored holidays that are kinder to the environment and benign to the host culture». These are the tourists Butcher (2003) termed the "New Moral Tourists", whose main characteristic is a moralised concept of leisure.

Butcher (2014) underlined the current changing roles of the private and public spheres, with the boundaries between the two becoming blurred and the public entering the private, as expressed in the tendency towards a politics centred on responsibility, awareness, and care. Furthermore, Butcher (2014) argued that this responsibility is one that is globalising, while at the same time lacking «political contestation of ideologies of development. Those who don't act in the prescribed ethical manner are deemed to lack awareness and the opportunity to act responsibly» (p. 23). He also suggested that ethical tourism, as described, works well with contemporary anti-political tendencies.

However, he underlined that being closer to the object of the care (i.e. being somewhere abroad to do volunteer work) provides no moral guidance, noting: «holiday encounters, like all consumption based ethical strategies, seem to expand the possibilities for moral action, but in doing so narrows the scope for moral agency. [...] The personal touch – "being there" – is not substitute for politics» (Butcher, 2014, p. 26). Therefore, Butcher (2014) defined volunteer tourism as a form of "New Moral Tourism", forming «an individualistic, narcissistic, and incredibly limited approach to politics» (Butcher, 2011, p. 75).

A number of researchers, including Smith (2014), McGehee et al. (2008), Brown and Hall (2008), Guttentag (2009), Sin (2009), Caton and Santos (2009) and Palacios (2010) suggested that, as noted above, supporters of

volunteer tourism advocate its potential to challenge the dominant model of neoliberal tourism. On the other hand, those critical of volunteer tourism argue that it is an example of specific elements of neoliberalism, which views local communities as the "object", and is often based on the idea of the hosts as "other" (i.e. in neo-colonial terms), so influencing volunteers' perceptions of the inhabitants of the global South.

In addition, Sin, Oakes and Mostafanezhad (2015) put forward a similar perspective, viewing volunteer tourism, not as a niche sector alternative to mainstream tourism, but rather as having changed over time in response various interests in need of being met. Therefore, they suggested that it would be fundamental to answer questions concerning «what volunteer tourism as a social and political phenomenon says about how we understand the world and our moral and ethical responsibilities in this world» (p. 121).

One of the points made by Sin, Oakes and Mostafanezhad (2015) is that tourism is often seen as encouraging a neoliberal economic and moral order (see also Burrai and Hannam, 2018). Kapoor (2013) considered that the growth of volunteer tourism is one of the elements demonstrating a propensity for the "privatisation" and the "NGOization" of development. The explanation for this phenomenon is twofold: firstly, that there are more projects and options for which individuals can volunteer in the field of development and secondly, the process of the depoliticisation of development has reduced the latter to simply constituting a challenge for individuals and communities. In this context, volunteer tourists can be seen to provide development in a manner that acts to conceal the structures of global capitalism that both create and reiterate poverty and inequality, as highlighted by Sin, Oakes and Mostafanezhad (2015).

Volunteer tourism can thus be productively viewed as a form of neoliberal governmentality, a kind of "technology of the self" through which subjects constitute themselves simultaneously as competitive, entrepreneurial, market-based, individualized actors and caring, responsible, active, global citizens. […] there are also broader-scale implications to viewing volunteer tourism as neoliberal governmentality. (Sin, Oakes and Mostafanezhad, 2015, p. 122)

From this point of view, volunteer tourists produce a globalisation of state space. Thus, the state outsources a large part of its welfare provision to the private sector, which, from the spatial point of view, is not limited to the territory of the nation state. This infers that the roles of governments are increasingly being carried out by both supranational organisations and «transnational alliances forged by activists and grassroots organizations and the proliferation of voluntary organizations supported by complex networks of

international and transnational funding and personnel» (Ferguson and Gupta, 2002, p. 990). This led Sin, Oakes and Mostafanezhad (2015) to suggest that volunteer tourism is a form of transnational governmentality, with volunteers being actors within these new spaces and mobilities of global governance.

Furthermore, the outsourcing public services to civil society is one of the characteristics of the neoliberal project (Burchell, 1991) that aims to maximise state powers, while simultaneously minimising its social responsibilities (e.g. welfare) and economic costs (Burchell 1991; see also Harvey, 2005). This was supported by Foucault's (1991) concept of "governmentality", while Ferguson and Gupta (2002) claimed that governmentality surpasses the state boundaries found within transnational collaborations between grassroot organisations, volunteer and activist networks, as well as international civil society in general. Thus, each context displays a different set of mechanisms relating to neoliberalism, and volunteer humanitarianism can turn against this system, in particular through reactions by strong activist networks to the void left by institutions.

Moreover, volunteer humanitarianism can also be viewed as an expression of the handover of responsibility by national and international governments, defined as «post-bureaucratic humanitarianism» (Trubeta, 2015, p. 66). This is undertaken in the name of "protecting the vulnerable", but without challenging the causes of this vulnerability, or how power perpetuates and increases such vulnerability. Nonetheless, volunteer humanitarianism can go beyond this notion of post-bureaucratic humanitarianism, in particular by choosing not to collaborate with governments to offer humanitarian assistance, thus refusing to become complicit in border regimes, but rather creating new practices within these mechanisms. For example, Trubeta (2015) argued that:

When activists and NGOs provide assistance to state authorities conducting the compulsory health registration of border crossers, deeming it merely a formal procedure, necessary if such migrants are to attain the status of administrative detention, they disregard the racist discourse behind the measure and the violation of human dignity. (Trubeta, 2015, p. 66)

Another example can be found in Sandri[3] (2018), who argued that «simply being in the camp, grassroots organisations challenged the position and practices of the state» (p. 71).

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[3] She worked on the unofficial camp in Calais, where the French government refuses to recognise officially the presence of thousands of migrants stuck there in the attempt of crossing the sea to reach the United Kingdom. Organisations deciding to be there were stating the existence of that place.

Similar to Butcher (2011), Sin, Oakes and Mostafanezhad (2015) suggested that "responsible consumption" or "responsible tourism" in mainstream discourses appears to have "universal" ethical connotations. Volunteer tourism is assumed to possess a universal code of responsibility, including an ecological consciousness, the need to "give back" to communities, and to view other peoples and cultures as more than simply exotic. However, as shown by Sin (2014), the act of working as a volunteer and "being there" may, in practice, present situations in which an individual's ethical ideals and that which what is personally recognised as being responsible, clash with the above-mentioned universal meaning of responsibility. Sin, Oakes and Mostafanezhad (2015) also recognised that researchers into volunteer tourism need to find a balance between accounting for experience and analysing matters of justice, inequality and neo-colonialism in relation to development.

How do we critique development or neoliberalism while not being dismissive of meaningful or affective experience? How do we link the personal and the social? Volunteer tourism offers a particularly productive opportunity to address these kinds of questions. For many scholars, the personal terrain upon which volunteering traffics erases the political from the equation: volunteer tourism becomes a kind of neoliberal «anti-politics machine». (Ferguson, 1994 in Sin, Oakes and Mostafanezhad, 2015, p. 124)

Furthermore, Sin, Oakes and Mostafanezhad (2015) underlined the need to move beyond a framework based on rules and standards of behaviour, along with impact, and effect. This is due to these normative frameworks evaluating tourism according to a set of objectives that are often not achieved, or end up negatively impacting host communities. They stated that work on volunteer tourism needs to go beyond such a framework, to fully face the complexities of those experiences in terms of actual practices, outcomes, and effects. This would then allow researchers to undertake a broader evaluation of the intersections of tourism, development, and neo liberalism.

2. Migrant Support Volunteer Tourism: an Underexplored Field of Study

A broad range of previous literature has examined the issue of volunteer tourism, as well as migration and the "refugee crisis" in Europe, including, more specifically, the islands of Lampedusa and Lesvos, as well as other border areas, i.e. Calais and Ventimiglia. However, despite an increase in

research over previous years, there remains relatively little focussed on the volunteers offering their services in places at which migrants arrive and/or are in transit (Rozakou, 2016; Skleparis and Armakolas, 2016; Chtouris and Miller, 2017; Kitching et al., 2017; Guribye and Mydland, 2018; Melotti, Ruspini and Marra, 2018; Sandri, 2018; Haaland and Wallevik, 2019; Daminelli, 2022). Furthermore, little attention has been paid to this phenomenon from the perspective of volunteer tourism (Knott, 2018; Trihas and Tsilimpokos, 2018; Cavallo and Di Matteo, 2021; Di Matteo, 2021; Tsartas et al., 2020).

The existing literature focuses primarily on the response to the crisis, including: solidarity and humanitarianism; forms of cooperation and self-organisation among volunteers; and the role of grassroots organisations and NGOs. In addition, it often addresses some of the problems created by the presence of volunteers and organisations. Guribye and Mydland (2018) categorised the arrival of volunteers in Lesvos as "spontaneous volunteerism", which generally develops as a consequence of a disaster or emergency. The initial volunteers were unrelated to NGOs, with most having a broad variety of training, skills, and experiences. Those who first offer support to a situation of crisis can play a fundamental role in providing help to those affected (Whittaker, McLennan and Handmer, 2015). They can be categorised these as citizen initiatives for global solidarity (CIGS), defined as the «efforts and projects set up and run by one or more individuals in the Global North aimed at improving the living standards of people in the Global South» (Haalanda and Wallevik, 2019, p. 1871). Despite recognising the limitation of such a definition, the researchers argued that CIGS can vary from less structured and part time initiatives to those that are more structured and long-term, as well as being run on a full-time basis. Furthermore, a typical CIGS starts from the (often emotional) response of an individual to what is considered as a need.

Sandri (2018) defined the phenomenon as "volunteer humanitarianism", referring to grassroots organisations founded in 2015 in response to the critical situation faced in Calais. From this point of view, it is not too different from the conceptualisation of spontaneous volunteerism. These activities were not managed, or funded, by international aid agencies or governments, but both money and work were provided directly by civil society. Guribye and Mydland (2018) highlighted that these volunteers were not trained for the work they performed, and usually lacked experience of working with migrants, and/or in a similar environment. In addition, Skleparis and Armakolas (2016) referred to the phenomenon as a "humanitarian response", while Kitching et al. (2017) employed the terms "humanitarian aid" or

"humanitarian assistance", to define those organisations created by non-professionals for specific occasions and particular events (i.e. a natural disaster), terming them as ad hoc grassroots organisations whose main aim is humanitarian relief.

Moreover, I acknowledge Rozakou's (2016) suggestion that «though it would be simplistic to categorise this fluid and rich setting, one cannot ignore the centrality of solidarity as the principal concept that specific initiatives share in common» (p. 194). In most cases, it appears that these grassroots organisations and independent volunteers were not, at least initially, motivated by political reasons or activism, but that the main motivation was a humanitarian one (Sandri, 2018), a point of view that differs from that of Daminelli (2022) when referring to the solidarity movement in Ventimiglia. Although scholars such as Guribye and Mydland (2018) considered that this approach differs from volunteer tourism, I argue that the widely recognised presence of volunteers arriving from different parts of the world to support migrants during the "refugee crisis", can be considered a form of volunteer tourism. As noted by Knott (2018), the phenomenon of migration is a new "attraction" impelling not only volunteers to arrive in such places, but also journalists, scholars, students, and (in a much smaller number), conventional tourists prompted by curiosity. To further clarify the choice of this categorisation, I will now retrace the definition of "tourist" to analyse how it informs the choice of defining volunteers in contexts of migrants' arrival, together with the literature concerning volunteer tourism, as discussed above.

The UN Conference on International Travel and Tourism held in Rome in 1963 initiated a definition that is still used by UNWTO. In this, tourists were described as «temporary visitors staying at least twenty-four hours in the country visited and the purpose of whose journey can be classified under one of the following headings: (i) leisure (recreation, holiday, health, study, religion, sport); (ii) business, family, mission, meeting» (in Cohen, 1974, p. 530). The current UNWTO definition of tourism is as follows:

A visitor is a traveller taking a trip to a main destination outside his/her usual environment, for less than a year, for any main purpose (business, leisure or other personal purpose) other than to be employed by a resident entity in the country or place visited. These trips taken by visitors qualify as tourism trips. Tourism refers to the activity of visitors. (UNWTO, 2008, p. 10)

According to Cohen (1974) considered the UNWTO definition as the most inclusive, capable of encompassing every type of traveller, excluding only migrants and migratory workers. Moreover, this definition highlights

two sociological components of the traveller's role. Firstly, movement, i.e. making a journey (traveller component) and secondly, sojourn, i.e. staying somewhere apart from the traveller's own place of residence (visitor component). The latter is particularly important when observing the interaction between travellers and the society or locality they are visiting. A further element absent from the first definition by the UN, but previously considered by Ogilvie (1934) concerns the economic aspect. As noted above, a tourist is an individual who is absent from home for a relatively short period of time, with the money spent during this absence not earned in the places visited. Thus, Ogilvie (1934) viewed the tourist primarily from the economic point of view, i.e. as a consumer.

Cohen (1974) in his conceptualisation of "Who is a tourist?" drew up a new definition, stating that: «A "tourist" is a voluntary, temporary traveller, travelling in the expectation of pleasure from the novelty and change experienced on a relatively long and non-recurrent round-trip» (p. 533). He defined six dimensions that, along a continuum, have stronger or weaker touristic components (i.e. permanency; voluntariness; direction; distance of the trip; recurrence, purpose of the trip). He argued that the concept of tourist is "fuzzy" and these various components make it possible to determine a number of partially tourist roles:

In a multi-dimensional space in which each role would be represented by a well-bound region, representing the fully-fledged role-bearers […] and a peripheral region, representing the marginal role-bearers […]. The marginal areas of the various traveller roles will sometimes intersect, since the different marginal roles may pertain to more than one fully-fledged role (e.g. the tourist-pilgrim will pertain to the marginal area of both, the fully-fledged "tourist" role and the fully-fledged "pilgrim" role). The overlap may occur only along a single dimension or along several dimensions. (Cohen, 1974, p. 549)

In view of the above definitions of tourists and the theorisation concerning volunteer tourism, I now wish to consider from perspectives those volunteers working in locations at a distance from their own place of resistance in order to assist migrants. The first concerns the practical aspect, in which volunteers: travel from different locations within a single country, or between various countries; stay in their chosen location for a relatively short period of time; as with all tourists, act as consumers, requiring accommodation, as well as purchasing meals and using local shops; do not view volunteering as a recurrent trip (or not to the point of completely losing the touristic component of the trip); focus on assisting migrants through volunteer

work, but also spend part of their time undertaking various leisure activities, including sightseeing.

The second relates to Cohen's (1974) concept of overlapping partial roles. Thus, there is a clear overlap between the role of those travellers who are "fully-fledged" volunteers, but also (as shown in this work) play a partial role of being tourists, as well as often other partial roles, previously described as relating to the motivation of volunteer tourists (for a further description of the many existing types of tourism see the chapter «Tourisms à la carte»[4] in D'Eramo, 2017).

The various people I have met during my work have tended to fall into these two categories on different points of a spectrum from being "more a tourist" to the "more a volunteer". In my response, I have drawn on Callanan and Thomas's (2005) proposal of three shades of volunteer tourism ("shallow", "intermediate" and "deep"), as an argument similar to that of Daldeniz and Hampton (2011) who (as previously discussed) distinguished between "VOLUNtourists" and "volunTOURISTS". I thus suggest that the emphasis on the VOLUNtourist nature of my interviewees does not blur their "tourist identity", but rather renegotiates it in a specific way. Above all, I argue that, in considering this practice to be volunteer tourism, I do not mean to strictly categorise it in opposition to other social-spatial practices. On the contrary, as noted above, it evidences the challenges to the dichotomies rooted in traditional tourism studies, including as work/leisure, host/guest and outsider/insider.

Nonetheless, it remains true that many volunteers do not see themselves as tourists, but rather as volunteers who travel to «work; not just be tourists» (Wearing, 2001; McIntosh and Zahra, 2007, p. 546). However, an examination of their practices during their free time away from their volunteer work, reveals their engagement in leisure activities and some elements typical of a tourist experience. This is the element I will take into account during my analysis of the case of Lampedusa and Lesvos, since it was found to strongly emerge in both case studies. This was also underlined by Trihas and Tsilimpokos (2018), who demonstrated that, among the least ranked motivations contributing to the choice of Lesvos as a destination to volunteer was «to visit Greece/Lesvos and to view the scenery», thus indicating that the volunteers did not consider themselves to be tourists. However, this information should not be considered simply as a matter of fact, as demonstrated by the multifaceted views held by the volunteers.

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[4] Author's Translation. From this point onwards, if not otherwise specified, translations are all by the author.

The rejection of the "tourist" label is not new in tourism studies. Indeed, as reported by Jacobsen (2000), the phenomenon of vacationers wishing to differentiate themselves from other travellers is quite common, to the point that Aubert (1965) discussed the "anti-tourist", a term used in social sciences for various contexts (Culler, 1981; Urbain, 1991; Buzard, 1993). This represents the criticism of the superficiality of the conventional tourism experience, often referring to organised tour groups (Urbain, 1991). In this sense, it is interesting to note how in the Oxford English Dictionary, after the definition of the term "tourism" is included the detail: «originally usually depreciatory» (The Oxford English Dictionary, 2022). In addition, Cohen (1979), quoting Boorstin (1964), emphasised this tendency, asking: «what is the nature of the tourist experience? Is it a trivial, superficial, frivolous pursuit of vicarious, contrived experiences, a "pseudo-event" […]?» (p. 179).

This indicates that this tendency is not strictly related to volunteer tourism, but rather to the entire field, suggesting the rejection of being considered a volunteer tourist can be related to the overall rejection of being considered a tourist *tout court*, as noted by Turco (2012):

> Yes, I am a tourist. […] Things about me are said that are quite surprising […] Things that are unseemly or even phobic […]. Strange ideas circulate about my sensitivity and my intelligence. They get to think I am irresponsible, or even amoral. Thus, they invent expression such as "responsible tourism" and "ethic tourism". The matter concerns always someone else, even though everyone knows to be (or that they were or will be) tourists. Someone has spread the idea that the tourist (me) is the knock-off of the traveller (them). (Turco, 2012, pp. 9-15)

Furthermore, in *The World in a Selfie: An Inquiry into the Tourist Age* (D'Eramo, 2017), recalled how, in his sociology seminars, Bourdieu (see also Bourdieu, 1979) argued that class struggle would always manifest itself as a temporal chase, but when a privilege turns into a social achievement and a general practice, it decreasingly changes its value and it will never be considered the same again.

I believe that, when it comes to volunteer tourism, a number of further specific reasons can be identified to demonstrate why volunteers do not see themselves as tourists. Firstly, the concept of a tourist refers to an individual who (unlike volunteers) is not undertaking any work, and whose time is spent relaxing, exploring, and generally in enjoyment. Secondly, accompanying this idea of tourism as leisure, the concept of tourism (as already mentioned) carries negative connotations, i.e. a lack of seriousness, care and awareness. This, as noted above, plays a fundamental role in shaping this type of

tourism, with tourists often seen as an undistinguished mass. This is perceived even more radically in the light of the previous discussion in this chapter regarding the moral turn in tourism, with volunteer tourists forming a category of travellers who are particularly careful about concepts such as "responsibility", "awareness" and "sustainability". Furthermore, unlike volunteering, conventional tourism (and in particular mass tourism) is seen as disruptive (Butcher, 2003).

In this context, Bourdieu's analysis is not unrelated. In general, volunteer tourists come from the wealthy middle and upper classes, tending to be highly educated, and thus belonging to the category of individuals able to "afford" to think about moral and sustainable tourism and to travel to help others "less fortunate". In addition, they tend to disregard those who are considered to simply undertake "tourism", considered in its worse connotations. This reflection is beneficial for framing the phenomenon of volunteering to assist migrants in transit into the characteristics of volunteer tourism, and more generally into those of tourism. This can reveal how this form of volunteer tourism, despite its own specificity, can be included in the big cluster or volunteer tourism.

I now wish to focus on a number of specific elements differentiating this type of tourism from that which is community-based or environmental. Chtouris and Miller (2017) analysed the work of volunteers during the "refugee crisis" in various locations in Greece. They focused on a small number of aspects, including the motivation impelling the volunteers to "do something". They underlined the volunteers' moral attitude, with most being unable to simply watch and remain indifferent to the situation, and wanting «to ensure human conditions and meet the children's needs» (p. 70). In addition, the research volunteers in Chtouris and Miller (2017) described their experiences as opening a «new dimension to their life and a sense of moral completeness which they previously lacked» (p. 70).

Furthermore, the researchers argued that a related element concerned the positive acknowledgement from families and friends. The authors also highlighted that many decided to volunteer in a manner that was not grounded in a precise plan, but rather as a consequence of the interest emerging from the "crisis". This was frequently combined with the volunteers' desire to open a new page of their life through an experience offering them new meaning to the terms "work" and "profession", often stating that this involvement is now an integral part of their lives, including many considering to take up a profession in a related field. Moreover, Knott (2018) emphasised how many of those arriving in Greece to volunteer sought to be on the «front lines of the crisis», while «the islands' shores and camps were seen as the centre-stage of border drama» (p. 359).

A number of issues have been raised in the existing literature focusing on volunteering with migrants in these "emergency areas" or "crisis areas" related to the difficulties and critical aspects connected to the presence, as well as the work, of volunteers. Firstly: the lack of, or little cooperation with, local stakeholders; inadequate attention to the context; (3) the absence of and little awareness (and knowledge) of other initiatives taking place in the same region (Guribye and Mydland, 2018). Secondly that participation depends more on volunteers' own goals, dispositions, wishes, and career paths, than the actual needs of those they are assisting. Thirdly, as argued by Guribye and Mydland (2018), people taking part in spontaneous volunteering or voluntourism may have little time to create a connection with the local population, as well as having insufficient professional skills or experience, and not having received appropriate training before starting their volunteer work.

At this point, it is already possible to see how most of the motivations and problematic aspects emerging from research into this specific type of volunteering correspond to those already exposed in the previous sections discussing the main characteristics of volunteer tourism. Indeed, the main difference between volunteer tourism aimed at assisting migrants and more widespread forms, is that in the former there are at least three groups to consider: volunteers; locals; and migrants. If, on one hand, there are many elements in common with conventional volunteer tourism, this is not aimed at the local population or environment, and it does not impact on them directly, as meant by Wearing (2001). Instead, the impact is indirect. For example, there is an economic impact on the local community, since volunteers (as noted above) spend money on accommodation, meals, transportation and entertainment (Tsartas et al., 2020). However, this is a consequence, rather than the main goal, of their presence, i.e. to improve immigrants' lives. The same argument is valid when considering the idea of a mutually beneficial intercultural interaction, since volunteers spend little time with locals, but rather with the migrants coming from many different countries and backgrounds. Therefore, in this case the mutual intercultural exchange would be valid for volunteers and migrants, rather than for the local population, or, if it did occur, would involve the three groups of people in different ways.

Furthermore, I would also argue that the power balance between these groups differs from those in other cases of volunteer tourism. The relation between volunteers and locals can be seen as relatively even, but is far more unbalanced when considering migrants, in particular in some cases, when they are completely illegal and invisible (i.e. in Calais, where the French government has refused to recognise the settlement). This peculiar aspect of volunteer tourism aimed at supporting migrants can lead to specific

problematics, including conflict with the local population, which does not necessarily accept the presence of either the volunteers, or the migrants.

The creation of the enclave spaces discussed above, may exist in other forms of volunteer tourism, but is, in this case, exacerbated, in addition to a number of issues connected to the legality of actions carried out in some specific situations, or all of the issues connected to the particular vulnerabilities of a considerably heterogeneous group of people. There remains a general lack of focus on these aspects in the field of volunteer tourism, and it is beyond the scope of the current study to examine the specific interaction between migrants, volunteers and locals. Nonetheless, it is vital to take this aspect into account when considering the practices of volunteer tourists outside volunteer spaces, as it is indeed within these contexts that this particular issue of volunteer tourism aimed at migrants' support proves more relevant.

In concluding this section, I wish to define what is intended by a volunteer tourist offering support to migrants. The general definition of tourism, and volunteer tourism, indicates that these are individuals travelling outside their everyday environment for personal and/or altruistic motives, to a border space, aiming to support migrants, either independently or affiliated to an organisation, or to work for migration related projects. These trips may last from a few days to a complete year.

3. A Spatial Look

A final premise is necessary as an introductory framework of this study. This concerns the importance of examining volunteer tourism spatially. It was a consideration of both the context in which volunteering takes place, and volunteers' mobility within the islands of Lampedusa and Lesvos, which led me to focus on the spaces outside volunteer work. This differ from authors such as Knott (2018) and Trihas and Tsilimpokos (2018), who focused on volunteer tourism within the spaces inhabited by the transit of migrants.

In this book, I therefore examine the spaces in which volunteers occasionally go for outings and where they usually spend their spare time. This choice was led by various reasons. Firstly, most of the literature on volunteer tourism (even from a geographical perspective), does not consider this aspect of volunteer tourism. Despite the location of destination being recognised as important (Wearing, 2004; Sin, 2009; Keese; 2011), there remains a lack of analysis of the relationships volunteers construct with the spaces and places to which they travel as volunteers. Secondly, the idea of examining volunteer tourism in Lesvos and Lampedusa for this research project arose from a

desire to determine the interactions between two phenomena of tourism and migration. When considering tourism, the destination is inevitably viewed as an ensemble of attractions, with its space including various elements on a variety of different scales, i.e. national, regional and urban. With this premise in mind, and specifically focusing on volunteer tourists assisting migrants, my study examines the following questions: (1) What is the role played by heritage towns, monuments, museums, beaches, and so on, in volunteer tourism aimed at assisting migrants?; and (2) What kinds of relationships are established with these spaces?

Moreover, volunteers work almost exclusively within dedicated spaces, i.e. reception centres or facilities managed by NGOs. These are enclaves in which volunteers spend most of their time and are therefore rich in meaning, including when it comes to human relationships. At the same time, volunteers are in contact with the rest of the space surrounding them, mostly during their free time. This is when they leave the heterotopic enclave spaces (Foucault, 1986) conceived for migrants, and thus relate to the "normal" island space through spatial dynamics and evaluation of attractiveness. This is an aspect they sometimes share with "traditional" tourists, while at other times becomes a specific type of volunteer tourism (Cavallo and Di Matteo, 2021).

This latter aspect was analysed by Keese (2011), who attempted to categorise the motivation of NGOs to set projects in one particular place, rather than another. Among five criteria, he identified one relating to attractiveness, which led him to argue that appealing places and an "exotic" image of a destination would «attract more volunteers than refugee camps and shantytowns» (p. 275). Although I only partially agree with this statement, since (as shown later in this work) I have identified refugee camps and other places related to migration as also attractive for volunteer tourists, I believe that it is valid to say that the attractiveness of a place is significant in terms of the development of volunteer tourism.

Moreover, as argued by Sin, Oakes, and Mostafanezhad (2015) looking at volunteer tourism in spatial terms means considering it as a place-based phenomenon, with a fundamental role played by firstly, the context of volunteer tourism and secondly, its contingencies. In addition, a further key aspect to consider in relation to the spatiality of this phenomenon concerns the intrinsic mobility of the volunteer tourists, who:

Embody a whole range of socially constructed mobilities, thereby embodying the ways in which "the global" gets constituted through "the local." The mobility of volunteer tourists can thus serve as an important conceptual link between the abstract

(i.e. "global structures and processes") and the embodied (i.e. "place-based experiences"). (Sin, Oakes and Mostafanezhad, 2015, p. 126)

The following chapter considers the theoretical framework of this study. This includes the role of (im)mobility in the context of lived spaces in a borderscaped, which led me to examine the practices of volunteer tourists in these locations external to the volunteer work enclaves. In doing so, my attempt is to understand if, and how, these practices contribute to the borderscaping of these islands' spaces, and whether forms of resistance can be seen to emerge against "Fortress Europe".

2. Geographies of Mobility, Borders, and Resistance

Following the previous definition of volunteer tourism, and more specifically migrant support volunteer tourism, this chapter delineates the theoretical framework of the current work. My overview of Mobility Studies, focusing on existing literature considering the intersection between migration and tourism, led me to conclude that volunteer tourism has become one of the most manifest interactions between migration and tourism. From this starting point, the chapter examines the following. Firstly, if (and how) mobility can be considered a form of resistance from a borderscaped perspective. Secondly, current definitions of concepts such as "border", "borderising" and "borderscape". Thirdly, how topics such as human mobility and lived experience have been addressed spatially, in particular when it comes to spaces of transit. Finally, the methodology and methods adopted for this study.

1. "The Big Two": The Main Contemporary Forms of Mobility

Anciently developed, or emerging, tourist places constitute interesting laboratories to analyse the logics of contemporary mobilities and their multiform compositions. They play central roles as pivots between fluxes of different nature (touristic and migratory) where interrelations, overlaps and filiations are shaped. (Dehoorne, 2002, p. 6)

Broadly speaking, the concept of spatial mobility encompasses all forms of displacement experienced by either individuals or groups (Courgeau, 1998). There has, over the past thirty years, been a recognition of how the logic of both migration and tourism is evolving and diversifying, becoming more complex through organisation on a global scale (Simon, 1998). Thus, there is now a confusion of traditional identification schemes: the emigrant

has become a migrant, and it is frequently no longer a question of transferring a sedentary lifestyle from one place to another, involving a re-rooting, but of maintaining the ability to be mobile (Lévy, 2000). Since the late 1980s and 1990s, several qualitative studies concerning mobility have focussed on tourism, transport and migration. At the same time, an interdisciplinary interest has been raised in topics such as: transnational migration; diasporic cultures; mobile communication technologies; the Internet; postcolonialism; and the concept of the performative (Merriman, 2009).

I consider one of the key moments of this process to be the claim in *The New Mobilities Paradigm* (Sheller and Urry, 2006) for a mobilities turn in social sciences. This has added and enriched the debate, although some authors, including Merriman (2009), have expressed caution, suggesting that «mobilities research is not that new», while much contemporary research is based on «long-established and broader-reaching developments in the social sciences. New and emerging research questions do not necessarily lead to a "turning" of disciplines and research agendas, or the establishment of new paradigms» (p. 136).

Therefore, the paramount importance given to the topic of mobility, and the way it is used as both a method and a subject to be studied (Sheller and Urry, 2006), has created a divergence from previous approaches. This implies that, if movement itself is the subject of research, the researchers themselves must be located within the patterns they intend to study through a "mobile ethnography". Furthermore, Sheller and Urry (2006) concluded that the change created by the "mobilities turn" in social sciences surpasses the dichotomy between transport and social research. Furthermore, it has the ability to connect diverse forms of transport and movement with social experience. They argued that:

[*A*] "new mobilities paradigm" neither means that mobility is a new phenomenon and that nowadays the world is a stateless, smooth, borderless, deterritorailised (Hardt and Negri, 2000, p. 136) nor that these issues were considered at all before in research. This new paradigm "is rather aimed at going beyond the imagery of 'terrains' as spatially fixed geographical containers for social processes and calling into question scalar logics such as local/global as descriptors of regional extent". (Sheller and Urry, 2006, p. 209)

Merriman (2009) further underlined the importance of Cresswell's (1993) argument concerning the relationship between the politics and geography of power and the practices and discourses of both mobility and fixity. Cresswell stated that these power relations must be uncovered by human geographers

and social scientists, together with an examination of the social, spatial, and material processes by which particular mobilities are produced: «one does not simply travel across the landscape. Mobilities rework, shape, animate, and perform places and landscapes» (Merriman, 2009, p. 135).

However, feminist theorists have claimed that nomadic theory (Braidotti, 1894) is based on a «romantic reading of mobility» (Kaplan, 2006). In addition, Ahmed (2004) argued that the «idealisation of movement, or transformation of movement into a fetish, depends upon the exclusion of others who are already positioned as not free in the same way» (p. 152). Moreover, Skeggs (2004) maintained that the mobility paradigm can be related to bourgeois masculine subjectivity, referring also to the dichotomy between the public and travel spheres being for men and the private and local for women. Furthermore, she suggested that «mobility and fixity are figured differently depending on national spaces and historical periods» (p. 48). Massey (1991) also clarified this point, stating that new connectivities, along with space-time compression and mobilities, tend to produce geographies of exclusion, disconnection, inequality, and immobility. Moreover, this is not simply a matter of who is able to move, but rather of power. Indeed, she refers to «the power geometry of time-space compression»[1] (p. 25) when arguing that social groups relate differently to various forms, and degrees, of mobilities. Among the categories of those excluded (or hindered) from taking part in global mobility, and generally criticised by political and cultural commentators, are asylum seekers and economic migrants, followed by tramps, gypsies, and travellers (Merriman, 2009).

At the other end of the spectrum, tourists are also highly mobile, and among the best examples of the category described by Sheller and Urry (2006) as "kinetic elites" (Sheller, 2018), or "mobile elites" (Sheller, 2009). Furthermore, Merriman (2009) suggested that mobilities are frequently constructed as indispensable to capitalist expansion and circulation, often appearing to lack any "valid" purpose or destination, being romanticised as escapism, while also posing a threat to the routines of sedentary societies.

As noted above, tourism and migration have been both studied over a long period of time as part of the social sciences and specifically in geography. Three main examples of the field of mobilities studies illustrate the importance of these two fields. Firstly, the production of the journal *Mobilities*, which is based on three main theoretical cores (transport, tourism and migration); secondly, *Tourism Mobilities. Places to Play, Places in Play* (Sheller

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[1] It is important to underline that in Massey's analysis this point not only concerns who can move and who cannot, but also power in relation to the flows and the movement.

and Urry, 2004); and thirdly, the issue of *Mobilities* dedicated to the topic of migration. This latter opens with an editorial by Fortier and Lewis (2006), setting out the theoretical premise for the construction of "critical migration studies", including an examination of the intersection between migration studies and feminist, queer and postcolonial theories. However, as argued by Williams and Hall (2000a), little attention is paid in current tourism studies to the relationship between tourism and migration.

The first works exploring the connection between tourism and migration appeared in the 1970s, when such studies concentrated on the tourism generated by return migration (Cerase, 1974; Bennett, 1979) or multi-residence tourism (Ming, 1977). At the beginning of the 1980s, research focused on the complexification of flows, examining the generally permanent settlement of new residents in areas long characterised by the importance of emigration, i.e. retirees from urban and industrial centres in Northern Europe settling permanently in tourist areas. Following a phase of relative dispersion, the international research project "Tourism and Migration: New Relationships between Production and Consumption" (1999) was developed by the Study Group on the Geography of Sustainable Tourism, followed by several further related publications (Williams and Hall, 2000a,b, 2002). The subject continued to attract the interest of scholars, until in 2000 it became the main focus of the IGU research group "Global change and human mobility", and the conference "Human Mobility in a Borderless World?" took place at the Gabriele d'Annunzio University in Pescara (Italy), bringing together specialists on migration and tourism (Dehoorne, 2002). Furthermore, in the Italian context, the special issue "Turismo e Migrazione" of the journal *Scritture Migranti*, edited by Musarò and Piga Bruni (2019), has recently raised the profile of this subject, while in the international arena, Choe and Lugosi (2022) published a special issue of *Tourism Geographies* on "Migration, tourism and social sustainability".

Although the two phenomena are framed as components of mobility, they cannot, as noted above, be assimilated, and, as recalled by Dehoorne (2002):

Mobilities are not reduced to migratory movements and tourism is not migration, even though the expression "tourist migration" is sometimes used (Dewailly and Flament, 1993). […] Tourism is one of the components of mobility, but not a migration in the strict sense; therefore, it cannot be encompassed within the migratory flows. (Dehoorne, 2002, p. 2)

Furthermore, Dehoorne also suggested that motivations are crucial for distinguishing between differing forms of mobility. Thus, the degree of

freedom of choice (and, I would add, of power) varies according to the type of displacement, with one extreme being the refugee. This freedom is not absent in the case of migration, and in particular at the decision-making level, but it can be considerably reduced by economic, family, social, environmental and political determinants. This is also true for tourism, as (for similar socio-economic reasons) not every member of society can be a tourist, although differences tend to occur when it comes to the type of choice, along with the level of freedom, and the resulting consequences.

The interrelationships between tourism and migration must be considered in the context of contemporary globalisation, along with political processes found within the rules governing the circulation of populations and capital. In general, human relationships are now becoming more intertwined, and space is being used in new, and more imaginative, ways to bring together production and consumption (Dehoorne, 2002). Furthermore, changes in production and consumption also play a role in the interconnections between tourism and migration, including: firstly, increasingly volatile and globalised labour markets; secondly, the ageing population of developed societies; thirdly, changes in working lives and retirement; fourthly, changes in national and regional identities; fifthly, changes in income streams; sixthly, the re-evaluation of valued living and working environments; and finally, changes in transport and communications. Moreover, some of the elements of these changes can be seen as strictly related to tourism (i.e. mass tourism), along with internationalisation of tourism markets and tourism capital (Williams and Hall, 2000a).

In addition, some of the specific forms of the emerging tourism-migration relationships include: tourism and labour migration; (2) tourism and return migration; tourism and entrepreneurial migration; tourism and retirement migration; and second homes (Williams and Hall, 2000a). Furthermore Dehoorne (2002) added that he viewed tourism in terms of the diaspora (i.e. flows generated from the country of origin of a specific community migrating to a separate country), and tourism as a migratory pretext (i.e. "fake tourists", referring to those overstaying the expiration of the touristic visa they used to enter a country, and therefore becoming illegal immigrants in the territory).

There has also, as noted by Williams and Hall (2000b), been an examination of a number of additional aspects of this relationship, which have gone beyond the concept of tourism and migration, as two concepts «operating at two ends of a continuum of personal mobility with one concept blurring into the other» (p. 3). For example, Russell (2003) individuated various common positive and negative impacts of economic aspects, traditional culture, and

natural resources through a comparison of two case studies, one focused on the development of Malaysian tourism in 1992 and one in 1994 examining Kenyan refugee camp aid with Operation Lifeline Sudan in northern Kenya.

A more recent work creating a dialogue between migration and tourism studies is that of Schapendonk, van Liempt and Spierings (2015) that, similar to Russell (2003), engaged a branch of migration studies considering those who were not yet resettled, but remained on the move, therefore challenging the typical conceptualisation of the migrant as an individual transferring from one location to another, which would have turned migration into something static (Cresswell, 2006). Furthermore, Schapendonk, van Liept and Spierings (2015) argued that aspects of the usual framework used to confront these mobilities include firstly, politicisation (considering the dichotomy between welcome tourists as opposed to unwanted migrants) (see also Del Biaggio, 2016), and secondly, temporality (i.e. viewing the condition of tourists as temporary and that of migrants as permanent). Schapendonk, van Liept and Spierings (2015) attempted to change the perspective of analysis, considering the dimension of "experience" (in particular the ongoing journey) as an embodied form of travel of two typical types of travellers, i.e. the transient migrant and the backpacker.

More recently, Turco (2019) considered the relationship found in the collective imaginary between tourism and migration, connecting the two phenomena through three perspectives: firstly, opposition; secondly, germination; and thirdly, correlation. These lines of analysis offer a new perspective on the relationships (as in the first two cases) previously studied. In addition, they explore a new type of relation in the final category (i.e. "correlation"), in which, in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, migrants and tourists are connected as being carriers of disease and risk.

This literature review has revealed that research into the relations and interactions between tourism and migration remains deficient in the field of geography, despite, as argued by Giubilaro (2016):

Migration, transport, and tourism are the three fields starting from which the heterogeneous community of mobility scholars try to hold together discourses on mobility in its unlimited possibilities of realisation. (Giubilaro, 2016, p. 52)

On one hand, there is currently rich and flourishing research considering the dynamics of migration, touching on its most diverse aspects, as well as the literature concerning tourism and volunteer tourism. Nevertheless, there remains a lack of a specific focus on transient contemporary migrants and tourists within iconic places for migrants' arrival and transit, which also act

as tourist destinations, or are currently becoming destinations for new forms of tourism. The following sections of this book explore a number of these studies, in order to disentangle, order and reflect upon these connections.

To produce a complete and deep analysis of this subject, I chose to focus on one specific issue, in recognition of the width and complexity of the field. I therefore identified volunteer tourism as one of the forms of interaction between these two phenomena of mobility permitting more than a simple comparison between their practices, as well as an analysis of their mutual impact. This allowed me to take a deeper look at the encounters, interactions and mutual influences taking place physically in Lampedusa and Lesvos, and actively involving the islands' spaces within these highly mobile contexts.

2. (Im)Mobile Resistance

Resistance is defined by The Oxford English Dictionary (2022b) as follows: «the action of resisting, opposing, or withstanding someone or something»; «the impeding or stopping effect exerted on an object or substance by another, or by a force; the susceptibility to such an effect on the part of an object or structure»; and as used politically, the «organized (in later use usually covert) opposition to an invading, occupying, or ruling power; (an organized body of) individuals engaged in such opposition». Thus, any discussion of resistance must also consider the issue of power.

As one of the goals of this book is to understand if (and how) the practices of volunteer tourists contribute to the formation of resistance against "Fortress Europe", this chapter frames the concept of power and resistance employed. Foucault (1975) identified three types of coexisting power: disciplinary power; biopower; and sovereign power.

Firstly, disciplinary power is defined as being negative and repressive. It forms and normalises its subjects, dictating that they speak, think and act in a similar manner (Foucault, 1975). This power is strictly connected to a system of knowledge that defines the norm, while any deviation is unacceptable and must be "reformed" (Johnston, 1991; Lilja, 2008), i.e. the abnormal can consist of LGBTQIA+ individuals, along with the outcast and the homeless, as well as migrants.

Secondly, biopower is, by contrast, "productive" (Lilja and Vinthagen, 2014, p. 109). It forms a "technology of power" arranging human subjects as a population, aiming to «incite, reinforce, control, monitor, optimize and organize» (Foucault, 1978, p. 136). It is fundamental to biopower that it is exercised by state apparatus and public institutions (e.g. the police), as well as

private ventures, including charities, benefactors, philanthropists, associations, and NGOs (Foucault, 1982).

Finally, sovereign power is, similar to disciplinary power, also repressive, but on a legislative (i.e. prohibitive and censoring) basis, principally through the use of the law and law-like regulations (Foucault, 1978).

However, if forms of resistance are created according to the type of power opposed, power tends to adapt to such circumstances, and can even rely on the production of resistance. Thus, power and resistance occur in a «mutually constitutive relationship» (Lilja and Vinthagen, 2014, p. 111) and must be considered as being interconnected and entangled (Lilja, 2008). A further point of view challenging the «orthodox accounts of power [… *which*] tend to equate power straightforwardly with domination» (p. 1) is that of Paddison et al. (2000), who suggested that domination and resistance are inherently spatially entangled.

Moreover, Shindo (2016, p. 166) stated that: «resistance is not something that can be named in an absolute sense» and recalled the broad discussion taking place around the topic. This included positions such as that held by James Scott (1990, 1993), who demonstrated how resistance is not only made of organised and principled actions, with revolutionary implications (Scott, 1993), but also of forms of protest hidden within everyday practices. On the other hand, other scholars, such as Sydney Tarrow (1998, p. 7), argued that this type of resistance is simply an individualistic position led by resentment. Tarrow (1998) considered resistance as being collective and structured, individuating in these actions the so-called social movements, revealing «collective challenges, based on common purposes and social solidarities, in sustained interaction with elites, opponents, and authorities» (p. 4)[2].

Shindo (2016) suggested that, in a globalised and mobile world, resistance is frequently associated with practices capable of challenging the concept of the state as the main actor in politics, or (as similarly argued by Mountz, 2010), the nature of sovereign power is changing and the state has now become a transnational player, frequently operating outside its official territorial boundaries. Shindo, (2016) highlighted that: «resistance gives a language to examine such activities that are led by individuals and groups of people other than the state, take place within, across and beyond states, and are formulated around issues that are no longer confined to state boundaries» (p. 169). She also argued that studies of global resistance foresee the

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[2] In the field of migration studies, the topic of social movement and the "romanisation" of the dichotomy power/resistance as a collective will and struggle has been studied, for example, by Stierl (2012).

development of a spatial entity separate from the national. This space is named (among other definitions) "global civil society" and, according to Falk (1998, p. 100), is «the field of action and thought occupied by individual and collective citizen initiatives of a voluntary, non-profit character, both within states and transnationally».

One of the aims of global civil society is to mitigate the negative impact of global market forces in areas including the environment and poverty. Moreover, Gill (2000) argued that both present and future political tensions consist of those caused by a conflict between neoliberal economic globalisation (i.e. aimed at expanding capital) and the forces of social resistance, which are focused on preserving, and reformulating, community and solidarity.

Alongside authors considering resistance in relation to globalisation, and viewing politics as no longer restricted within national borders, I also wish to discuss the relationship between resistance and the power of sovereignty. From this point of view, resistance is a means of producing new political subjects. Shindo (2016) related this argumentation to Agamben's (1995, 2003) theory concerning the "state of exception" and "bare life". She demonstrated how Agamben's positions have been criticised, including by Connolly (2004), Rancière (2004) and Walters (2008), who argued that he omits any opportunity for resistance against the sovereign power. In addition, Walters (2008) employed an example related to migrant subjects, stating that Agamben's (1995, 2003) logic dictates that they are only able to endure their condition, with little chance (even in desperate situations) of implementing change, i.e. «things are always done to them, not by them» (Walters, 2008, p. 188).

On the other hand, Rancière (2004) suggested that politics is when egalitarian logic is introduced into police logic. If the latter becomes the silencing force, the former considers the right of all humans to be equal in their right to expression. This passage therefore opens up politics to those assumed to be invisible, enabling them to contest their own silenced position. A number of scholars have, following this point of view, analysed practices that can disturb and interrupt power's control over subjectivities, with particular attention directed towards migrants (Butler, 2004; Papadopoulos, Stephenson and Tsianos, 2008; Nyers and Rygiel, 2012; Gill et al., 2014; Skleparis, 2017; Fontanari and Ambrosini, 2018).

It is within instability and dynamism that the possibility of a change takes place. It is only recognising this point that politics exist, and ethic is possible (Derrida, 1993, p. 86). And it is reinventing open spaces of singular and dissonant relations

that the aim of geography can be realised: "an openness to the event of space is the ethic specific to geography". (Derrida, 1993, p. 89; in Giubilaro, 2016, p. 120)

In *Corpi, Spazi, Movimenti. Per una geografia critica della dislocazione*, Chiara Giubilaro (2016) examined the issue of resistance from the viewpoint the «statics of power and dynamics of resistance» (p. 207). She described how authors such as Deleuze and Guattari (1980) announced the revolutionary power of movement. This position therefore turns movement into revolutionary *per se*, while opposition becomes reactionist. Mobility is therefore seen as coextensive to transgression (Westphal, 2007, p. 67). The logical consequence of this definition of movement as intrinsically transgressive and revolutionary is that the State needs to block it, or, if unable to do so, at least exert control and define its paths. The limit to this idea is traceable in Foucault (1994), whose arguments claim that there are always possibilities of resistance, disobedience or dissent, while recognising as fundamental the fact that transgression depends strictly on limits identical to those this transgression aims to remove. Thus, in recalling the above discussion of the mutually constitutive relationship between power and resistance, it is impossible to think of one (transgression) without the other (limit).

Stierl (2012, p. 427) argued the existence of a general view «tied to a static understanding of power». Throughout her reasoning, Giubilaro (2016) deconstructed the dichotomy between a revolutionary movement and a reactionary static. She thus suggested that the concept of an immobilizing power (which expresses itself only through the creations of borders around people or territories, or building walls and fortresses), would omit some of the complex phenomena currently existing, as demonstrated by Shindo (2016) in terms of global forms of resistance. Furthermore, it is reductive to declare that power concerns only inhibition, control and management of movement, particularly as some forms of mobility are explicitly intended to serve power, which consequently protects and incentivises such forms. Two clear examples concern the need for (ultra-rapid) movement to enable capital to reproduce, or those mobilities defined as «counter-geographies of globalisation» (Sassen, 2000, p. 503). These include violent and hidden migrations, produced for neo-liberal economic interests, and which cannot be seen as subversive (i.e. women trafficking aimed to feed the sex industry or migrants forced to work in near-slavery conditions in agriculture). This led Giubilaro (2016) to conclude that no movement is in itself revolutionary, and no static condition is reactionary, but power can either hinder dislocations and fluxes or use and encourage them. Thus, political value is only acquired by referring to specific contexts of mobility and positioning. It is thus not possible to

identify universally valid forms of resistance, and, in order to understand those aspects rendering practices disturbing, it is vital to examine places and anchor each question to the materiality of its own "where" (Butler, 1990).

An analogous direction was recognised by Foucault's (1976) argument that there is no single locus of pure power or of pure resistance, while hubs and knots of resistance are never external to power, and therefore resistance takes place within the strategic field of power relations. Elements of resistance tend to arise abruptly, and their localisation is always problematic, contextual, and unpredictable, occurring during specific moments and in some types of behaviour (Foucault, 1976). Thus, spaces are the product of a never-ending negotiation between power and struggle (Foucault, 1989, p. 244). Similarly, Butler (1990) argued that there is no pure political position arising as a result of the pervasive presence of power, but the ability to act takes place within this condition. Moreover, the bodies and the spaces they produce can locate themselves outside of the field of power, being liberated from its influence. However, it is within the inevitable involvement with power that transgression becomes possible. Moreover, Shindo (2016, p. 167) noted the existence of «a need to incorporate unintentional and hidden practices into studies on resistance and world politics».

Lilja and Vinthagen (2014) considered each type of power to be countered by varying types of resistance. Thus, resistance to sovereign power (characterised by violence and repression) necessarily takes the form of «rebellions, strikes, boycotts, disobedience and political revolutions, by overthrowing kings, governments and regimes, with the attempt of ever more clever applications of violence, counter-power and strategies of power play» (Lilja and Vinthagen, 2014, p. 113).

In addition, resistance to disciplinary power consists of avoiding self-surveillance and discipline (see also Paddison et al., 2000). It is important to bear in mind that disciplinary power is applied through the values and scope within the interests of others, in order to transform the individual. Therefore, resistance takes the form of a rejection of any participation in the construction of new subjectivities or organisations, or to turn them into something useless for power interests. This may include evading, or reshaping, discourses, as well as undermining the institutional control of behaviour, usually taking the form of "everyday resistance", i.e. hidden or not openly addressed. Scott (1990) cited actions such as foot-dragging, escape, sarcasm, passivity, misunderstandings, disloyalty, slur, avoidance or theft.

A further example of this type of resistance is considering any punishment as a reward, so flipping the relationship between the two. In this sense, Butler (1995) suggested that other forms include the re-articulation

(or repetition) of the dominant discourse, while slightly changing the original meaning. It is more difficult to openly challenge power when the discipline countered is a dominant characteristic of a society, and institutional correction systems are applied to dissenters. Foucault (1981, p. 101) referred to these as reversed discourses. Lilja and Vinthagen (2014) gave a further example of these practices of resistance as the concept of mimicry. These tactics can be «victories of the "weak" over the "strong"» (De Certeau, 1984, xix).

Lilja and Vinthagen (2014) highlighted that the most difficult aspect to challenge is that of biopower, as this involves the management of the population and society based on information databases, surveillance, and statistical management. However, forms of resistance can be created through resistance communities with no reliance on central coordination or planning.

Closer to the core topic of my own research, is the study by Gill et al. (2014), who argued that there has, to date, been little research examining those aspects termed by Apple (1995, p. 120) as «non-reformist reforms», specifically within the field of immigration control, encompassing practices that do not aim towards system change. This is the distinction emerging when, as noted above, Tarrow (1998) criticised Scott (1993) in relation to the effectiveness of every-day practices of resistance, i.e. between openly dissident political struggle and resistance, made of a public «openly defiant and challenges through rebellions, strikes, boycotts, disobedience and political revolutions, by overthrowing kings, governments and regimes […]» (Lilja and Vinthagen, 2014, p. 113) and that which De Certeau conceptualised as "tactics" (1984). These mechanisms of resistance insinuate themselves into subjugated lives. Tactics are marginal, rather than those revolutionary practices that aim to change an entire system. However, at the same time, they should not be undervalued.

Gill et al. (2014) drew on de Certeau's (1984) theorisation of tactics against "strategies" (i.e. institutional subjugating social forces), using the distinction between sovereign and disciplinary power, in order to understand the effectiveness of de Certeau's tactics. They argued that such tactics may not be able to challenge the cause of the issues to which they are attempting to respond, as «they contest the way that strategies are effected rather than contesting the very right to effect a strategy. This can result in petitioning the sovereign power, which performs its authority» (Gill et al., 2014, p. 375). This point is central to my work, in particular when considering the practices of volunteer tourists within NGOs governance, along with the European management of migrants' lives and reception systems, i.e. practices that (apart from some sporadic exceptions) they do not challenge directly with their work or practice.

Instead, volunteers working to (more or less directly) offer assistance to migrants do not only work within those systems, but their energy, time and money are also employed to feed the system itself. It can be argued that both NGOs and volunteers provide services that should be implemented at the institutional level (i.e. national and supranational), and are thus freeing governments from their responsibilities. One example I experienced was the food provided by NGOs in reception centres, due to the institutional provision being insufficient or of low quality. Thus, from this point of view, the NGOs' presence could be seen as strengthening sovereign power.

Moreover, in providing services, volunteers can also become a substitute for the state in exercising a role of control over individuals. For example, in refugee camps, they ensure that rules are respected, control distribution lines, as well as, at times, undertaking surveillance. However, as argued by De Certeau (1984), tactics are able to address disciplinary power manipulating its mechanisms. Thus, tactics are useful in addressing the concept of an entangled relationship between power and resistance, being able «to operate within disciplining systems, turning formations of disciplinary power against themselves» (Gill et al., 2014, p. 375).

Gill et al. (2014) focused on British and American irregular migrant and asylum support groups (MASGs), including their tactics in response to strategies of migration control. In their work, the body emerged as a site of tactics, and in particular the physical presence, blocking or observing by activists and volunteers in specific moments, i.e. during court hearings. Gill et al. (2014) argued that these tactics do not challenge the existing system of asylum seeker management, although they do act to draw attention to the practices of state actors and expose migrant governance to public examination. Mountz (2015) presented a clear picture of the role of the invisibilisation (as well as of hyper-visibilisation) of the margins and lives restrained in such places, arguing that silence infers being complicit with violence, while hyper-visibility may also prove instrumental to power. In addition, although this proved controversial, Fassin (2008) referred to witnessing and advocacy as the main goals of humanitarianism.

In assessing Foucault's theorisation of power, alongside potential forms of resistance, I wish to focus on a specific argument capable of shedding light on the association between movement and power. Massey (1991) stated that the power relationship between those able, and unable, to move is not simply a matter of unequal distribution, arguing that «the mobility and control of some groups can actively weaken other people. Differential mobility can weaken the leverage of the already weak. The time-space compression of some groups can undermine the power of others» (Massey,

1991, p. 26). In this sense, a similar point was also made by Sheller (2018) in relation to kinetic elites.

This demonstrates that a further concept connected to dominating power is that of privilege. As noted above, power maintains the interests of a specific class, race or group, thus oppressing others. The dominant group is therefore able to assert its privilege. This is the key I wish to employ to connect this argument to the other central matter of this work, i.e. mobility. In particular, I intend to create a link between power and resistance and the concept of mobility justice, as theorised by Sheller (2018), who argued that «actual mobilities are full of friction, viscosity, stoppages, and power relations. We need to understand not only what is constituted as mobile, or potentially mobile, and what is not, but also where, when, and how there are resistances to that power, or counter-movements against it» (p. 10). Commencing with the spatial turn in social sciences, studies concerning mobility have considered not only movement per se, but also focused on the power of discourses, practices and infrastructures influenced by mobility regimes that, in turn, establish who can move and under what conditions (Sheller, 2018). The privilege of free movement, belonging to those Sheller (2018) termed "kinetic elites" is expressed in this work by the figure of the volunteer tourist: the white, Western traveller able to exercise their privilege to help others. This raises the question of how this image accords with the possibilities of resistance to a power that the volunteer tourist herself is exerting.

This point clarifies that, as can be the case when speaking of the impact of borderscape on migrants (e.g. in research on humanitarian work), I will not focus on resistance practices enacted by those who form the directly affected subjects. Instead, I take the point of view of those who are (supposedly) playing the role of allies, in this case volunteer tourists. Indeed, in wishing to take the "extreme" position, by viewing this form of tourism and humanitarian work as a neo-colonial practice (see Wearing, 2001; Palacios, 2010; Sin, Oakes and Mostafanezhad, 2015), it may appear that it is not up to the white Western "saviour" to take part in this resistance. However, bearing in mind this reasoning, which relates more closely to power and mobility justice (Sheller, 2018), I consider it fundamental to think of the role of volunteer tourists from the point of view of possible resistance practices. As demonstrated by feminist theories and practices, the role of allies is not to be underestimated.

In attempting to sum up and draw a line that will be useful to follow throughout this work, I suggest that volunteer tourists are one form of expression of global civil society as theorised by Falk (1998), and whose existence is strictly connected to the high level of mobility characterising (the

privileged part of) the contemporary world. Thus, it is fundamental to ask, as a consequence of what has been exposed so far, whether the presence of volunteers in border islands influences the mobility of those migrants arriving in such locations. This includes how the right of movement of individuals able to offer support through volunteering is impacting on that of those they are supporting. Moreover, it must be recognised that, as for Giubilaro (2016), movement is not revolutionary in itself, both for migrants and volunteer tourists. Nevertheless, as shown in this section, there are a number of forms of resistance. In this work, I focus on individuating those operating within the mobilities and lived experiences of volunteer tourists in Lesvos and Lampedusa.

3. Borders, Borderscaping and the Humanitarian Approach

This book commenced with an examination of human mobility and dislocation, and continued by retracing the work of those authors who have connected movement and space with both resistance and practices aimed at challenging power and the systems it creates. It is now legitimate to pose the question: what systems are we talking about? To introduce this topic, I will employ Claude Raffestin's (1987) statement: «the territorial grid is a manifestation of power; one of the numerous manifestations of power. The territorial delimitation informs on one hand about the power that established it, and on the other on the intentions of this power» (p. XX). Raffestin (1987) considered that power needs boundaries and borders to "grid", control, organise, facilitate, monitor, contain and repress (see also Paasi, 1998). The concept of a border is encompassed within that of limits, differentiating from the latter primarily due to its social and historical connotations. The notion of border is not univocal, but can be viewed as a zone (frontier, borderland) or a line (boundary). Furthermore, these can be simultaneous or characterise the same territory in different times and places.

Following Raffestin (1987), there has been a considerable increase in the number of scholarly writings around the topic of border, including in geography. During the 1980s and 1990s, scholars began to shift their interest from the concept of the border as boundary (i.e. a line separating two territories and delimiting sovereignty), moving towards the idea of border connoted by socio-cultural processes and practices. This transition has been represented in the English language by the introduction of a number of new terms, i.e. from border to "borderland", to "bordering" (meant as the action/process of making borders), to the more recent terms "borderisation" (Cuttitta, 2012,

2014), and "borderscape". The term "bordering" represents a significant change within border studies, considering them «as dynamic social processes and practices of spatial differentiation» (Brambilla, 2015a, p. 15). In addition, border scholars have challenged the idea of boundaries as consisting of stable, unchanging, and fixed lines[3].

The process of bordering is considered fundamental to an understanding of border spaces, with borders being constantly imagined and reimagined (Popescu, 2012) and attention being focused on this aspect, rather than the various results of this process at different times. In this sense, Popescu (2012) individuated three main spatial contexts for bordering taking place within the emerging global border regimes. These are not mutually exclusive, but can occur simultaneously within an identical geographical setting, and should therefore be considered together, rather than as separate entities. These are borderlands, networked borders, and border lines.

This new perspective on borders does not exclude or substitute their traditional function, but includes the role that social action, discourse and ideologies play in the creation of meanings for boundaries, which are constant evolving and used as instruments of social division and control. It is as an instrument of social control and order that Paasi (1998) considered boundaries as part of the "discursive landscape" of social power. Furthermore, his more innovative suggestion is that this landscape is not restricted to border areas, but spreads out into society, reaching wherever this discursive landscape is produced and reproduced.

Massey (1995) confirmed the paramount importance of issues related to power, knowledge, agency and social structures, with borders forming an aspect of the process of "place-making". Her work demonstrates how borders possess differing meanings and impacts for different subjects at separate times and contexts. Among several authors underlining the relationship between border and power, Van Houtum and Van Naerssen (2002) argued that borders are spaces in which the nature of governance manifests itself as either more rigid or open.

A similar position is held by Newman (2006) who argued, in more practical terms, that both constructing and closing (as well as eliminating or opening) borders tends to serve the interests of the same power elites (see also Cuttitta's "Border play", 2012, 2014). This is due to borders essentially representing the governing and preserving of the present economic order (Sassen, 1999).

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[3] Paasi (1998) suggested that, at a time when globalisation is generally perceived as a push towards a borderless world, and boundaries are disappearing in the "world of flows", research should be particularly careful and sensitive to the transformation of the meanings of boundaries.

The work of these authors clearly demonstrates a recognition that borders are not just «Lines in the Sand» (Parker et al., 2009). Indeed, the shift from the concept of border to bordering was fundamental for the recognition of borders as processual and embedded in the social dynamic practices of spatial differentiation (see Newman, 2006). Furthermore, we are no longer considering a location-specific object, but something that moves unceasingly through society and space in re-bordering processes.

In examining the concept of bordering as applied to concrete cases close to my own research topic, I have drawn on Van Houtum and Van Naerssen (2002) who, in their work on mobility-immobility and (b)ordering, argued that mobility and fixating are always mutually necessary, and reproduce themselves in a cycle. The movement of capital across the world on the one hand, and that of people on the other, form (as already noted) the two main types of contemporary mobility in the global landscape, in which the former is facilitated and the latter restricted.

Thus, as stated by Van Houtum and Van Naerssen (2002, p. 120): «in the post-modern performance game between places, others are welcome, but some others are more welcome than other others«. In particular, their analysis compares the (b)ordering of two groups, whose mobility clearly exemplifies this argument, i.e. "refugee-borderings" and "touristic refuges". The first, at the borderlands of a society, are «the noncommunities of the excluded» (Van Houtum and Van Naerssen, 2000, p. 183), which the authors compare to those enclaves intended (and built) for tourists, and which (opposite to those spaces described above) represent the bright and rich side of society (Van Houtum and Van Naerssen, 2002).

The following sections demonstrate how these two dimensions of border spaces may not only exclude one another, but also overlap. This occurs with the arrival of migrants in those spaces conceived as "touristic" (i.e. the beaches of an idyllic holiday island) and with tourists entering the enclaves created to contain migrants, as in the case of volunteer tourists. Primarily, I focus on the island spaces and explore the tourists outside those enclaves, in order to show how such spaces are considerably more porous and fluid than is usually imagined.

In this sense, it is vital to retrace a number of further steps in the conceptualisation of border spaces. Firstly, there is Cuttitta's (2014) work on the island of Lampedusa and his concept of "borderized spaces", in which he argues that:

[…] Lampedusa is more "border" than other border spots […] Indeed, Lampedusa's high degree of "borderness" also depends on political choices: on policies,

practices and discourses that have been developed in and around the island, "border-izing"[4] Lampedusa and transforming it into the quintessential embodiment of the Euro-African migration and border regime. (Cuttitta, 2014, p. 199)

Therefore, the process of "borderizing" can be seen as complex and multifaceted, being created from specific political choices, including: the opening of detention centres; the concentration of migrants in one place; the presence of border guards (national and supranational); engaging patrol boats; and involving humanitarian workers. This concept is connected with (but does not overlap) that of borderscape. The term "borderscape" (dell'Agnese, 2005; Rajaram and Grundy-Warr, 2007; Perera, 2007) has been used to underline and express a space that Brambilla (2015a) considered:

Fluid and shifting; established and at the same time continuously traversed by a number of bodies, discourses, practices, and relationships that highlight endless definitions and shifts in definition between inside and outside, citizens and foreigners, hosts and guests across state, regional, racial, and other symbolic boundaries. (Brambilla, 2015a, p. 19)

A substantial difference between borderizing and borderscaping is that the first refers to the normative dimension of the border, while the latter expands this concept, encompassing a reflection on different levels, but without excluding the normative dimension that Brambilla (2015b) named "hegemonic borderscapes". This forms a critical evaluation of the ethical, legal, empirical premises underlying border policies. Nonetheless, the reflection on borderscapes includes the recognition that borders are also traversed by struggles and tactics related to resistance against hegemonic discourses and politics of control, known as "counterhegemonic borderscapes" (Brambilla, 2015a). Therefore, this notion recognises the normative aspect of the border (including the impact of the state's power), but rejects the concept of a simplistic interpretation of the relationship between justice and borders based on the dichotomy of inclusion/exclusion, so demonstrating a relationship based on a "differential inclusion" (Mezzadra and Neilson, 2011).

The concept of borderscape is particularly appropriate when considering the relationship between humanitarian practices, such as volunteer tourism (which needs to respond to mobile bodies and needs), and space (Brambilla,

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[4] Cuttitta (2014) outlined that the decision to create the verb to "borderize" was due to the advantage of this term to unambiguously mean the fact that something is turned into a border, unlike the verb "to border" which, as previously discussed, contains a wider range of meanings.

2015a, 2015b; Brambilla et al., 2015; Pallister-Wilkins, 2017a, 2018b; Brambilla and Jones, 2019). Furthermore, embedded in a time at which globalisation is at its highest, and translational flows are at the core of the current neoliberal economic system, this concept is beneficial for rethinking the meaning of state territoriality and political space (Brambilla, 2015b).

Pallister-Wilkins (2017) employed the concrete example of the Greek case (i.e. Lesvos and Idomeni) to introduce the concept of humanitarian borderscape to describe the spaces in which the multiplicity of humanitarian borderwork takes place. Fundamental to this conceptualisation is the fact that humanitarian action is territorialised in those spaces (such as borderscapes) in which «corridors, hubs and nodes of the transport network traversed by people on the move on their life-seeking journeys» (Pallister-Wilkins, 2017a, p. 94). However, the key point, is not only that the transit of people takes place in these spaces, but also humanitarian actions take the specific form of the compromise between policing and relieving suffering. This type of humanitarian work is based on a number of rules creating a system into which Pallister-Wilkins (2017a) considered that «humanitarian practitioners attempt to govern mobile lives according to rationalities of security and well-being» (p. 99). This infers that, in order to attain assistance, human beings need to prove their vulnerability, or to belong to a specific nationality, thus creating hierarchies ordinating and separating those considered more deserving of rights from those viewed as being less worthy.

It is on this basis that Pallister-Wilkins (2017a) defined the humanitarian borderscape as a space which «render[*s*] visible endless categorisations and shifts in categorisation between self and other, saviour and victim, legal and illegal, worthy and unworthy, refugee and migrant» (p. 100). Thus, the various performances taking place in borderscapes coexist and include the contestation of the border, as well as its reinforcement (also through humanitarian actions). In this sense, the concept of borderscape is able to show how humanitarian work is actually borderwork.

4. Space

Space is the element that has been repeatedly mentioned in the first pages of this book. Thus, at this point of the construction of my theoretical framework, it is necessary to step back and examine this essential geographical concept. Space as (socially and culturally) "produced" has been broadly acknowledged in critical geographical research, including for the various conceptualisations of the ways of knowing and being in the world (Amin,

2004; Castree, 2004; Massey, 2005; Nicholls, 2009; Pierce, Martin and Murphy, 2011; Pierce and Martin, 2015).

Giubilaro (2016) suggested the work of Lefebvre as being fundamental to understanding space as a process. Thus, space is not a blank, flat page (Tilley, 1997), but rather a mix of orders, prohibitions and multiple interferences connected to power, and to those aspects that are, and are not, permitted, i.e. «space commands bodies, prescribing or proscribing gestures, routes and distances to be covered» (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 143). Furthermore, the space is filled with moving bodies, which, as suggested by McCormack (2008), «walk, crawl, gesticulate, run, stumble, reach, fall and embrace» (p. 1823). Nevertheless, bodies move in various ways: affectively, «kinaesthetically, imaginatively, collectively, aesthetically, socially, culturally and politically» (p. 1823). This is how bodies can "produce" spaces (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 216; see also Gil, 2006), inferring that the quality of moving bodies influences and changes the qualities of the spaces in which these movements occur. McCormack (2008) noted that:

Spaces are – at least in part – as moving bodies do. Think, for instance, of the difference between a football pitch with and without a game taking place on it. The presence of moving bodies is not only a physical transformation of the pitch: it also alters the imaginative, affective, sonic and social qualities of this space. (McCormack, 2008, p. 1823)

Thus, space is also relational due to being the product of bodies in relations. Lefebvre (1991) argued that bodies create space:

Not in the sense that occupation might be said to "manufacture" spatiality; rather, there is an immediate relationship between the body and its space, between the body's deployment in space and its occupation of space. Before *producing* effects in the material realm (tools and objects), before *producing itself* by drawing nourishment from that realm, and before *reproducing itself* by generating other bodies, each living body is space and has its space: it produces itself in space and it also produces that space. (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 170)

Lefebvre's (1991) theory has been widely used within geography (i.e. Jones and Popke, 2009; Leitner and Miller, 2007; Pickerill and Chatterton, 2006; Sheppard, 2002), as well as being deepened or echoed by many scholars in different fields (i.e. Merrifield, 1993; Purcell, 2003; Schmid, 1995; Soja, 1996)[5]. This led Goonewardena et al. (2008) to individuate a "third

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[5] For further details see Pierce and Martin (2015).

wave" of Lefebvrian scholarship. In particular, Lefebvre's spatial theorisation has been used in a number of contexts. However, it has been argued that, in order to understand Lefebvre's work on space, neither the complexity, nor origins, of his work should be dismissed (Schmid, 2008), including his studies of urbanisation processes and class inequalities from a Marxist perspective, alongside the concept of dialectics that can be viewed as his original contribution.

At the same time, Lefebvre has been criticised and questioned, in particular by feminist scholars, who (specifically in relation to the urban) have underlined how «traditionally feminised spaces, such as the home, have been frequently erased as worthwhile sites in the geographies of research and theory that construct the urban» (Blum and Nast, 1996; Buckley and Strauss, 2016). Moreover, geographers such as Milton Santos (2021) have questioned space as something that is produced, seeing it rather as a constant totalisation process, while also arguing that territory is a product.

In this book, I want to begin from those aspects referring to openness to revolutionary possibilities; thus from «Lefebvre's emphasis on the – unpredictable and uncertain – role of social struggle in the creation of events, moments, and new knowledge has yielded crucial analyses of territorial conflict as an active force in the contestation and reorientation of historical capitalism» (Kipfer, Saberi and Wieditz, 2012, p. 121).

According to Lefebvre (1991) space intended as a social process, rather than an object, is central to our experience of the world. Moreover, every experience is contained within three dialectically interrelated dimensions that are constantly interacting in the production of space, as well as being doubly designated (the phenomenological and linguistical approach): firstly, the "perceived space" (i.e. the sphere of the day-to-day spatial practices); secondly, the "conceived space" (i.e. the sphere of the abstract and rational representations of space, such as in urban planning); and thirdly, "lived space" (i.e. the space of representation directly experienced through symbols and images).

Firstly, the perceived space is (among a number of interpretations) considered by Watkins (2005) as consisting of the spatial practices of the daily routines and the social conventions of behaviour accepted within a certain environment. These dynamic practices play the role of mediators between the other two aspects of space (i.e. conceived and lived), both holding them together and keeping them separated (Cloke, 2006).

Secondly, the conceived space is the dimension of the conceptualisation of space comprising codifications and abstract representations that form, as noted by Shields (1999), the «logic and forms of knowledge, and the

ideological content of codes, theories and the conceptual depictions of space» (p. 163). These are also the rational, intellectualised, and official notions aimed at analytical and administrative purposes created by technocrats (Leary-Owhin, 2016). Thus, power can be seen as embedded in conceived space (Merrifield, 2000). Nonetheless, the conceived facet of space (despite frequently being an expression of hegemonic power), can involve mental inventions, spatial discourses, and imagined landscapes (Borelli, 2012) capable of opening new possibilities and meanings in spatial practices.

Finally, the lived space is the alive face of space: it is the realm of passion, action and lived situations; it is essentially qualitative, fluid and dynamic (Lefebvre, 1991). Furthermore, it is the level the conceived space seeks to change and appropriate (ibidem). It is therefore a multi-layer combination of signs and symbols by which individuals understand the world and that «the conceived, ordered, hegemonic space will intervene in, codify, rationalise and ultimately attempt to usurp» (Merrifield, 1993, p. 523).

Lefebvre (1991) argued that, if treated exclusively as an abstract model, this triad loses its force, and must therefore be applied to concrete cases (e.g., Cloke, 2006; Wolfel, 2016). In Chapter 5, I welcome the invitation to explore volunteer tourism spatially, applying the triad to the humanitarian borderscape of Lampedusa and Lesvos, in order to investigate the various levels of this space and unpack and dissect volunteers' spatial experiences.

Furthermore, Lefebvre (1991) put the following questions: «if space embodies social relationships, how and why does it do so? And what relationships are they?» (p. 27). Far from being considered an empty void, the relational aspect of space has been underscored by a number of authors. For instance, Massey (2005) described space as a «product of relations-between» (p. 9), continuously produced and reproduced. More specifically, she recognised and addressed three main characteristics of space: heterogeneity, relationality, and coevality, with particular attention paid to the social and political implications of the relational aspect of space. Massey (2005) based her theories on the following:

[A] notion of space as constituted through the practices of engagement and the power-geometries of relations, of the structuring of space (both through enclosure and through flow) through such relations, and through an understanding of those relations as differentially (and unequally) empowering in their effects. Such practices and relations do not so much measure space as create it, the "distances" they engender may be ones of physical force, of political (dis)alignment, of imagination…; and in that sense within any one of these they are likely to be a-symmetric. (Massey, 2005, p. 100)

At the same time, Massey (2005) suggested that the chance encounter is intrinsic to spatiality, and cannot be completely annihilated, due to forming a fundamental aspect of the openness of time-space to the future. Thus, it is the encounter that makes time-space «the ongoing event of place» (p. 180). Merriman et al. (2012) noted that: «Massey, Thrift and others have suggested that our focus must be on "time-space" or "space-time"» (p. 24).

Malpas (2012) criticised some of the most widely known conceptualisations of space and place as lacking in clarity, and attempted to rethink the meaning of relationality in these concepts. In particular, he argued that Massey (2005) considered places as points of linear intersection or relational convergence. Malpas (2012) suggested that, in doing so, the distinction between place and space (which he recognised as being closely related) collapses and thus «place becomes simply a moment (a meeting point) in space – a moment constituted through spatial flow and movement» (p. 229). In addition, he argued that one of the main reasons for this conceptualisation is the rejection of the concept of boundary, emphasising that this was done by Massey, as well as Thrift (2006) and Reichert (1992). Malpas (2012) noted the use of the three concepts of boundedness, openness and emergence: «the concept of space as distinct from place is actually the development of a concept of pure extendedness, which comes to be identified with space, that is abstracted from out of the bounded openness of place» (p. 234). He does not deny the relational aspect of space, but places greater emphasis on the relational aspect of place, relating it closely to the concept of boundness.

I believe that these two positions are not entirely incompatible from a single point of view made explicit in Massey's (2005, p. 185) statement: «does the argument that place is space which has been endowed with meaning not allow those stretched relations of a globalised world to have meaning too? My argument is not that place is not concrete, grounded, real, lived, etc. It is that space is too».

In juxtaposing place and space, which may not be seen as completely comparable, I suggest that we can consider space as "pure extendedness", but that this does not infer that space is not concrete, lived and traversed by relations and bodies: «for it is by means of the body that space is perceived, lived and produced» (Lefebre, 1991, p. 162).

Massey (2005) added additional elements to the role of relationality in the construction of space. She argued that an acknowledgment of the essential interrelatedness of human beings (based on the individual's imaginative awareness of others) is an indirect expression of a spatiality, which should be a central aspect of investigation and political engagement. Moreover, she also noted that recognising the characteristics of contemporaneity and

heterogeneity implies the acceptance of a spatiality consisting of a «multi-plicity of stories-so-far. Space as coeval becoming» (p. 189). However, it is also vital to consider the social and the political constitution through a spatio-temporality which is open. Politics recognising the openness of the future requires a drastically open time-space, alongside a space constantly in the process of being made. A further characteristic of this space consists of being always incomplete and under production (Massey, 2005). Similarly, Giubilaro (2016), drawing on Rose (1999), stated that relations do not only occur in space, but also contribute to its creation: "space is a doing".

A theoretical advancement proficuous for this work is Merriman's (2012b) suggestion, who drew on poststructuralist and non-representational geographies, of going beyond the idea that space and time are the only foundational and *a priori* concepts through which to understand events.

[…] Spacing and timing, space and time, are useful concepts because of their plastic, exact and abstract qualities as measures of processes, eventfulness, liveliness, extension and being, but they are not all, and I now want to trace how the unfolding of specific events might entail the emergence of ontologies and socio-material formations that demonstrate an openness to other intensive and extensive registers such as "movement-space" rather than "space-time". (Merriman, 2012b, p. 21)

Moreover, without denying the challenge of avoiding falling into the romanticisation of mobility, it is not possible to reduce qualities of movement to instants in space, or moments in time. Thus, mobility is considered as relevant to the unfolding of events as are space and time. Furthermore, as noted by Merriman (2012), qualities such as position, context and extension «may be constituted through affective forces, atmospheres and rhythms, and registered or apprehended in more dynamic, embodied ways – whether kinaesthetically, proprioceptively, rhythmically» (p. 24).

5. Comparing and Positioning: Methodology and Methods

I wish to open this section by recalling Donna Haraway (1991), who argued that it is impossible not to frame what we observe and be situated to some degree. Furthermore, knowledge is not neutral, and I acknowledge the idea that it reflects the power and social relationships within society (Mertens, 2003). At the same time, the scope of knowledge construction is society's progress, and therefore aspects including oppression and domination are fundamental, particularly if considered through a critical perspective.

Mertens (1998) described this as a transformative paradigm, the «explicit goal for research to serve the ends of creating a more just and democratic society that permeates the entire research process, from the problem formulation to the drawing of conclusions and the use of results» (p. 159). Nonetheless, this is not possible without placing emphasis on the researchers' personal bias, i.e. only situated knowledge can produce a form of objectivity, which will always be imperfect.

My own research is based in ethnographic methodology, and a combination of methods outlined in this section of the chapter. However, the other element at the very base of my research is the concept of being able to study Lampedusa and Lesvos through a comparative approach. The preliminary work I carried out on these two islands revealed several similarities. I thus found the parallelism of an event taking place on both islands confirmed the benefits of undertaking a comparative work, in the form of Pope Francis visiting Lesvos in 2016, three years after his visit to Lampedusa in 2013.

I employed the horizontal comparison approach to study these two islands (Bartlett and Vavrus, 2016), as I consider this beneficial for analysing how similar policies and practices unfold in different locations that are both socially produced (Massey, 2005) and complexly connected (Tsing, 2005). However, I simultaneously employed a case-oriented understanding, in order to maintain the centrality of the participants' point of view. The decision to use a comparative approach is closely related to a reflection on the specificity of borderscapes, with Brambilla et al. (2015) arguing that this «concept registers the necessity to investigate borders not as taken-for-granted entities exclusively connected to the territorial limits of nation-states, but as mobile, relational and contested sites, thereby exploring alternative border imaginaries "beyond the line"» (p. 2). This demonstrates that borderscapes consist of multidimensional entities taking various forms, in a «multiplicity of social spaces where borders are negotiated by different actors» (Brambilla et al., 2015, p. 2). This reveals why it would be significant to employ a multi-sited ethnography, included in the notion of horizontal comparison, which aims to compare two borderscapes simultaneously very different and similar. This is even more true when considering the mobile nature of both the field of study involved, i.e. migration and tourism. Marcus (1995) noted that «redrawing the boundaries of topics of study here inevitably causes overlap with the terrains being established by other interdisciplinary arenas» (p. 105).

Moreover, Alaimo (2012) suggested that multiplying the field sites of research does not imply any increase in the differences between the sites, but rather within the site itself. Furthermore, the field is not intended as pre-constitute, but as co-produced with those taking part in the research, and so does

not correspond to a uniform piece of territory, but is rather «designed around chains, paths, threads, conjunctions, or juxtapositions of locations in which the ethnographer establishes some form of literal, physical presence, with an explicit, posited logic of association or connection among sites» (Marcus, 1995, p. 105). Moreover, this does not reduce the importance of that the "where" of the field, but the spaces of the research stretch over single places following (to use Marcus' words) people, things, conflicts and stories.

I have therefore divided each chapter of this book into two specular parts, the first focusing on Lampedusa and the second on Lesvos. Furthermore, I have, at the end of each chapter, added a conclusive section capable of providing a comparative gaze onto the two cases presented.

Watson and Till (2010) noted that: «[e]thnographic observation of, and interaction with, others highlight how bodies interact, meld, and constitute social spaces» (pp. 122). I therefore adopted a fairly traditional strategy to carry out my research, based on the following three main methods: firstly, observation (i.e. explorative and participant); secondly, surveys; and thirdly, interviews.

I will commence the description of my research methods by retracing the chronological (and logical) order in which they were implemented. My field-work commenced with an initial phase of observation, acknowledging Paul Claval's (2013) statement that geography is a science of observation. In particular, I planned a first period of explorative observation, or *observation flottante* (Petonnet, 1982; Morange and Schmoll, 2016), defined as the method «consisting in being, in any circumstances, vacant and available, and to not mobilise the attention on one specific object, but instead to let oneself "float" so that information would penetrate without filters, without *a priori*, until the appearance of some point of reference, some convergence and so we get to discover some underlying rules» (Petonnet, 1982, p. 39). This type of observation leads, through impregnation, to an increasing implication of the observer, to the point at which the interview becomes a fundamental consequence. As also argued by Pierce and Lawhon (2015), observational walking creates the frame for the data gathered, including through interviews and focus groups. Furthermore, it supports the development of a local literacy, inferring that the researcher has acquired an embodied understanding of the scales and rhythms of the research context.

I wish to clarify that wandering and "floating" is not intended to be completely random, as fieldwork implies a certain preparation, rather than «just get into the field» (Tuan, 2001, p. 42). Furthermore, prior to arriving physically at the location, each researcher begins restricting the field by means of hypothesis based on previous preparatory work, which is to be subsequently

verified (Alaimo, 2012). But this is, as argued by Kearns (2010), probably always the case: «observation is the outcome of active choice rather than mere exposure» (pp. 242), and the choice concerns both what to see and how to see, resulting in the observer being an active participant. Observing also has a number of different goals, primarily "counting", "complementing" and "contextualising" (Kearns, 2010, p. 242). Moreover, these tend to complement each other, rather than being mutually exclusive.

Observing does not only refer to literally seeing, but to employing all of the senses, including listening, smelling and (in some cases) touching (Kearns, 2010). Active choices are taken when deciding on the point of observation, including (in my own case) the importance of the role of public spaces. These provide a privileged point of observation, as they are settings for encounters, exchange, visibility, being views on the staging of social practices, of spatial and social choreographies (Morange and Schmoll, 2016). During this phase, I frequently walked through the main streets of Mytilene or Lampedusa, listening carefully to excerpts of conversations that might allow me to recognise some of the volunteers, as well as following them on their errands, or observing them at a café or restaurant, so familiarising myself with aspects of their routines, their interactions, and their social lives.

I decided to commence with a free observation, and so spent my first research periods in the two islands in 2018, staying for two weeks in Lesvos and one month in Lampedusa[6]. Concomitantly to the first period of observation in Lesvos, I started the preparation of an online survey that, following my first contact with volunteers, was useful as a means of deepening and consolidating the data I had collected during my first period of observation. Moreover, in order to ensure a diachronic perspective, this survey reached out to a wider range of volunteers staying on the islands at different periods, including outside the period of my fieldwork, and thus encompassing several I was not able to personally meet and interview.

I therefore created an online survey using the online platform Google Forms. I decided to use accidental sampling, which has proven to be more suitable when the population of a survey is not defined (Etikan, Musa and Alkassim, 2016), due to the impossibility of measuring and contacting the entire target-population. Etikan, Musa and Alkassim (2016, p. 2) viewed accidental sampling as «a type of nonprobability sampling where members of

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[6] Within this period of field work, I combined a first period of explorative observation with a subsequent period of participant observation. This choice was based on the fact I had previously spent time on the island and so had the opportunity to meet and know many of the subjects involved in my research. This included a month in 2016 when I was collecting data for previous research.

the target population that meet certain practical criteria, such as easy accessibility, geographical proximity, availability at a given time, or the willingness to participate are included for the purpose of the study». This type of sampling does not allow the measurement of statistically relevant data, and therefore the ability to predict some underlying pattern. Indeed, using nonprobability sampling is neither possible, or desirable, to generalise to a broader population (McGuirk and O'Neill, 2010). Nonetheless, this does not mean that the data collected are not valuable. It is rather a matter of scope: the use of the survey was rather aimed at having a first contact with volunteers. This was particularly true for Lesvos, where there is a generally broad phenomenon of volunteer tourism, to enable me to frame the situation, as well as gather data on information I might not necessarily explore into during the interviews, but which could prove beneficial to an initial understanding of the context.

The questionnaire I employed for both Lampedusa and Lesvos followed an identical pattern, with some minor variations and adaptions due to the differing contexts. I created the questions according to various goals. Furthermore, in accordance with De Vaus (2002), I distinguished between four different types of content: "attributes"; "behaviour"; "attitudes"; and "beliefs"[7]. Firstly, "attributes" refers to the general information concerning the respondents. Secondly, "behaviour" refers to questions aimed at understanding what they do. Thirdly, "attitudes" seeks to determines what my respondents believed to be desirable. Finally, "beliefs" seeks to individuate which aspects the respondents considered true and false.

I used a mix of closed questions (i.e., checkboxes and multiple choice) and open questions, as well as some combination questions. It has been previously established that closed questions risk hindering the possibility of a full and in-depth answer, since it is the researcher who defines the various options from which the respondents are asked to choose, although there are techniques to compensate this risk. I therefore used open-ended questions when I felt this would prove effective (i.e. those aiming at establishing attitudes), while I offered the choice of "other" for each closed question, so providing space for adding options I had failed to include, as well as being useful for offsetting the limited nature of the choice of answers. This is particularly fundamental when a survey is employed as a preparatory instrument for further research. These choices allowed me to: firstly, measure trends among my respondents; secondly, give them a voice and enable them to express a broader point of view on certain topics; and thirdly, put the

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[7] De Vaus also considered "knowledge", which I did not need in my survey.

respondents in the position of questioning the questionnaire itself, by means of alternative interpretations, insights and justifications (McGuirk and O'Neill, 2010).

I observed some of the limitations of the written survey, in particular finding confirmation of Oppenheim's (1992) statement concerning open questions, which he defined as «easy to ask, difficult to answer, and still more difficult to analyse» (p. 113). It was evident in some of the open-ended questions that the respondents were not always ready to provide lengthy responses, possibly due to a lack of time, or interest. It has been also argued that this can be due to the issue of the trust in the researcher and the use of data (McGuirk and O'Neill, 2010).

I employed a number of strategies to prevent these possible negative outcomes, such as leaving open questions until the end, so allowing the respondents to develop a level of trust during the process of going through the questionnaire. I also made clear that they were not obliged to answer every question. Moreover, I divided the questionnaire into sections and sub-sections, to make the questionnaire easier to both read and fill in (i.e. as opposed to long pages of text), and used captions to facilitate understanding of the context of each section.

This first phase allowed me to prepare the second part of my fieldwork and data collection processes, including the participant observation and interviews. The preliminary analysis of the questionnaires' data provided a framework, and also allowed me to judge which aspects to analyse in further depth, and to test the themes, elements and concepts I might develop further. I therefore used the results to subsequently prepare and gauge the questions for the in-depth interviews I carried out later in my research. I went to both islands two more times after the first visit, spending thirteen weeks in Lesvos and ten in Lampedusa, resulting in a total of approximately six months of fieldwork. As already mentioned above, during the separate trips that constituted my fieldwork, I immersed myself in the field in various different ways, with a particular focus on participant observation.

As noted above, there are many types of observation. Morange and Schmoll (2016) described gradients of observations rather than type (as categorised by Gold, 1958). Thus, the researcher is recognised as generally having four possible roles: the complete observer; the observer-as-participant; the participant-as-observer; and the complete participant (see also Kearns, 2010). These roles are frequently fluid in nature, and never fully static, but are subject to movement from one extreme to the other in the degree of engagement with that being observed. I defined my own position on this gradient as that of the participant-as-observer.

Participant observation is a process of immersion in the field, characterised by the participation of the researcher in the everyday lives of the subjects of study. This means sharing common activities, their social lives, and working in the same professional environment, as well as accessing their private and intimate spaces and spaces of affects (Morange and Schmoll, 2016). This movement beyond formalised interactions allows the researcher to become involved in situations of systematic understanding of a place and thus develop a geography of everyday experience (Kearns, 2010).

Looking at the more practical side of my own work, during my first period in Lampedusa, I participated as a volunteer at the *Terra! Camp* and was involved in various activities with volunteers and the local inhabitants. This was also true for my second period there, in November 2018, when I volunteered at the *Ibby Camp*. As I will describe in detail later, I took part in the volunteers' daily routines, worked with them, and attended the afternoon/evening meetings and presentations offered by both camps. In addition, I participated in their recreational activities and socialised with them during their free time. Furthermore, I did my best to involve myself in other activities and events taking place on the island.

In Lesvos, I undertook participant observation during my second trip. I shared an apartment with two volunteers and participated in several related activities, including attending up-cycling workshops and other activities in the support centre, *Mosaik House*, as well as spending time with volunteers at the beach or in the evening. Moreover, during my final stay in Lesvos, I also worked as a volunteer for two different organisations, firstly, *A Drop in the Ocean* and secondly, *Refugee4Refugees*. Once again, alongside sharing their daily work routine, I spent mealtimes with the volunteers, and took part in various activities, including short trips during our free time, and meeting up for drinks on weekends. This allowed me to share their activities, emotions and experiences, alongside experiencing the spaces they inhabited, both when volunteering and in their free time. This enabled me to see and experience where (and how) volunteers spent their non-volunteering time, as well as to gain an insight into their interactions and relationships, and observe the resulting practices.

Moreover, this participant observation allowed me to share the physical effort involved in working in the garden in the August heat of Lampedusa, and the sense of physical discomfort when playing with children in a dusty and noisy playground, as well as making the mental effort of conveying to complete novices knowledge I tend to take for granted (i.e. computer skills). At the same time, I experienced the gratification of being useful, and seeing young people's progression in computer or English classes. I was also able

to see smiles and spend many evenings eating and celebrating and enjoying time together with people from all over the world. In addition, I experienced the pain of the separation when it was time to leave people I had met on our separate journeys, and who were either remaining on those islands, or continuing on to the next (often unknown) destination. Finally, it meant dealing with issues related to sometimes being an outsider, while at others an insider, including those relating to closeness, distance, power and responsibility.

Both during, and following, these periods of fieldwork, I implemented the third method of my research, in the form of seventeen interviews conducted on Lampedusa and thirty-eight on Lesvos. Most of these were semi-structured, with just two being unstructured. I undertook the interviews with volunteers, representatives of organisations, local inhabitants and some representatives from the institutions. The volunteers were selected through snowball sampling[8], with the majoring being from those I met during my time working as a volunteer. Almost all of the interviews were recorded and transcribed, and I took down written notes for the three interviews I was unable to record.

The interviews focused on investigating elements individuated from the analysis of the survey further in depth (i.e. where volunteers spent their free time), along with volunteers' practices, representations and attitudes towards the relevant spaces. Furthermore, I decided to interview a number of selected local actors I individuated as gatekeepers of specific spaces or communities. In addition, I selected organisations' representatives that, either in response to their specific type of work, or because they were able to give me some new points of view or information. When it came to local and national authorities, I was able to interview the mayor of Lampedusa, but could not obtain any interviews[9] with representatives of the municipality of Lesvos. By contrast, it was fairly straightforward to organise a meeting with a representative of the Greek Ministry of Tourism. As suggested by Alaimo (2012) it is possible, as a researcher, to deploy various belongings that may facilitate (or hinder) access to people or to the field. In this specific case, presenting myself as a researcher exploring the relationship between the phenomena of tourism and migration proved beneficial when contacting the Ministry of Tourism. However, it also this meant an absolute closure on certain topics, and (due to an imbalance of power) an interviewee-led conversation

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[8] Snowball or chain sampling is based on the identification of participants through word of mouth (Bradshaw and Stratford, 2010).

[9] I had a brief meeting with the tourism councillor of the municipality of Lesvos and also requested, but without success, to meet with a representative of the Secretariat General for the Aegean and Island Policy, as well as other representatives of the ministry for immigration.

concerning the negative impact on tourism from the arrival of migrants in Lesvos, alongside the initiatives put in place by government to confront this issue and stimulate tourism in the area.

One issue that must be considered in relation to interviews relates to power dynamics, particularly as any difference of power between inter-viewer and interviewees plays a role in the outcome. Firstly, it is vital to create an environment of trust and cordiality. In my case, this was often fairly easy to achieve when interviewing volunteers, as they were generally able to meet me beforehand, and we had spent time in each other's company, in-cluding working together. Even when this was not the case, I had the ad-vantage of dealing with a close circle of individuals, whom I had met through a mutual acquaintance.

By contrast, my relationship with the authorities was based on a different environment, atmosphere and power dynamics. When interviewing the vol-unteers, I paid particular attention to not influencing and orientating their answers through my questions. However, when interviewing the authorities they were able to give me only partial information. This is a typical mecha-nism of power that can be put in place by interviewees. Nonetheless, it is not necessarily a serious issue, since the aim of the interview is not to judge the truth of the answers, but rather to understand peoples' representations of a specific phenomenon or place (Alaimo, 2012), and often what is not said is already an important piece of information. As noted by Braidotti, (2017):

> Positionality is a rooted and embodied memory: an ensemble of counter-memo-ries activated from those who think and resist against the dominant narration of sub-jectivity. A positionality is a spatial and temporal place of co-production of the sub-ject, everything but not a relativist instance. (Braidotti, 2017, p. 55)

Dynamics of power also concern the researcher's positionality. Research involves coalescing personal experiences, encounters, relations and emo-tions with the role of researcher. It has now been accepted that it is not pos-sible to undertake completely neutral and objective research, and, once this is recognised, it is then fundamental to understand what is meant by posi-tionality.

As argued by Haraway (1991), positionality is central to the creation of knowledge, as it implies recognising personal responsibility for best practice. Moreover, positionality is always connected to, and paralleled by, reflexiv-ity, as it involves managing distance and closeness, which is fundamental to fieldwork (Alaimo, 2012). I found it particularly beneficial to commence my reasoning from the position of Berger (2015), who suggested that «the

relationship between reflexivity and the position of the researcher vis-à-vis the phenomenon under study has been only sparsely addressed» (p. 222).

Starting from the concept of positionality (Pillow, 2003; Padgett, 2008) I focused on listing the personal characteristics I considered to influence my work. There are a number that are clearly relevant: I am a woman, I am Italian, I am white[10], I am (still) young (twenty-nine years old), and I speak various European languages at differing levels of fluency, including English, Italian, German, French, Russian, although not Greek. In addition, I have had numerous experiences abroad for extended periods of time, and, due to my research, I have a deep knowledge of the context in which I work, although I have no personal experience of the border in its constraining and violent expressions. Moreover, I believe in the freedom of movement independent of an individual's place of origin, and I position myself as anticapitalist and antifascist. These thus influence my viewpoint when it comes to European immigration policies and management.

This being stated, it must be considered that the researcher's positionality may impact the work in three main ways. Firstly, it can affect access to the field, with some characteristics influencing the participants' decision whether or not to share information. Secondly, it may influence the nature of the relationships between researcher and researched, including the kind of information they are willing to share. Thirdly, the worldview and background of the researcher impacts on how questions are asked, language is used, or how information is selected and interpreted, so influencing the final findings of the research (Kacen and Chaitin, 2006).

In my own experience, the above characteristics have proved at times advantageous, and at others a hinderance. For example, to be accepted as a volunteer, I found my language skills beneficial, as well as my previous experience of teaching and working with children. However, being a young woman put me in a position of weakness when dealing with authority, (which was generally represented by an older man), or when I was instructed what I should wear when working with migrants. At the same time, my origin, my age, my previous experiences, and even (in one case) my role as a researcher, proved an advantage in creating trust with other volunteers, in particular (but not only) those of my same age. This was true when it came to firstly, Ottar, a Norwegian man who had previously worked at a university, and could therefore identify with me as a young researcher, and secondly, with Kendra

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[10] To be precise, I have typical Mediterranean physical traits, and could therefore look like a local both in Lampedusa and Lesvos. This both facilitated and hindered me, according to the situation.

and Inga in Lampedusa, since I was one of the few volunteers able to speak fluent English.

Reflexivity is an instrument used to look back into oneself, to identify and be accountable for one's own position within a study, including its consequences for the participants, the data being collected and its interpretation. A number of researchers have used the concept of reflexivity undifferentiated from reflectivity or critical reflection, while others have identified a distinction between these concepts (D'Cruz, Gillingham and Melendez, 2007). In general, reflexivity is viewed as the «process of a continual internal dialogue and critical self-evaluation of researcher's positionality as well as active acknowledgement and explicit recognition that this position may affect the research process and outcome» (Berger, 2015, p. 220).

Reflexivity thus allows the researcher to consider the way who they are may both support or hinder the co-construction of meanings, and to reflect on how data collection and interpretation contribute to the understanding of social phenomena. On the other hand, the absence of reflexivity may result in accepting «the apparent linearity, thereby obscuring all sorts of unexpected possibilities» (Russel and Kelly, 2002, p. 37). A further important element emphasised by Pillow (2003) is that «reflexivity is situating the researcher as non-exploitative and compassionate toward the research subjects» (p. 178), thus addressing concerns regarding the negative impact of power on researcher-participant relationships. Finally, deep reflexivity includes researchers' embodied, emotional and unconscious meanings (Crossley, 2021).

Berger (2015) considered the relationship between positionality and reflexivity can constitute three macro possibilities: the study of the familiar; the study of "while becoming" familiar; and the study of the unfamiliar. In this study, I focus on the first two scenarios, since, during my field work, I had various experiences as a volunteer, and therefore commenced a process of familiarisation until I was finally familiar with the experiences of being a volunteer in various contexts. Furthermore, I was fully part of both the experience and the context, and shared feelings with my fellow volunteers working for the same organisation, thus «simultaneously being an onlooker in the stalls and a member of the cast» (Shaw, 1996, p. 10).

From this point of view, the first advantage was being able to understand the shades of the participants' reactions, or the implicit content, as well as being more sensitive to certain types of data i.e. the shared experiences or knowledge encouraged the interviewees to give implicit details, which were assumed to be understood. Moreover, being familiar with people, and setting let the distances between us shrink, allowed me as the researcher to go where they would probably not. For example, the only interview I conducted with

a refugee was with a "resident volunteer"[11] and thus was a fellow volunteer, with whom I had built a relationship and a sense of trust, allowing me to ask questions I wouldn't have put otherwise. Indeed, being an insider to the group ensures a sort of privileged gateway and, even though I identified myself (and was identified) as a PhD student, my identity as a volunteer was somehow seen as stronger.

On the other hand, there are several negative aspects of familiarity with a specific group/context. This can, during interviews, risk leave some things unsaid due to being considered obvious, as well as sentences left unfinished, and, at times, not taken seriously. In addition, the boundaries between the researcher and the participants can be looser, with the risk of imposing one's own values, belief, perceptions, and preconceptions, as well as overlooking some aspects of the experience of the participant. Furthermore, the researcher can be so involved as to be unable to "hear other voices", a risk I felt to be prescient during my fieldwork.

Finally, I consider it necessary to openly express my critical position towards the subject I am studying, not only (as previously mentioned) when it comes to how people's lives are managed through policies and practices at borderlands, but also towards the phenomenon of volunteer tourism, and in particular migrants' support volunteer tourism. Nonetheless, being there as a researcher, and as a volunteer, put me in a position of openness and curiosity that allowed me to see beyond my first point of view and made it richer, leading me to appreciate the shades of possibilities behind this phenomenon. As suggested by Baldwin (2012): «researchers can weaken their ideological lens, to look with a novice's eyes, at least in the initial phases of trajectory and relationship identification – to first describe before one explains» (p. 210).

These observations, read through the lens of deep reflexivity, led me to acknowledge the fact that the field is, first of all, defined from the position of one's own politically situated nature, as well as by personal fears, desires, and imagination. Nonetheless, encounters and experiences within the field play a fundamental role. «Field in this sense is not just "there"; it is produced and reproduced through both physical movement across a landscape and other sorts of cultural work in a variety of sites» (Driver, 2000, p. 267). As in every space, it is constructed by those who are traversing and living within it, as well as the relations created between such individuals and the places we study.

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[11] Several organisations do not only work with international volunteers, but also with some volunteers among the migrants staying in Lesvos. This is undertaken for a number of reasons: they can be interpreters when needed and they know how to interact with people from their same country. This is fundamental (or should be) to ensure self-determination and agency against the logic of the "good westerner" who takes care of the "poor" refugees.

3. *Neither Mediterranean Paradises nor Invasion Islands*

1. Lampedusa: Fishing, Tourism and Confinement

Lampedusa together with Linosa and Lampione, forms part of the archipelago of the Pelagie Islands, belonging to the Province of Agrigento in Sicily. It has a total local population of 6,299 [1] inhabiting an area of approximately 25.83 km² (20.2 km² Lampedusa, 5 km² and less than 1 km² Lampione). The name of the islands is believed to originate from the Greek λέπας ("reef"), or λαμπάς ("torch"). Both names recall the need, already evident in ancient times, of a safe stopping place for vessels traversing the Mediterranean (Fragapane, 1993). Lampedusa lies 205 km off the Sicilian coastline and 167 km away from Tunisia, being simultaneously the final southern strip of European land and the first outpost of Africa.

From the geological point of view, Lampedusa is part of the African continental plate. The island is constituted of layered limestones (limestone and dolomite) deposited during the mid-late Miocene, being currently shaped as a rocky plateau rising slightly towards north-west. Its highest point, Monte Albero Sole, is 193 m above sea level. The northern and western coasts consist of sheer cliffs rising from the sea, as well as stratified steep crags with caves and cavities, while the southern coast is more undulating, with numerous bays and coves. This morphology of the southern coast facilitates the landing of migrant boats, which would prove impossible on the northern coast. From the morphological point of view, Linosa, being a volcanic island, differs considerably from the other two islands of the archipelago.

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[1] This data includes the inhabitants of both Lampedusa and Linosa. Lampione is not inhabited (ISTAT, 2011).

Fig. 3.1 - Map of Lampedusa, Linosa and Lampione. Elaborated by the author on Open-StreetMap base (Open Database License).

Lampedusa has a long and complex history, which is mostly beyond the scope of the current study. However, it is relevant that Lampedusa was, like many other islands, used for "forced domicile detention", i.e. a preventive administrative act used against political dissidents, not necessarily corresponding to a specific offense. As noted above, this aspect functioned from 1863, initially on other islands. The fascist institution of the *confino* (confinement) islands remained the main spaces of internal exile, along with a number of other remote areas, in particular in the south of the country (Breschi and Fornasin, 2005; Poesio, 2012). During the period of fascism, Lampedusa was employed both for political *confinati* and for common *coatti*[2]. An article written for the periodical *Il Risveglio Anarchico* on February 19th, 1927, describes the island as containing over 300 common criminals, alongside 108 political *confinati,* the majority of whom were communists, with the remainder being anarchists, republicans, socialist reformists, maximalists, and Nittian democrats.

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[2] These two words were used for those detained in these islands, with the second referring to common criminals.

The political outcasts are confined to a dorm *[called camerone]* that, according to the management, should accommodate up to 180 people, but in fact is not equipped to house the 108 who are there now. They sleep on straw mattresses, laid on wooden tables and stands. It is required of all of them to sleep in the dorm. They are locked in for the evening after the daily roll call at 16:30, and the doors are unlocked at 7:00 in the morning. (Anonymus, 1927)

The above extract reveals a parallel with the experience of current migrants, including: the poor living conditions; overcrowded facilities; a scarcity of food; the impossibility of moving from the space where they are confined; and the considerable variety of people detained, i.e. men and women, children and a small number of elderly. Alongside this is the higher cost of life on the island, which has not changed, and which also impacts on the local inhabitants.

Due to its strategic position between Sicily, Malta and Tunisia, Lampedusa was fortified during the Second World War (1939-1945) and underwent heavy bombing. Subsequently, the first power plant was created in 1951 and the telephone connection was opened in1963, followed by a desalination plant and the completion of the civil airport in 1968. In continued recognition of its strategic importance for the control of the Mediterranean, the US military base of Loran was opened in 1972. This importance is exemplified by the island being targeted by two missiles on April 15th 1986, allegedly targeted from the Libyan military forces and ordered by Muammar Gaddafi[3]. This controversial event attracted the attention of the media to the island, and indirectly marked the beginning of Lampedusa (previously unknown to most Italians) becoming a popular tourist destination.

At the time of writing, Lampedusa has a single settlement, in the form of a small town located in the south-eastern area of the island. The main urban area has developed around the main street, Via Roma, which ends overlooking the port, and along the western coast in the area known as Contrada

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[3] This episode remains unclear; some argue that these missiles have never been launched, as suggested in the «1986, quando Craxi pensò di attaccare la Libia» (Nigro, 2008). However, this has been one of the peaks of a period of delicate balance in international relations between the Italian government led by Craxi and Libya (with the always-present intervention of the USA). After a period of renewed closeness between the two countries, which began at the end of the 1970s, economic relations improved, despite the opposition of the USA. From January 1982, a diplomatic crisis began between the two countries, due to the debts Libya had incurred with some Italian companies. Between 1985 and 1986, the tension between these three countries led to the so-called Sigonella's crisis. The next main step in the crisis took place between March 24th and 25th 1986, when the USA undertook a navy and air force action against Libya in the Gulf of Sirte (Giovagnoli and Pons, 2003). This episode increased the already present tensions and led to the launch of scud missiles against the USA base in Lampedusa.

Guitgia. In addition, villas and single houses can also be found in other areas of the internal sections of the island. In particular, approximately 65% of the housing stock is located in the main urban area, with 13% within the more northern areas of Grecale, Cala Creta and Terranova, and 12% is constituted of far-flung rural dwellings (Regione Siciliana, 2010; Longhi et al., 2006).

The interior of Lampedusa continues to reveal its agricultural past. A web of (often abandoned and decaying) drystone walls run both along, and between, the few roads allowing access to the western and northern side of the island. A relatively large part of the western side of Lampedusa is occupied by a military base, being also the location of the former Loran C[4] base. In addition, the area houses five radars (the last being built in 2019) and three antennas for military control. These are located less than 400 meters (as the crow flies) from the island's nature reserve. Lampedusa is, in relation to its size, a strongly militarised island, with other military areas or devices also on the western side of the island, including the radar at Capo Grecale (decommissioned in 2018) and two areas by the airport under the control of the 134th Squadriglia radar remota (134ª Sq.R.R.), which is part of the Italian air force. The airport area also houses a facility for the control of drones, managed by Frontex and the Guardia di Finanza, under the control of the Ministry of the Internal Affairs. It is significant that most of the military bases or facilities are there for the purposes of border control. The collective Askavusa[5] created a detailed mapping of the above-mentioned areas and facilities.

The economy in Lampedusa is based on firstly, the traditional occupation of fishing, and secondly, the relatively recently developed tourism sector. Statistics by the National Institute ISTAT reveal that, until the 1980s, over half of the island's workers were employed in the agricultural and fishing sector and only 30% were working in services. In 2011, 16.3% of the population was employed in the primary sector, 15% in the secondary and 68.7% in the tertiary, of which 39.5% focused on non-commercial activities and 29.2% on commercial activities. A more detailed examination shows very little employment available in occupations related to agriculture and forestry, while there were seventy-five local enterprises working with fishing with a

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[4] This was a USA base from 1972, important for its strategic position in the Mediterranean.

[5] Askavusa in dialect means "bare feet", and is a collective of activists active in different fields, such as the struggle against the militarisation of Lampedusa or the pollution of the territory. They also opened a trade union on the island, and over time, were involved with migrants who arrived in the island in a number of ways, but their main request on the topic is the definite closing of the Hotspot. Porto M is the headquarter of Askavusa, here the collective has created a small exhibition of migrants' objects.

total of 234 employees, including one in aquaculture with twenty-six employees (Istat, 2011).

Lampedusa shares with many Mediterranean islands various issues related to transport, environmental fragility, water supply, energy production and the disposal of waste (Cavallo, 2007). Despite the current increasing interest in environmental sustainability, and efforts to improve the protection of the territory, Lampedusa's environmental status remains highly fragile, with seasonal tourism increasing the existing pressure. Among the most important initiatives to address these issues was the institution of the nature reserve in 1996 and the marine protection area in 2002, both of which were obtained in response to strong pressure by Legambiente[6].

Moreover, an important work of environmental restoration has been carried out in the *Spiaggia dei Conigli* area,[7] primarily involving the upper slope of the beach and the planting of native flora and fauna. In addition, the access path to the beach was renovated, to control the rainwater and the fruition of the beach. This area (which forms part of Area A[8] of the nature reserve) is the best-known beach of Lampedusa. The *Project of Eco-compatible Fruition of the Spiaggia dei Conigli* has been set up to enable the fruition of the beach, which is perceived as being fundamental for the success of tourism in the island, and to simultaneously ensure its preservation. The island retains a number of complex environmental issues and, despite the importance of the nature reserve, many more need to be addressed, including those relating to energy production, as well as the management of unauthorised building and control of refuse. These environmental issues were already highlighted in 2006, in a report by the IUAV University of Venice (Longhi at al., 2006).

Tourism began to slowly develop in Lampedusa during the 1970s (considerably later than other Mediterranean islands[9]), after the opening of the airport, along with the installation of phone lines and the creation of the desalination plant. A form of "funding act" placed the beginning of the touristic era of the island in 1986, when Lampedusa was, as noted above, "discovered" by Italians as a consequence of the missile attack by Gaddafi.

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[6] Legambiente is an environmental association created in 1980 from the anti-nuclear environmental struggle.

[7] Funded by the project LIFE Natura 2003 for the safeguarding of the Caretta Caretta turtle and the Tursiops truncates (bottlenose dolphin).

[8] Access and swimming should be completely prohibited.

[9] Tourism commenced in the Mediterranean islands between the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. However, from 1965 to 1995 these islands saw a peak of arrivals related to tourism, which increased approximately 600% in thirty years (Cavallo, 2007).

Tourism subsequently increased during the 1980s, and again in the 1990s. According to Siragusa (2006), there was a doubling of arrivals by plane and ferry between 1986 and 1996, from more than 40,000 to almost 80,000. However, it should be noted that this does not only measure the movement of tourists but also includes the movement of local inhabitants. However, it is important to keep track of this information, in particular as most of the accommodation continues to be offered unofficially in private houses. Moreover, even such partial data can give an ideal of the size of the phenomenon at that time.

Over the previous four decades, the main characteristics of this sector has not experienced any notable change. Similar to the majority of Mediterranean islands, Lampedusa's tourism is seasonal, with stark differences seen between summer and winter. However, the tourist season has now expanded from the popular times of July and August, to last into the middle of October, particularly over the last five years, including due to the celebrations held on October 3rd[10]. Furthermore, the tourism sector has remained almost completely national in nature, with only a small (if increasing) number of international tourists.

The attractions of the island have remained mostly unchanged, with Lampedusa being a typical 3Ss destination and perfectly representing the paradigm of sun, sea and sand, and a small number of visitors are attracted by water sports. Lampedusa is presented as a paradise of natural beauty, transparent waters and tranquillity, representing the perfect expression of the "temperate exoticism" Cavallo (2007, p. 43) of Mediterranean islands. However, the issues outlined above, tend to be hidden behind this imaginary, including: environmental concerns; the overcrowded streets and beaches at the peak of the season; and the disorganisation and inadequacy of the tourist activities on offer. Nonetheless, efforts have been made (although with little success) to increase the cultural attractions on the island.

The island has made various efforts to restore traditional buildings, such as the *dammuso*[11] Casa Teresa, as well opening an archaeological museum and attempting to communicate the presence of interesting archaeological remains. However, these generally remain largely inaccessible, either due to being (in the case of much of the archaeology) closed or abandoned.

[10] On that day, a tragic shipwreck took place off the coast of Lampedusa (Askavusa, 2018).
[11] Traditional building of Lampedusa.

Fig. 3.2 - The 'Spiaggia dei Conigli' during the summer.

This includes the archaeological museum, opened in 2016, after several years of planning[12] and two years following the completion of the renovation works to the building, together with the opening of the Museum of Trust and Dialogue for the Mediterranean, which took place during a period of particularly intense interest in the topic of immigration and its narrative in relation to Lampedusa. Recently, with the general increase in tourism related to food and wine, Lampedusa has also focussed on this aspect, advertising traditional local food and the high quality of its seafood, which is the only type that can be considered local, since everything else must be imported (see Longhi et al., 2006).

The island, and the centre of the town, have both undergone a relatively rapid transformation. Some characteristics of the touristification process can be recognised, including: firstly, the renovation and modernisation of many establishments; secondly, the increasing number of new bars and restaurants advertised as cooking traditional local dishes with genuine ingredients;

[12] According to Antonino Taranto, president of the Archivio Storico (Historical Archive), the museum had been announced twenty years before its opening.

thirdly, the opening of fishmongers offering instantly cooked fresh seafood; fourthly, the multiplication of souvenir shops; and finally, the creation of clubs on the beach, such as those in Cala Croce and Cala Palme. Via Roma contains a large number of souvenir shops, bars and restaurant, many of which are not owned by locals. However, it should be noted that the cost of living tends to be higher on the island than in the rest of Sicily (see Suppini and Catania, 1970s, p. 36).

These developments, together with the general lack of services for the inhabitants, reveal the spread of the touristification of the island. At the same time, it is not possible to estimate the most significant consequence of this phenomenon when it is connected to gentrification, which includes the expulsion of the local population (and in particular the poorest), which also lies outside the scope of this research.

Lampedusa's tourism has been historically characterised by repeat visits. I found this subject arising in many of my conversations with locals during my fieldwork, who often complained about changes in tourism characteristics, i.e. the decrease in the amount spent by each person, the increase of short stays (sometimes only weekends[13]), and the growth of single-stay visitors. However, the average vacation in Lampedusa is between one and two weeks, with and a considerable proportion of these being returnees.

In general, there is considerable pressure from tourism on the island during the summer, with Longhi et al.'s (2006) calculation of the ecological footprint during the high season in Lampedusa stating that, in order to ensure a sustainable consumption of natural resources, there should be 4.5 more "Lampedusas". Longhi et al.'s (2006) study is also useful to highlight the lack of long-term planning, which is reflected in many of the previous issues discussed, and the complete licence for private initiatives, accompanied by periodic interventions that have brought little benefit to Lampedusa.

Despite the issues highlighted above, Lampedusa has avoided some of the worse consequences of mass tourism, summarised as "balearisation" (Cavallo, 2007). One reason for this has been the establishment of the nature reserve in 1994 but also that its tourism has never been controlled by large tour operators and has, throughout the previous four decades, tended to remain self-organised. Furthermore, despite initial attempts by hotel chains, the island has remained free of such companies, for which the president of the hotel association (Federalberghi) expressed regret during an interview I

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[13] The decrease in tourists' expenditure, and the reduction in their length of the stay, is in line with a general global trend, which is due, among other reasons, to the increasing frequency of travels per person.

carried out in 2016. Nonetheless, it must be observed that tourism is a monoculture in Lampedusa's economy.

The most recent available data reveals that, despite the growth of tourism over the last forty years, the number of accommodation facilities and beds that are officially available has remained largely unchanged. However, it must also be highlighted that there remain a considerable number of unrecorded forms of accommodation, generally located in private houses. This indicates that, after the first explorers in Lampedusa led to the hotel "era" between the 1980s and 1990s, following the 2000s, the tourists visiting the island tend to be more interested in agritourism, as well as renting private apartments and B&Bs, along with guesthouses and, a smaller number camping. This has been confirmed by the data confirming the total number of houses on the island and the increasing number of that are not occupied (Longhi et al. 2006).

Data from the Tourism Observatory of the Sicily Region shows the increasing growth of tourism flows on the island. The only exception was a noticeable drop of arrivals after 2011, which subsequently recovered, and then exceeded this level in 2018[14]. This drop is clearly connected to the socalled "migrant crisis" of 2011, as noted the *Report turismo 2013. Un'analisi dei dati 2011/2012: prospettive per l'anno corrente* (Tourism Report, 2013: An analysis of the data 2011/2012, perspective for the current year) (Ambrò and Contino, 2013) by the Province of Agrigento. This argued that the Pelagie Islands were impact by an approximate reduction of about 16% in response to the «problem of landings that strongly hindered the arrival of tourists».

My goal in this section is not to determine the exact number of tourists visiting Lampedusa over time, but to show its development and its main characteristics. This is beneficial for establishing how tourism has changed, including in relation to migration. Indeed, it has been frequently stated that tourism in Lampedusa suffered a shock from the arrival of migrants. The decrease in the arrival of migrants was noticeable in 2012, and partially in 2013[15], but (as discussed in the second part of this chapter) the changing narratives and the imaginaries of Lampedusa from the island of the "invasion"

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[14] It is possible that the number of tourists was higher before 2018, but this is difficult to document due to the lack of data concerning the use of unregistered short-term holiday accommodation.

[15] Data relating arrivals by plane show that August 2013 was the highest peak of recorded arrivals between 2005 and 2015. This may have been influenced by the visit of the pope at the end of July that year. This confirms that the available data must always be viewed as only partial data.

to that of a "welcoming island" generally played a fundamental role in the worldwide representation of Lampedusa.

Tourism was also influenced by the arrival of migrants, to the point that the related imaginary became an attraction for tourists, in particular following 2013. It can be argued that the last phase of the touristic development of Lampedusa is connected to its links to migration. This new phase of tourism development is characterised by the growing number of initiatives, activities and projects involving tourists around the topic of migration, i.e. summer camps on human rights, the opening of exhibitions, and exchange programmes (Di Matteo, 2017).

2. Lesvos: Mediterranean Carrefours

Lesvos is a Greek island located in the north-eastern Aegean Sea. It forms part of the North Aegean (Vóreio Aigaío) region, composed of nine inhabited islands (i.e. Lesvos; Chios; Psara; Oinousses; Ikaria; Fournoi Korseon; Lemnos; Agios Efstratios; and Samos), as well as several that remain uninhabited. With an area of 1,633 km^2, Lesvos is the third largest Greek island (after Crete and Euboea) and the fifth most populated, having a total of 86,436 inhabitants (Hellenic Statistical Authority, 2011). The island is located a few kilometres from Turkey, separated only by the Mytilene Strait, which is approximately 10 km wide. The capital Mytilene (which earlier gave the name to the island) and is also the capital of the North Aegean region, has a population of 37,890 (Hellenic Statistical Authority, 2011) and is located on the southern part of the eastern coast. It appears that Lesvos took its ancient name "Pentapolis" from the five main cities of Mytilene, Methymna, Antissa, Eresus, and Pyrrha. In addition, a further important city in ancient times was Arisba, located northwest of Kalloní, which was destroyed by an earthquake in the 5th century BCE.

Lesvos is located between latitudes 39°24' and 38°57' north, and longitude 25°49' and 26°37' east. The island has a quasi-triangular shape, with two deep gulfs in the south: the eastern and smaller being the Gulf of Gera and the western and larger forming the Gulf of Kalloni. Three main mountain ranges can be distinguished: Mount Olympos (highest peak 967m); Mount Ordimnos (highest peak 589m); and Mount Leptimnos (highest peak 968m). Of these reliefs, 67% are hilly mountains with sharp peaks, steep slopes and deep valleys (Pareharidis et al., 1999), from which various drainage networks develop. The main plains are those of Kalloni, Ippeos, Perama and Eressos (Papanis and Kitrinou, 2011).

Fig. 3.3 - Map of Lesvos and Mytilene. Elaborated by the author on OpenStreetMap base (Open Database License).

Lesvos belongs to the Pelagonian geotectonic zone (Velitzelos and Zouros, 1997) and is composed mainly of volcanic rocks from the Neogene Age (53,5%), in particular the northern and western side is created of Neogene and Quaternary formations of marlstones and limestones. The south is formed of Preneogene metamorphic rocks, including marlstones, phyllites, schists and greenschists (Alexeouli-Livaditi and Lykoudi, 2003). The outcrop of different types of rocks, along with tectonic activity, causes a wide geological variation and consequently the variety of landscape. Furthermore, around the area of Eressos, Antissa and Sigri (located at the south-eastern side of Lesvos) important accumulations of fossilised tree trunks have been found, composing the Petrified Forest, which has recently become a UNESCO Geopark. This petrified forest, formed approximately twenty million years ago, is particularly important due to its state of conservation, but also because it formed during a later age than other identified petrified forests (Velitzelos and Zouros, 1997).

Lesvos' morphology is characterised with steep slopes that favour the development of runoff and erosion of the terrain. In general, the island's flora is composed by olive groves, Mediterranean maquis, phrygana, pine and

deciduous oak forests, mostly developed in the eastern side (Symeonakis et al., 2014).

Recent volcanic activity, which took place underground, led to the formation of renowned thermal springs, with the main basalt volcanic centres being located near Mytilini and Polychnitos. These volcanic areas have developed along two directions: from west to east, in the southern part of the island from Sigri to Polychnitos, and similarly along a fault going from south Mytilene towards Kalloni. Another direction is followed by the fault on the western side, which goes from south to north, traversing the whole island (Lambrakis and Stamatis, 2008). Lambratis and Stamatis (2008) also identified six hot springs, located in Eftalou, Argenons, Polychnitos, Lisvorion, Gera and Thermi Mytilini.

The morphology of the coast is due to the erosivity of the volcanic rocks form more than half of the coastline. The northern, western, and part of the southern coasts are made exclusively of volcanic rocks, while the eastern and the rest of the southern coast consist of metamorphic rocks. The coasts formed by Neogene and Quaternary deposits include small bays and beaches, while both gulfs of Geras and Kalloni form lagoons and swamps, some of which are permanent and others seasonal. These have been created due to the low level of the coast, the augmented sediment transported by torrents, and the low-energy wave and marine current within the gulfs. In general, the beaches are made of sand and pebbles of varying sizes, whilst the backshore zone are usually covered by grass. There are cliffs along the perimeter of the coast, being mostly found along the northern and eastern coast and being generally between two and three meters in height, but with some reaching the size of falaises, being the product of marine erosion (Livaditis and Alexouli-Livaditi, 2004). The eastern coast generally has a low gradient. However, although this would tend to facilitate the landing of dinghies, most migrants arrive in other areas of the northern coast, where conditions are less conducive.

The wetlands are of great ecological importance, in particular those of the Gulf of Kalloni, which extend over 50% of the bay and include a number of salt pans. In addition, part of the wetlands encompasses the coastal area surrounding the gulf. The area is significant due to: firstly, being conducive for the over-wintering, reproduction and migration of a great variety of wildfowl (approximately 259 bird species); secondly, fishing (in particular oysters and aquaculture); and finally, for ecotourism, specifically birdwatching (Boateng, 2004).

Fig. 3.4 - Wetland at the Gulf of Kalloni.

The island of Lesvos has been, as a result of its geographical position, a centre for flows of people for commercial and political reasons over a number of centuries, although it has gradually lost this centrality over the last two hundred years. The twentieth century opened with one of its many changes of government when, in 1912, Lesvos ceased to be part of the Ottoman Empire and was annexed to Greece as a result of the first Balkan War (1912-1913).

This resulted in the emigration of a large proportion of the Turkish inhabitants, resulting in the abandonment of the northern neighbourhood of Mytilene. At this time, many of the visible signs of the area's Ottoman past were abandoned or destroyed, including mosques and fountains. This is also the time when Lesvos (and in particular Mytilene) became a place of arrival for refugees. Thus, un response to the tension between Greece and Turkey, 100,000 Christians living in Asia Minor sought refuge in Greece (and mainly in Lesvos) between 1912 and 1913. This meant that, by 1916, almost half of Mytilene's inhabitants were refugees, living in abandoned houses in the northern neighbourhood, as well as in tents inside the castle and around the Epano Skala. However, by 1919, most of the refugees had, as a result of improving Greek-Turkish relations, returned to Asia Minor (Glenti, 2019).

Just three years later, a new wave of refugees arrived in Greece and Lesvos, following the military "catastrophe" (as it is known in Greece) in Anatolia in 1922. In 1919, following the end of the First World War, a new

conflict began between Greece and Turkey, which ended with the defeat of the Greek army in 1922 and the treaty of Lausanne in 1923, with the final victory of the Ottoman Empire (soon to become the Republic of Turkey). The Christians living in Turkey were once again persecuted and forced to flee. This led to one million refugees arriving in Greece in 1922, with 300,000 passing through Lesvos, some choosing to settle and others to continue towards the mainland. The historian Glenti (2019, p. 114) noted that: «temporary settlement took over almost every open space and public building of the city. Churches, schools, parks and warehouses were flooded with destitute people».

Despite most of those refugees being temporarily settled in the northern neighbourhood (in those houses left empty by the Muslim community of Lesvos and around the northern port), it is easy to identify echoes of far more recent events. Records from 1927 state that, of those 300,000, approximately 30,000 settled permanently in Lesvos, of which, about 13,000 stayed in Mytilene (Glenti, 2019). In addition, Glenti (2019, p. 114) highlighted that the northern part of Mytilene was the «epicentre of the urban transformation», in the sense of becoming increasing marginalised. A process of slow integration subsequently commenced in 1927, with the opening of a national programme that finally closed in 1970. The first urban refugee settlement was constructed to address the fact that people had been living in shacks, warehouses or other temporary unproper shelters, although this process took a considerable length of time to be completed (Glenti, 2019).

During this period, Lesvos, suffered from considerable economic instability and recession. At the same time, it had, over a couple of decades, already experience an emigration of expertise, with entrepreneurs from Lesvos choosing to invest in Egypt, Crete and Piraeus (Sifneos, 2004). The economic crisis led also to a depopulation of the island, in particular between the 1940s and the 1980s.

During the Second World War, Lesvos was (like other islands in the Aegean, such as Chios and Lemnos), occupied, with the entire country falling under the control of Germany in 1943. In Lesvos, as in the rest of the country, the resistance movement EAM-ELAS[16] continued to operate, and the Germans were expelled from the island in September 1944, one month before they left Greece. A significant event took place in December 1944, when the British attempted to liberate Lesvos, but were pushed back at the port of Mytilene by demonstrations from the local inhabitants. This episode is celebrated as the *Christougenna 1944*, the Christmas 1944 (as the British arrived

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[16] EAM-ELAS was the National Liberation Front–National Popular Liberation Army.

on December 24th), and as an important victory for the left and resistance movement of the island (Mason, 2012).

The end of the Second World War in Greece was followed by the outbreak of civil war, between the Greek Democratic Army (strongly influenced by the Greek Communist Party) and the National Army. This ended with the defeat of the Communists and the party being consequently banned until 1974. In Lesvos, where the left and the Communist party were strong, sociopolitical division between the supporters of the two sides appeared to be less marked and local support helped the guerrillas, who fled to the mountain, situated in the northeast, in Agiasos and in Gera. It is significant that the final remains of this resistance on Lesvos' mountains stayed there until 1955, i.e. over five years after the end of the conflict. The strong presence of the KKE, the Communist party has resulted in Lesvos being known as the "red island" and Montamados "Little Moscow" (Stefatos and Kovras, 2015).

During the following decades, Lesvos' economy remained based on agriculture but with a gradual abandonment of other types of cultivation, and a tendency to specialise in olive groves and grazeland. From the 1970s, there was a decline in agricultural land, which was instead used for housing, particularly in coastal areas, due to the development of tourism as a new source of income.

It is notable that, over a long period of time, but in particular from the beginning of the twentieth century, Lesvos ceased to be an active commercial centre immersed in international and national network (i.e. within the Ottoman Empire), instead becoming a peripheral region of Greece. By the end of the 1990s, a number of political and economic changes had resulted in the North Aegean Region becoming one of the poorest areas of the European Union, with GDP being approximately 30% lower than the national average (Sourbès, 1998), and only achieving the country's average level in the 2000s (Kizos and Iosifides, 2007).

As noted at the beginning of this section, Lesvos is one of largest of the Greek islands. The main settlement is its capital, Mytilene, which is home to almost half of the total population, i.e. of a total of 86,436 inhabitants, the municipality has approximately 38,000, with 29,656 living in the city. In addition, of the seventy-three settlements in Lesvos, only five towns have more than 2,000 inhabitants. As a consequence of the reforms of the Kallikratis government in 2011 (Law 3852/2010 on the "New architecture of self-governance and decentralised administration"), the regional unit of Lesvos was created from the former Lesvos Prefecture, which also formed the current municipality of Lesvos, so unifying the thirteen former municipalities.

Fig. 3.5 - View of Mytilene from the hills surrounding the town.

The population density is fifty-three residents per km^2 and (with the exception of Mytilene) it presents specific socio-economic characteristics of rural areas. There is extensive forestry and agriculture, and settlements are small and of a lower order, which reveals a strong relationship between buildings and the extensive landscape, being therefore considered rural by the population (Pavlis and Terkenli, 2017). Moreover, according to Pavlis and Terkenli (2017, p. 174), rural depopulation, as well as an aging population, have been due to the outflow of those who are younger and better educated to the large Greek urban centres. This appears to be the most common contemporary phenomena, particularly for the most highly educated, especially since the advent of the credit and financial crisis of 2008. Thus, there has been no rural repopulation since 2010. Kizos (2007) noted that the overall population of Lesvos dropped to 3.3% between 1951 and 1991, then rose again to 3.2% until 2001. However, the last census data revealed that it has again decreased between 2001 and 2011, i.e. from 89,935 to 86,436.

Mytilene is more densely populated compared to the rest of the island at 336.8 residents per km², and is the location of local and regional administration headquarters (i.e. the Regional Authority of Northern Aegean and the Ministry of the Aegean). In addition, it is where high schools and the University of Aegean are found, along with most business, and houses the base

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for international police and military forces. Since 2015, it has also been the base for the various NGOs working with migrants. Furthermore, Mytilene is the location of the two main transport infrastructures connecting the island to the mainland, these being the port and the airport, with the latter located about six kilometres outside the town along the southern coast.

The socio-economic make-up of Lesvos shows some characteristics of seasonality typical of islands and some types of tourist destinations. For example, as with other Aegean islands, there is a need to import employees for a variety of services, i.e. education, health and administration. The military also brings officers to the army and navy camps on a regular, if less seasonal, basis (Kizos, 2007). This is even more true in Aegean islands following the institution of "Hotspots" (see *infra* Chapter 3.4). Furthermore, Lesvos has a particularly high number of national and supranational military forces, which temporarily reside on the island for certain periods.

The island of Lesvos has, over a number of centuries, been a flourishing exchange centre, particularly when it comes to local products, some of which remain an important part of the economy of the island, i.e. agricultural products, olive oil, cheese and meat, honey and ouzo. The island's main sources of income consist of tourism, wholesale and retail trade, as well as construction and public administration, although agriculture and livestock breeding (mainly sheep and goat) remain significant activities in rural areas (Pavlis and Terkenli, 2017).

Despite its ongoing abandonment and transformation, the agricultural landscape of the island is still of great importance, in particular the terraced landscape that has been studied in depth by various scholars (Kizos, Dalaka and Petanidou, 2010; Pavlis and Terkenli, 2017; Terkenli, Cisani and Castiglioni, 2018). Terkenli, Cisani and Castiglioni (2018) tracked the origin of terraces on Lesvos since Neolithic times, arguing, in reference to studies by Zagorissiou and Giannoulellis (1995), that:

Many million terraces on Lesvos, some exhibiting intriguing forms and patterns, some stemming from the famous ancient "Lesbian stonemasonry". According to Axiotis, all in all, terraces ("σέτια" in the local dialect) represent a historically uninterrupted practice; in some cases they weave almost as if out of the rock, making it difficult to discern where the bedrock stops and the terrace begins. (Giannoulellis, 1995, p. 9)

While the terraces may have been originally used to support constructions, they now mainly serve agricultural purposes (Terkenli, Cisani and Castiglioni, 2018). Kizos, Dalaka and Petanidou (2010) gave a complete

overview of the terraced landscape of Lesvos, which (together with olive plantations), forms a homogenous landscape, highly characteristic of the island and ingrained in its local identity (Terkenli, Cisani and Castiglioni, 2018, p. 9). Agricultural landscape and terraces also play a role when it comes to tourism, being recognised as one of the typical characteristics of Lesvos, becoming part of the island's attractions. Tourism developed slowly, but has benefitted infrastructure development, urbanisation, and complex co-existence with agriculture.

In Lesvos, as in many other islands (along with as well as the entire country), waste and pollution are of considerable concern (Kontos, Komilis and Halvadakis, 2003). In Lesvos, the "Service of Planning Department, Cleanliness, Recycling, Waste Collection" of solid waste produced on the island is about 100 tons per day in winter, and 120-130 tons during the high tourist season (Kounani and Skanavis, 2018). By 1988, there were fifty uncontrolled dumps, compared to less than fifteen non-sanitary landfills and dumps at the beginning of the 2000s. Moreover, according to the newspaper Ekathimerini, there were fifty-nine landfills in the whole island in 2007, between official *ΧΑΔΑ* (*Χώρος Ανεξέλεγκτης Διάθεσης Αποβλήτων*), namely the Waste Disposal Area and Uncontrolled Disposal (Hatziioannidou, 2007). A new official landfill has been operating at Kleftovigla since 2010. However, the best-known remains that known as the life jacket graveyard, a landfill in which a large quantity of life jackets used by migrants have been thrown away, being located in an abandoned area, which it is still also used as an illegal dump by the local population.

Other environmental issues regard the sewage system and the separation of recyclable waste. In this work, it is important to reflect on this issue, firstly, due to the relationship between pollution and the production of waste with to tourism (i.e. particularly during the high season in accordance with the number of people staying on the island); and secondly, to the arrival and stay of migrants. Most hotels are required to have biological wastewater treatment plants, but often fail to operate these satisfactorily due to the high level of seasonal changes (Kounani and Skanavis, 2018).

Furthermore, the migrant camps (both those managed by the local administration and on the national and supranational level) are impacted by a lack of access to several services, including an appropriate waste collection and decent sanitary conditions. Moreover, the occupants often burn waste for warmth during the winter months. This is due to the inadequate capacity of local services to manage the number of people stuck in one place. Between 2015 and 2020, few attempts have been made to address the issues experienced by the camp of Moria (which has open sewer flowing out from the

camp), while the camp of Kara Tepe (which is managed locally) has undergone some improvements.

It is worth mentioning that the mayor of the island (elected in December 2019) declared that «the Municipality of Mytilene is obliged to transport between thirteen and fourteen tons of waste daily from the K.Y.T. [*Reception and Identification Centres*] of Lesvos to the Lesvos landfill. The daily cost is approximately 2,000 euros and includes the cost of transport and the end of the waste delivery to the landfill»[17] (Refugee Observatory, 2019). Stating that the municipality is unable to clean the area regularly with the current resources, he also requested the Minister to subsidise the municipality with an anual amount of at least 1,000,000 Euros (Refugee Observatory, 2019). According to Kounani and Skanavis (2018), the main impact of the presence of refugees on the island consists of the pressure on water and energy demand, soil destruction, air pollution, deforestation, and waste production.

A further element previously studied in relation to the arrival of migrants on the island concerns the pollution produced by discarded lifejackets and dinghies (Katsanevakis, 2015; Kounani and Skanavis, 2018). This has been highlighted, both by those employing the issue as an instrument against migrants, and those demanding that they should have access to normal transportation to cross the border. Katsanevakis (2015) calculated that the arrival of 1,000 immigrants per day would lead to an estimated waste of at approximately eight tonnes. Next to environmental preoccupations, researchers including Katsanevakis (2015) and Kounani and Skanavis (2018) have highlighted the touristic use of those environments, with the aesthetic values of beaches, or the sea being compromised by the presence of such waste.

It is also important to recognise the difficult economic situation in Lesvos at the end of the twentieth century. Between 1985 and 1986 the island was under a corrective fiscal programme that encouraged a strategy of tourism development based on low salaries, in order to create low-grade and low-cost tourism. This was a fundamental step in the vertical growth ensuring tourism became the main industry throughout Greece (Apostopulos and Sonmez, 2001).

As discussed above, the first visitors had arrived on the island during the 1950s, although, as with the rest of Greece, it was only during the following decade that tourism began to fully develop (Apostopulos and Sonmez, 2001). The first organised form of tourism focussed on the town of Molyvos, which in 1965, was recognised as a protected heritage site. A wealthy inhabitant of Mytilini initiated tours, bringing over visitors to explore the town and stay

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[17] Translation from Greek by Lamprini Papafoti.

overnight. The first hotel opened in 1961, and visitors were subsequently also accommodated in private houses[18].

The first significant development took place (as for the rest of the country) during the 1980s, primarily due to the first arrival of charter flights (mostly from the Netherlands) encouraged by the financial concessions established by the law 1262/1982 on industrial and touristic investments (Sourbès, 1998). This is also the era during which the first paved road was created connecting Mytilene to Molyvos. At this time, both ferries and flights landed in the capital and Molyvos became a renowned tourist destination. Terkenli (2015) reported a ten-fold increase in charter flights between 1983 and 1989 (from about 5,000 to over 50,000). Later, from the middle of the 1990s, this number stabilised at approximately 70,000/80,000 arrivals per year (with the exception of 1997 and 1998 which experienced a strong decrease). It should be noted that the airport in Mytilene had been active since 1948, but was little used for the purposes of tourism until the 1980s.

Next to the interest in Molyvos, the main attractions for visitors to Lesvos consisted of the sea and the beaches (Sourbès, 1998). The main sites during the 1990s were, as they are today, Molyvos, Petra, Kalloni and Polichnitos. During these first fifteen years of touristic activity, the beds available in Lesvos increased in response to demand, with Sourbès (1998) identifying eighty-five hotels and 4,500 beds as being available in 1993, alongside approximately 9,000 private rooms[19].

Moreover, Lesvos soon diversified, even before its main tourist facilities had been fully developed. For example, monasteries and churches became a destination for religious tourism. According to Rey (2010) the monastery of Agios Rafaíl (built in 1960), was aimed by the local administration and church to attract tourists, as indicated by Bishop Protosíngelos Anagnostou in Iakovidou and Turner (1994), next to religious tourism, in 1983 the first women agritourism cooperative opened in Petra (which was also the first in whole Greece); run by twenty-four women it offered seventy-five beds. About ten years later, in 1994 it counted thirty-six women involved and a total of 264 beds. Besides the bed and breakfast service and the other common services they offered daytrips,

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[18] Interview with Michalis Konstantellis, representative of the Tourism Association of Molyvos.

[19] Kizos ans Iosifides (2007) argued that the two main factors pushing Greece towards agritourism were firstly, Greece's entry to the European Economic Community in 1981 and the consequent promotion programmes and initiatives for local and rural development. Secondly, the increased attention on issues of gender equality and living standards of rural populations.

walks, Greek language classes as well as cuisine and traditional dances classes (Iakovidou and Turner, 1994, p. 482).

This demonstrates the growth of tourism in Lesvos, showing considerable potential from a number of aspects, including the richness of the island's history, culture and natural habitats. However, it failed to become a destination for mass tourism. As noted by Spilanis and Vayanni (2003), at the beginning of the 2000s, Lesvos' tourism was not comparable to the growth experienced by other Aegean islands, in particular in the Cyclades. Moreover, only a small percentage of its GDP (i.e. 2.1%) was produced by hotels and restaurants during this period, when compared to the number of tourists. Kizos and Iosifides (2007) explained this as resulting from two factors: the low quality of services available, with the consequent low added value; and the widespread informal economy, which prevented income from being registered.

Tourism on Lesvos has continued to be mostly based in small family businesses and modest hotels. The core attractions have tended to remain unchanged, with the main form of tourism being the 3Ss model (the most famous beaches are in Vatera, Varia, Agios Isidoro, Skala Eresou, Molyvos, Thermi and Anaxo). Nonetheless, next to this primary form of tourism, Lesvos has been able to diversify, although not always successfully. Firstly, as noted above, religious tourism plays a vital role, in particular for internal tourism, attracting primarily Greeks. As well as the monasteries, the village of Agiasos has become particularly famous for its church, but also as a small traditional village. The same is true for Agia Paraskevi, which also has a number of archaeological sites. Moreover, according to Papanis and Kitrinou (2011), the second most popular reason) to visit Lesvos (i.e. 19% of their respondents) is to undertake pilgrimages.

Alongside the above developments, agritourism has, despite various limitations, continued to increase. Kizos and Iosifides (2007, p. 59) argued that «it lacks coherence and strategy at a national level, and remains fragmented at the local level. Meanwhile, it has been claimed that it is more "tourism" than "agro" […]». Their study counted 154 units in total, of which 116 offered accommodation, accompanied by fourteen restaurants, and twenty-four restaurants with accommodation. However, the fact that majority of these are located in coastal and "conventional" tourist settlements, combined with a small proportion (12%) also offering additional activities and services related to agriculture or nature in general, made the authors consider this type of service as generally equivalent to any other "tourism providers" present on the island. Papanis and Kitrinou (2011), on their side, found that in general 12% of visitors travel to Lesvos for alternative tourism, including among others agritourism and ecotourism.

Other resources consist of the island's natural heritage. During previous decades, the Petrified Forest and its museum have started to become an attraction, in particular after 2012, when it was included in the UNESCO Global Geopark Network, followed in 2013 by the complete island. However, the Petrified Forest Park has been accessible since 1987, with new sites being opened up to the public, including a museum in Sigri. As discussed during the section on the wetlands of Kalloni and Gera, birdwatching and ecotourism are well developed, along with well-signposted trekking rails and paths. Moreover, the thermal springs of the island are very well known, despite most lacking in any services. These attractions are of particular interest for northern Europeans, who represent the most numerous international tourists in Lesvos. Papanis and Kitrinou (2011) highlighted that the great majority of visitors, both Greek and international, stated that their main motivation to choose Lesvos was its natural beauty.

A final remark regarding cultural tourism in Lesvos concerns the island's failure to exploit its rich heritage, both material and immaterial. A great part of the architecture has been abandoned, possibly due a lack of funding, and even when some investment has been made to improve their accessibility. One example is the castle of Mytilene, which can be freely visited in some parts, but lacks a welcoming atmosphere, due to signs showing "opening hours" but many have been vandalised, while parts of the castle seem to be permanently closed and there is no place to enquire. Another example is the Yeni mosque, also in Mytilene, whose remnants hint at its ancient beauty, but which is completely inaccessible, primarily due to security reasons. However, this kind of neglect is not universal, with other towns and villages, (i.e. example Molyvos) being well preserved and managed and matching the postcard image of many tourist sites.

Another aspect that has developed in more recent times is gastronomic tourism. Lesvos has been advertised for its local products and cuisine, which accords closely with the agricultural aspect of the island. There are a conspicuous number of restaurants and taverns, despite Terkenli (2015) considering them to be generally of low quality. This is also related to the lack of luxury accommodation, i.e. 4- and 5-star hotels.

Various studies, including that of Terkenli, Cisani and Castiglioni (2018) have argued that, despite the great potential of its natural and cultural resources, Lesvos still lacks long-term planning for tourism, along with a comprehensive action strategy and vision, resulting in various problems, both quantitative and qualitative. Terkenli (2015) argued that the main issues include Lesvos' dependency on large organisations, as well as a lack of institutional and bureaucratic support, i.e. cooperation with national institutions

and the Greek National Tourism Organisation. She also showed that, over a period of two decades, package tourism has decreased, while the industry remains deeply dependent on big tour operators. Moreover, the island's infrastructure continues to be inadequate and demonstrates a general deterioration in the local environment and landscape (Terkenli, 2015). A final characteristic is that of seasonality, with the extreme changes in the number of visitors between winter and summer impacting most of the island outside Mytilene (Terkenli, 2005).

The most important aspects related to tourism facilities on Lesvos are, as previously discussed: firstly, that accommodation is of medium and lower standard, with Papanis and Kitrinou (2011) highlighting one of its attractions as the low cost of accommodation, i.e. there are no 5-star hotels, and just eleven classed as 4-star. In 2005, there were a total of 132 hotels on Lesvos, offering 8,703 beds. As it can be seen in the table below, the number of hotels and beds have decreased in comparison to the previous decade, potentially due to the economic crisis of 2008, which had a particularly adverse impact on Greece.

Most hotels are 2- and 3-star, while the number of hotel activities remained relatively unchanged over the three years discussed in this book. However, as also noted above, alongside the traditional types of accommodation (i.e. B&Bs, hotels, bungalows, camping) there are also a larger number of private rooms and apartments that tend to be rented out in a less official manner, i.e. there are more than 300 Airbnb listings for Lesvos, and it likely that most of the available accommodation has not been officially registered.

The most indicative and reliable data concerning the number of arrivals relate to incoming flights. This demonstrates that, similar to Lampedusa, there was a noticeable decrease in arrivals between 2016 and 2017, in response to the refugee crisis, followed by a dramatic rise in 2018, when the number of arrivals exceeded the level prior to the crisis. These data also need to be considered in relation to the arrival of international actors linked to the presence of migrants, as well as the global attention given to the island, which has led to a new increase on tourism.

As confirmed through a study carried out by Tsartas et al. (2020), the arrival of migrants is generally associated with a decrease in the number of tourists. As previously mentioned in relation to Lampedusa, this is not always linear, at least over the long term. Tsartas et al. (2020) analysed the relationship between these two fields in Lesvos and Kos, the two Aegean islands most closely associated (alongside Chios, Samos and Leros) with the arrival of refugees. They recorded the perception of local stakeholders, both from institutions and private business, concluding that there has been a

considerable impact on these islands. They identified a significant increase in the number of accommodation cancellations in Lesvos (i.e. up to 30%) resulting in the contraction of the touristic period and therefore of employment. The decrease in the number of arrivals and length of stay was also confirmed in an interview released by a representative of the Ministry of Tourism, who stated that, in 2015, 178,000 overnight stays were cancelled, both from tour operators and fully independent travellers. The ministry also observed the reduction in the length of the tourist season by about two months. In addition, it registered the cancellation of conventions and cruise ships, along with flights from major tourism markets[20].

Nonetheless, the government attempted to put in place a number of initiatives to counterbalance this situation. These were presented to me during an interview with a representative of the Ministry of Tourism. In September 2015, the Ministry established a working group to draw up a report outlining the "Consequences of the refugee flows on the Aegean Islands". This specified the measures required to respond to the issue and recover the island's tourism. The main initiatives were as follows:

- Intensifying the efforts of state authorities for the alleviation of the phenomenon.
- Recording of the phenomenon in all its aspects by the parties involved.
- Developing a strategic and operative plan, in cooperation with the jointly competent ministries.
- Ensuring the required resources (both from the national budget and European funds) to support the mitigation of the situation and compensate for the negative impact on the local economy.
- Cooperating with the competent tourism authorities (i.e. the Hellenic Chamber of Hotels and the Hoteliers' Associations) for the recording of the consequences of the refugee movement in relation to tourism bookings.
- The prompt implementation of an integrated programme to address potential negative impacts on the economy of the islands most affected[21].

Moreover, alongside these general objectives, there were also a number of practical interventions (see also Tsartas et al., 2020), including the following. Firstly, the promotion of the island as a tourist destination in the major markets (mainly Germany). Secondly, organising farm trips with journalists,

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[20] Interview with the Ministry of Tourism, 19/05/2020.
[21] Interview with the Ministry of Tourism, 19/05/2020.

bloggers and tour operators targeting major markets, i.e. China, Russia, the UK, Italy and France. Thirdly, waiving the fees for participation in the islands' tourism market, in order to support, and give additional impetus, to international exhibitions. Finally, the promotion of domestic tourism, allocating funds to promote vacations in Lesvos for lower income Greek citizens. This was implemented through the provision of free tickets for those entitled to reach the island, and extended the length of the stay (compared to previous programmes) from between five and ten days. The initiative was aimed to motivate Greek visitors to stay longer in Mytilene, in order to reinforce the overnight rates in Lesvos[22]. This last programme was also active during the summer of 2019.

I also wish to consider the role of volunteer tourism. Tsartas et al. (2020) acknowledged that the presence of volunteers played a fundamental part in the recovery of tourism (in particular some sectors) over the last few years. Volunteers, as shown through this work, use accommodation (mostly hotels) and services, and visit destinations previously considered attractions for "conventional" tourists. Thus, despite the Ministry of Tourism preferring not to express an opinion on the role of volunteers in the touristic industry during my interviews, they simultaneously recognised that, despite the first negative publicity: «from the time that all of these media partners came to the island and saw the beauty, neglecting sort of the problem the islands is facing, they discovered a new destination[23].»

3. "No Island is Just an Island". A Comparative Examination of Lampedusa and Lesvos

The above overview of the two islands comprising the case studies employed in this work reveal that Lampedusa and Lesvos differ considerably from each other, geographically, geomorphologically and historically. However, as pointed out by Cavallo (2013), every island is the concrete incarnation of one possibility among many[24]. The concept of islandness is itself

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[22] Interview with the Ministry of Tourism, 19/05/2020.
[23] Ministry of Tourism, 19/05/2020.
[24] Here, I do not lean towards exceptionalism, seeing islands as «too unique» (King, 2009, p. 56), nor towards the generalisation that wishes islands to be a microcosm of the world (Brunhes, 1920). Moreover, this section is not an attempt to define the identities of Lampedusa and Lesvos, as this would be somewhat superficial. Instead, I have attempted to grasp some of the characteristics of these islands from the perspective of the relationship between their spaces and the people who traverse them.

relative and plural and depends as much on historical and anthropogeographical characteristics as the physical. In addition, the relations with what is external to the island is important to the definition of the island identity: «a complex play of exchanges, material and immaterial flows mould it» (Cavallo, 2013, p. 183). It is from this point of view that I intend to briefly examine the differences in the way Lampedusa and Lesvos relate to those who are, and were, foreigners.

As noted previously, Lampedusa has, over a long period of time, remained uninhabited, with arrivals being either by chance, or in need of a safe port, with their stay being to supply ships with water and food, or wait for a storm to pass. It has only been in modern times, and as a result of colonisation, that Lampedusa has become an inhabited island. People have been moved there by force to exploit its sources, but primarily for strategic reasons, with the UK desiring to control Lampedusa as it did Malta. Thus, the first inhabitants were not by choice, but were offered what appeared to be a more conclusive location and an improved future. At the same time, as already noted, Lampedusa has been used as a prison. If islands can be considered archetypes, alongside their representation as idyllic and ideal is the symbolism of a place that is both closed and encloses. This is demonstrated by the fact that islands were already used as spaces of exile by the Romans, and throughout history, including today (Cavallo, 2013). Lampedusa has, in this sense, been inscribed as this double-faced archetype of the island of salvation (or the welcoming island) and that of imprisonment (or the island of invasion and death).

Lesvos, by contrast, has been an important centre for trades and culture, being a fundamental node of exchanges, not only of goods, but also of people, like Sappho's Tihasus, which formed a closed space of safety and culture for women made by women, but also the chance for young women to meet, live together, acquire an education and be initiated into love through homoerotism (Cavallo, 2019). This recalls the archetype of the island as a femininised space, that of "the island of women" (Cavallo, 2013, 2019). Moreover, as noted in the previous section, Lesvos was a space of encounter and exchange due to its various governments, (i.e. the Greek, the Genovese and the Ottomans), which brought with them differences that have both enriched the island, as well as bringing danger. The island was, as it is today, a land of arrival of people from different places and cultures[25]. King (2009), in

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[25] I am tempted to refer here to Cavallo's work "Oggetti geografici, oggetti simbolici. Isole e insularità in geografia culturale" (2013), when she refers to the «voices from the margins» (p. 200). In that case, the marginalised were women and children, and in particular she reports Frame's fascination, as a child, for the sound and meanings of the word "island" that

analysing the definition of nissology[26] given by McCall (1994), wondered how to define the exact boundary «between islanders and non-islanders, insiders and outsiders. Given islands' long histories of migration, both in and out, who is an islander?» (p. 57). Indeed, as Cavallo (2013) reminds us, islands have always been borderlands and, as such, permeable and mongrel.

This last remark prompts a reflection on the contemporary form of exchange and encounter between insiders and outsiders: between firstly, permanent residents, secondly, temporary residents held on the islands for an undetermined time (i.e. migrants), and thirdly, more or less temporary visitors (i.e. tourists).

Firstly, tourism has, following the Second World War, developed in a variety of ways around the Mediterranean basin, with coastal areas and islands becoming a primary attraction, usually viewed as a new opportunity for economic growth. Despite the fact that neither Lampedusa or Lesvos have experienced the most egregious impacts of mass tourism (and have developed this industry fairly late compared to other Mediterranean destinations), there are a number of observable differences and similarities. I suggest that these fall into two types: on the one hand, they depend on material preconditions and, on the other, on the type of policies applied.

From the first point of view, there are a number of elements to bear in mind, particularly considering the pre-existent conditions. This includes the size of the island and its distance from the mainland. It has been widely demonstrated that those characteristics considered "typical of insularity", (i.e. isolation), are not valid indistinctively for every island and do not only and directly depend on physical distance from the centre (usually the mainland). However, even a partial examination of the two islands considered here reveals the role played by their position and the size in their interconnectedness with the mainland, as well as the development of tourism.

Lampedusa was, for long time, overlooked by the Kingdom of Sicily and (due to the harshness of its living conditions, i.e. the lack of water) was only populated only when it obtained a strategic position in the Mediterranean for military reasons. On the other hand, Lesvos was more accessible, being larger and with more resources, as well as being positioned closer to the mainland. This led to one of the main differences between the two, with Lesvos being, for centuries, richer and with an important cultural, religious and commercial past, while Lampedusa remained relatively poor (despite a

became in her phonetic game (insisting on the "s" which is silent) "Is land". This childish, but meaningful play on words invited me to keep playing this game making of the same word, silencing again that "s" which Frame underlined so stubbornly, a new meaning: "I land".

[26] The term was first used by Moles (1982) in *Nissonologie ou science des îles*.

brief exception connected with fishing during the twentieth century), including failed attempts at agricultural development, that have left the island even further impoverished. Another factor influencing the precondition of the touristic development in Lampedusa was related to the military and administrative (as a place of exile) use of the island.

The above elements have led to tourism being first developed in Lesvos, so that, as early as the 1960s and 1970s, it was not only based on the 3Ss model but engaged in broadening its visitor attractions. This was possible primarily as a result of its far richer natural, cultural and historical resources. In addition, religious tradition also played a key role, in particular when it came to internal tourism. By contrast, Lampedusa was compelled to look to the sea as its only resource for attracting tourists, although its military structure and infrastructure (i.e. the airport and phoneline) created the preconditions for such development.

This study focuses, as noted above, on the more specifically touristic characteristics of high seasonality, despite Lesvos having a milder climate, particularly in Mytilene. A further interesting aspect differentiating the type of tourism developed by each island is that Lampedusa is characterised by internal tourism, with an indiscernible number of foreign visitors, while tourism in Lesvos is mainly international, with most arriving from north European countries.

I believe this last point takes on particular relevance when comparing "conventional" and volunteer tourists. Despite the lack of specific statistics relating to this particular group, it became evident during my field work (see Chapter 4) that, in both islands, the nationalities of the volunteer tourists closely corresponded to those of the island's general tourists.

The relationship between tourism and the arrival of migrants reveals a similar pattern for both islands, as they have been involved in an emergency situation (Lampedusa in 2011 and Lesvos in 2015), which led to a rapid drop in the number of tourists. In addition, the crisis continued in both cases over the subsequent two years, followed by a rapid (and ongoing) increase in tourists. I believe this took place despite the initiative taken by the islands' respective governments to specifically address the issue of tourism. Indeed, while Lesvos had some measures put in place, this was not so for Lampedusa. I therefore consider that a greater role was played by the communication and mediatisation regarding these islands, which turned Lampedusa and Lesvos into symbols of a Europe that was both welcoming, and hostile.

4. The Migration Phenomenon in the Central and Eastern Mediterranean Basin

Southern Europe (mainly Italy, Greece and Spain) has played a fundamental role in the global map of migration over previous centuries, initially as countries of emigration, and now as countries of arrival (King, 2000; Colucci, 2018). This has been as a result of a number of reasons, including that South European countries have a geographical position and morphology which, according to King (2000), makes these countries' borders «not possible to "seal" without their complete militarization and creation of an "iron curtain"» (p. 9). These countries therefore tend to be where migrants arrive by boat, although (as shown by many studies) this is not the main means of irregular entrance into Europe, albeit the most visible (Sciurba, 2009; Cuttitta, 2012; De Genova, 2013). Over the previous three decades, there has been an increased focus on routes bringing migrants from Africa or Asia to Europe through its southern coasts; in particular the central and eastern Mediterranean[27].

In addition, media attention, along with the main political discourse, have turned migration into one of the central matters of concern and discussion in the European Union, as well as neighbouring countries. This tends to view migration as a destabilising challenge, which has to be contained if not completely stopped, using words relating to illegality, terrorism, trafficking, and death[28].

These routes, and consequently the countries migrants traverse and arrive, are important for the issue of position and numbers. UNHCR states that, in 2019, 74,613 migrants arrived in Greece (UNHCR, 2019b), 11,471 in Italy (UNHCR, 2019c) and 32,513 in Spain (UNHCR, 2019d). However, the most important factors constructing these spaces as crucial for migration relate to the interaction of policies and political and economic interests at both a national and international level, as well as the agency and strategies of those traversing them. This is why an analysis of "spaces of transit"[29] is fundamental to understanding how EU policy on migration has changed and been

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[27] During the Thessaloniki European Council (19-20th June 2003) the intention was underlined (already expressed in Seville, in 2002) to give the absolute political priority to the topic of immigration (Guarneri, 2005). This was confirmed by the creation of FRONTEX in 2005.

[28] EU legislation make it almost impossible to immigrate legally. Furthermore, creating illegality becomes a means of control, in particular regarding the redistribution (and exploitation) of labour population (King, 2000; Sciurba, 2009).

[29] Even though, as it will emerge, calling them simply "spaces of transit" is reductive (Bernardie-Tahir, Schmoll, 2014b).

applied over time, both in the first country of arrival, such as Italy, Greece or Spain, but also Malta and Cyprus, or those spaces where people are concentrated, either institutionally (i.e. in the many camps and reception or detention centres around Europe) or spontaneously (i.e. in Idomeni, Ventimiglia, or Calais). These are peculiar observatories of the management of lives on the move, and can be read as those borderscapes encountered by the various trajectories of bodies, discourses, polices, hegemonic and counterhegemonic practices (Brambilla, 2015a).

In order to analyse how these borderscapes have been created in these spaces of transit (and more specifically on the islands of Lampedusa and Lesvos), I consider it vital to first examine the evolution of the European migration policy, before looking at the specificity of these two islands. Prior to the current "refugee crisis", various forms of migration crises have traversed Europe over the previous four decades, while some of the same anti-migration issues were apparent in the 1970s and 1980s, i.e. economic, sociocultural and security (Pastore, 2017; Sciurba, 2009; Colucci, 2018). Thus, immigrants have been previously labelled as those who would "steal our jobs", "change our culture" and "certainly become criminals". Moreover, a continuity of such narratives has been accompanied by a continuity of policies. The roots of the current European policy on migration can be found in the Schengen Treaty, signed in 1985, and subsequently the Schengen Convention, signed in 1990. A few days before the signature of the latter, in June 1990, another fundamental treaty had been signed, i.e. the Dublin Convention. This was a central step, as one of its main rules states that the country legally responsible for asylum seekers is that of first arrival. Thus, for neoliberal economic reasons, Schengen freed the internal movement within the EU, and aimed at strengthening the external borders of the Union, while the Dublin Convention simultaneously placed the "burden"[30] of dealing with those arriving from outside the Union on a small number of countries (Pastore, 2017). This formed the foundations of "Fortress Europe".

Furthermore, Huysman (2000) noted that the entire European apparatus of common regulations concerning migration was aimed at reducing population flows and the number of requests for asylum. Among the instruments used for such restrictive and control-oriented goal practices is the creation of the Eurodac system[31], as well as the coordination of visa policy, alongside

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[30] This term is used with reference to the concept of "burden sharing" employed within the EU from the 1990 to refer to this effect of the Dublin regulation (Pastore, 2017), being codified in the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1997.

[31] The "European Dactyloscopy" is the common EU fingerprint database for identifying asylum seekers and irregular border-crossers.

the co-ordination and facilitation of "readmission agreements"[32]. Furthermore, with the Convention of 1990, applying the Schengen Agreement of 1985, migration was already related to terrorism, transnational crime and thus the need for border control and securitisation (Huysman, 2000).

It cannot be denied that the EU has also promoted its role as the guarantor of principles and human rights against any adverse decrees or laws of single states, and has also introduced a number of significant instruments to guarantee asylum[33]. Nonetheless, from the early 2000s, the EU policy on migration did not change its main goals, despite the implementation of various instruments. Since 1999, the EU has created a Common European Asylum System (CEAS), together with several legislative measures harmonising common minimum standards for asylum (1999-2005). Moreover, the Dublin Regulation was updated in 2003, and EASO (European Asylum Support Office) was created in 2010. The general aims continued to focus on preventing irregular arrivals and reinforcing border control, often motivated as measures against human trafficking and terrorism, and externalising the management of those attempting to reach Europe as the responsibility of third countries.

Moreover, the forced division between the refugee and migrant (which derives from the Convention of Genève of 1951), is anachronistic for contemporary migration, since the current motivation for people to leave their own countries to seek protection abroad is frequently a mixture of economic and socio-political reasons, combined with human rights violations. Furthermore, the fact that an asylum request is the only legal means of entering the EU means that the gradual weakening of this instrument has been employed to further control and hinder migration flows (Sciurba, 2009).

Thus, in 2011, as an aftermath of the Arab Springs, the first of the two most important European "migration crises" took place. This could be viewed as more a crisis of Schengen than a result of the number of arrivals. Firstly, because the number of people fleeing was not sufficient to create an emergency, and secondly, because this "crisis" led France to close its borders

[32] EURAs are set between the European Union and non-EU countries, to enable the return of people residing irregularly in a member state to their country of origin, or to a country of transit. These are based on reciprocal obligations (Lilienkamp and Saliba, 2015).

[33] Charter of the Fundamental Rights in 2000; European Council Directive 2004/83/EC of 29th April 2004, then substituted by Directive 2011/95/EU of the European Parliament (European Parliament, European Council, 2011) and of the Council of 13th December 2011, on standards for the qualification of third-country nationals or stateless persons as beneficiaries of international protection, for a uniform status for refugees or for persons eligible for subsidiary protection, and for the content of the protection granted; Directive 2013/32/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26th June 2013 (European Parliament, European Council, 2013) on common procedures for granting and withdrawing international protection.

with Italy, and question the main principle of the treaty (Garelli, 2015; Pastore, 2017). It was at this point that the concept of "burden sharing" was reinforced, in particular by those countries forced to deal with the majority of arrivals.

A new long-term plan was presented by the EU in 2015, consisting of the European Agenda on Migration, composed of immediate action related to saving lives at sea, targeting criminal smuggling networks (through Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) operations), and responding to high-volumes of arrivals through relocations. Moreover, it established a common approach to granting protection through resettlements, as well as creating the basis for working in partnership with third countries to block migration up-stream (using the "excuse" of hazardous journeys, the Commission and the European External Action Service (EEAS) pushed for agreements with third countries to stop flows, i.e. the EU-Turkey agreement). The final instrument was the Hotspot approach. These immediate actions were aligned to four long-term pillars, corresponding to the characteristic goals of the EU policy: reducing the incentives for irregular migration; border management (expressed as saving lives and securing external borders); a strong common asylum policy; and a new policy on legal migration.

In this long-term plan, the Hotspot approach deserves to be examined in greater depth. The first Hotspot, activated as an exploratory approach, was in Lampedusa, followed by other Italian and Greek cities and islands, including Lesvos (Mentzelopoulou, Luyten and Claros, 2018). However, although both Hotspots in Lampedusa and Lesvos were activated in October 2015, the implementation of the Hotspot approach in Greece was developed on the work done in Italy.

In practice, the Hotspots have resulted in spaces violating human rights, in particular as a result of the degrading conditions in which people are held, as well as the procedures applied. Thus, migrants are arbitrarily detained, with no legal basis, being frequently forced to give their fingerprints against their will, including through violence. Hotspots are not simply places where these procedures take place, but constitute a method that goes beyond the physical space. The main function of Hotspots relates procedures aimed at separating those who do, and do not, have the right to claim asylum, this being based primarily on nationality, rather than personal histories. It also reiterates the discourse separating "economic migrants" (i.e. bogus refugees) and "true refugees". According to the Association for Juridical Studies on Immigration, the Hotspot approach is at the heart of the restrictive European policy on asylum. Furthermore, the relocation process (which has been considered as the most innovative instrument of this approach) is not only

ineffective, but also an instrument used against personal freedom, due to its coercive aspect that removes any choice from those who are relocated (Ferri and Massimi, 2018).

A further critical element concerns the ambiguous role of European fonctionnaires of the EU agencies (Frontex, EASO, Europol and Eurojust), with their mandate being unclear, as well as their operational mode (ASGI Puglia, 2016). Brown (2017, p. 3) noted that these agencies «regain EU control over immigration to Europe and control over the migrants themselves». Painter et al. (2017) identified that such EU agencies are given full discretionary power in their areas of jurisdiction, so underlining the responsibility taken on by NGOs for population management and welfare provision, replacing: «conventional welfare state provisions: essentially, a new form of privatisation within EU territory where past state and public sector functions are routed toward UNHCR, who then acts as a proxy allocator of funds to NGOs» (p. 259), thus substituting the previous responsibilities of the nation state. This point recalls Sin, Oakes and Mostafanezhad's (2015) argument in relation to the NGOization and privatisation of the humanitarian sector (see *infra* Chapter 1).

5. Hegemonic Borderscaping of Lampedusa and Lesvos

A number of scholars have considered islands as contemporary spaces of arrival and transit, but also the settlement of migrants, both in the Mediterranean and worldwide (King, 2009; Sheller, 2009; Cuttitta, 2012, 2014; Bernardie-Thair and Schmoll, 2014a, 2014b; Loyd and Mountz, 2014). As previously discussed, Mediterranean islands have become "emergency" locations particularly as (despite not constituting the main entry points for migrants) they are more visible and "sensational". Therefore, as noted by Bernardie-Thair and Schmoll (2014a, p. 88): «the symbolic or performative construction of irregular migration is however largely based on islands» which at the same time «epitomize the effectiveness or failure of both migration/asylum control and expressions of humanity and solidarity».

In particular, irregular migration to southern European islands reveals some specific characteristics. Firstly, media attention, with arrivals by boat or rubber dinghies, and the inconstant and inhomogeneous flows, facilitating instrumentalisation, in both the political and media discourse. This is also due to the fact that the humanitarian urgency related to migration is made tangible when located on islands (or during journeys to reach islands), consequently strengthening the «social construction of migration as a dramatic

and unpredictable» (Bernardie-Thair and Schmoll, 2014c, p. 4). This enables islands to become borderscapes, whereby spectacularising migrants' illegality (De Genova, 2002, 2005, 2013; Cuttitta, 2012).

The typical characteristics associated with islands are their (relative) remoteness, isolation and smallness, which can exacerbate their visibility and therefore the phenomenon of migration, or they can be liminal areas, in which people are detained and hidden from view. Thus, their confinement on islands results in migrants being simultaneously strategically "invisibilised" and "hypervisibilised" (Mountz, 2015). For example, stressing «the high-profile, high-security, and extremely expensive enforcement mechanisms that become popular news stories, such as marine interceptions and island detentions, the more mundane violence of interception and confinement are hidden from view» (Mountz, 2015, p. 190).

Furthermore, distance can be useful in humanitarian rhetoric, in order to produce politics of pity and therefore public sympathy. However, Mountz (2015) suggested that, at the same time, fearful publics are created by the securitisation and the consequent (geo)politics of fear. Part of the borderisation processes (Cuttitta, 2012, 2014) of islands, the mechanisms described by Mountz create a useful lens through which to examine the occurrences in Lesvos and Lampedusa from the point of view of policies and discourses, as well as the phenomenon of migrant support volunteer tourism.

Another element to take into consideration for this work, is the fact that islands have often been considered as laboratories, «quintessential sites for experimentation» (Baldacchino, 2007, p. 165). Other scholars, including Bernardie-Tahir and Schmoll (2014b), use a rhetorical figure to describe the island. Drawing on Bernard Debarbieux's (1995) concept of the island as a synecdoche, they consider it as part of an increasingly globalised world, and prefer the notion of "places of condensation" (Debarbieux, 1995), which I feel applies more closely to this current case than that of a laboratory.

Lampedusa's history of migration between the end of the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s reveals only an insignificant number either arriving autonomously or being rescued at sea, i.e. 0.71% of total arrivals in Italy were registered in Lampedusa. Nonetheless, the mediatic attention on the island was already quite high (Cuttitta, 2012). Until the mid 1990s, Lampedusa had no official structure to host, or give initial assistance, to those arriving by sea. Migrants remained on the island only until they were able to catch the ferry to Sicily. As the number of arrivals grew, a building adjacent to the airport was adapted as a first reception centre, managed by volunteers from the local Red Cross. From 1998, this location housed a "Centre of Temporary Reception and Welcoming" (*Centro di Permanenza Temporanea e*

Accoglienza). According to Ricci (2015), this had an ambiguous status until 2006, being also a Centre of First Relief and Sorting (*Centro di Primo Soccorso e Smistamento*).

The centre could host up to eighty people, but, after the passing of the Bossi-Fini law (Law 30 of July 2002, n. 189), it was enlarged and, by 2002, could host up to 190. However, conditions inside the centre were unacceptable, being frequently overcrowded, while migrants were unable to receive any information concerning their status or why they were being detained, as well an understanding of their rights. In addition, a report by MSF (2004) found that, although detainees were guaranteed access to a lawyer through a request to the magistrate, this had not been implemented prior to 2004. This was the time (2002-2003) when Lampedusa saw the first "wave" of arrivals, for which it was clearly unprepared.

After 2004, as a consequence of an agreement signed by Italy with Tunisia[34], the starting point of the routes leading to Lampedusa shifted towards Libya. This was also when the first actions of push back towards Libya took place, with over 3,000 people being sent back between October 2004 and March 2006. To confirm the violation of human rights, in 2005, both representatives of UNHCR (in March), two senators (Chiara Acciarini and Tana Zulueta), along with the lawyer Alessandra Ballerini (in April) and one deputy Elettra Deiana (in May) were prevented from entering the centre. This action was condemned by the European Parliament, particularly as they had authorised access to Libyan authorities (European Parliament, 2005). During that same year, the journalist Fabrizio Gatti conducted an undercover investigation within the reception centre in Lampedusa. For a period of eight days, he posed as a migrant from Kurdistan, being finally released with the "*foglio di via*", stating that he had to leave the country within seven days. The investigation also confirmed the dire conditions in which people were being held (Gatti, 2005).

These facts, together with pressure from NGOs and the change of leadership at the Italian government influenced a number of changes in the management of the system. This was due to the government being right wing until 2006, followed by a centre-left regime between 2006 and 2008. Repatriation and push backs were stopped, and the formal status of the centre was

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[34] Several bilateral agreements with countries of North Africa (in particular Tunisia, Morocco and Libya) were signed and renewed over the years. These agreements were generally aimed at readmitting illegal migrants to the country of origin or of transit, or to establish cooperation with police patrolling operations.

changed to a CPSA[35]. Here, people should have stayed for a maximum of forty-eight hours (as well as a further forty-eight if waiting for a validation from a judge). This did not take place in Lampedusa, where migrants could be detained unlawfully[36] in the centre for a far longer period (Save the Children, 2009).

The construction of the new centre of Contrada Imbriacola began in 2006 The reception centre was deliberately hidden, being placed in a valley-like area. The new structure was built to host 381 people, and up to 804 in emergencies (Ricci, 2015). The centre was initially open to various NGOs (i.e. OIM, UNHCR, CRI, and Save the Children), along with agreements with MSF and the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, as well as access being given to researchers (Cuttitta, 2012). Alongside this interplay of visibility/invisibility, and a redeemed public opinion, new agreements were signed with Libya at the end of 2007.

There was a further change in the style of management with the installation of the new government in 2008. The centre became, at the beginning of 2009, a CIE[37]; although this change of status (decree 21, January 2009) was never published on the Gazzetta Ufficiale (Cuttitta, 2012). By December of that year, the centre was already overcrowded and on January 23rd, 2009 migrants held their first large public demonstration on Lampedusa. Some of those detained at the centre also went on hunger strike to protest and a month later the centre was set on fire (Cuttitta, 2012). As a result, using the "emergency" as its justification, the government established, by means of a decree, the extension of the maximum duration of detention.

At this time, the main risks to migrants were either arbitrary detention or push back, which could be identified as the muscular behaviour of the state (Katz, 2007), being a manifestation of the «borders as sites where highly performative shows of enforcement are carried out» (Mountz, 2015, p. 190). Mountz (2015) also argued that a performance of border enforcement in the

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[35] The Ministery of Internal Affairs defines CPSA (Centre of First Relief and Welcoming) as follows: «In these centres, migrants receive the first necessary health care, are identified through photographing and can request international protection». In a second phase, in accordance to differing conditions, migrants are taken to other types of structures (CDA, CARA o CIE). CDAs and CPSAs were introduced with an inter-ministerial decree on February 16th, 2006 (Ministero dell'Interno, 2020).

[36] Public authority can detain a person that is not accused of any offence for a maximum of twenty-four hours (D.Lgs. 144/2005).

[37] CIE (Centres of Identification and Expulsion) were regulated by the decree-law n. 92 of 2008, the law n. 94 of 2009 and the law n. 85 of 2009 (as a ratification of the Convention of Prüm), the legislative decree n. 159 of 2008 on refugee status, the legislative decree n. 160 of 2008 on family reunification, and finally the decree-law n. 151 of 2008.

archipelago was aimed to draw attention to dramatic topics capable of appealing to the media, while distracting from the everyday forms of violence taking place, including prolonged (and unjustified) detention in the centre in Lampedusa. Thus, the sensational can obscure (including through the induced fear of threats to national security) the human insecurity.

Congruently with this situation, the next step was to reach "*immigrazione zero*" (zero immigration) (Cuttitta, 2012). The goal of this was to demonstrate that illegal immigration was defeated and thus "*clandestini*" (clandestine migrants) would no longer arrive on Italian shores. Refoulements and patrolling remained active, but now the centre was required to be empty, to the point that it was closed in 2010. But the Arab Spring of 2011 demonstrated that the need for the "border play" to go in another direction.

In February 2011, approximately 4,000 people arrived on Lampedusa, with no means of leaving. The newspaper *Corriere della Sera* stated: «Lampedusa: four thousand arrivals in four days. The boats keep landing. The goal is to transfer everyone by plane within Saturday. The Council of Ministers: humanitarian emergency» (Sciacca, 2011). People were held on the island and once more the spectacularisation of the bodies of thousands of people was used for political interest. This led the Italian government to declare a state of emergency allowing them to adopt the decree Dpcm 5, April 2011. This ensured that all those arriving after this date were to be repatriated. However, arrivals continued and, in September of that year, after being detained for several months, a group left the centre and part of the local population reacted with tension and hostility to their protests. The reception centre was closed once more, and all those detected and saved at sea were taken directly to Sicily. However, after only a few months, landings commenced once more at Lampedusa, with arrivals hosted in a tourist residence and then transferred to the mainland. It was only with the new flows during the summer of 2012 that the reception centre was reopened.

In 2012 the situation altered again, due to the end of Berlusconi's government in November 2011, followed by a technocratic government guided by Mario Monti and the election of Giusi Nicolini (who held a welcoming position toward migrants) as the mayor of Lampedusa. These changes in the political climate also transformed the discourse around migration in Lampedusa, that turned into more pietistic and tragic on one hand, but also began the process of turning it from being the "island of invasion" to the "welcoming island". This process was reinforced by two events occurring in 2013, which could be seen as very different, but that had a similar impact. In July 2013, Pope Francis chose Lampedusa for his first official trip, and on October 3rd of that same year, one of the better-known shipwrecks involving

migrants took place. It was a day that became symbolic of the issue, with the death of 368 people (most originating from Eritrea and Somalia). Just a few months previously, the Pope had declared from that same island: «we lost the sense of fraternal responsibility. The globalisation of indifference deprived us of our ability to cry» (Bollettino Sala Stampa Santa Sede, 2013). This is the context in which operation *Mare Nostrum* was launched and then substituted by Triton: this signalled an increasing level of control of the policies on migration on a European level.

The former president of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, announced the activation of the Hotspot approach On September 23rd, 2015, with Lampedusa being among the first centres to change status. As noted in the previous section, this new system did not bring any improvement from the aspect of human rights, with a number of unlawful praxes continuing to be perpetrated. This is particularly true of the Hotspot in Lampedusa, in which migrants were already identified and registered through fingerprinting and photographic identification. However, the main difference is that they are now also systematically coercively identified through the use of violence. Their identification should still take place within forty-eight hours of arrival, although, as previously, they are not always transferred within that time. New protests took place in Lampedusa in May 2016 (the third after the beginning of the Hotspot approach), with migrants attempted to regain subjectivity and agency, exiting the imposed anonymity of the crowd. Some left the Hotspot and began a protest in the square in front of the church, while more than seventy began a hunger strike to protest against the forced identification and relocation.

However, 2016 was a central year in the ongoing "humanitarian-washing". This process started with the visit of the pope, and the shipwreck of October 3rd; and continued with the Mare Nostrum operation. It was then followed by the petition to put Lampedusa forward for the Peace Nobel Price, and the decision to open a "Museum of Trust and Dialogue for the Mediterranean" in Lampedusa. Subsequently, the president of the Senate Pietro Grasso visited the island[38] and the Prix Italia was organised, along with the declaration of October 3rd as the "Day for the victims of immigration" (Article 1, law 21 March 2016, n. 45).

A new change in the political scenario of the island once more contributed to a transformation in the related rhetoric, accompanied on a national level by the above-mentioned criminalisation of NGOs operating in the

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[38] An harsh contestation of the visit, connected to a large number of denouncements of the degrading conditions at the Hotspot, was carried out by the local collective Askavusa.

Mediterranean Basin. This was as a result of a new Mayor being elected on the island in April 2017. Salvatore Martello (centre-left party, at his third mandate) followed a different approach to his predecessor, frequently stating that the presence of so many Tunisians compromised the security of the island. This year also saw the resumption of the "autonomous" arrivals (also known as ghost landings) from Tunisia, which continued during the following years. There were also many protests also during this period, including young Tunisians sewing their lips together. Moreover, in March 2018, despite the reception centre being declared closed for renovation, the arrivals continued and (as it emerged from interviews and my fieldwork on the island) the centre was, despite the official statements, still in use, with the only work being on the external fence of the structure, resulting in a considerable militarisation of the area, which was completed between 2020 and 2021.

Due to the nature of the government elected in March 2018, and the success of far-right parties in the most recent elections in 2022, a new phase has commenced concerning the migration discourse. The main slogan of the Minister of Internal Affairs of the new right-wing government of Lega and the Five Stars Movement is that of "closed ports"[39], and several episodes of human rights violation have taken place, such as that of the Diciotti vessel, the Mare Jonio or Gregoretti. Lampedusa, along with its surrounding seas, has once more become the centre of controversies related to the entrance of ships rescuing migrants into Italian territorial waters. Simultaneously, it has also resumed its position as a space of protest. In September 2019, demonstrations were held in front of the island's church by local inhabitants and the associations working in Lampedusa, accompanied by those held by migrants themselves, as Tunisian were about to be moved to Sicily to be detained before being repatriated. The latter demonstrators were requesting the granting of the *foglio di via*, to allow the freedom to decide their own destination, and refused to be repatriated or blocked in the limbo of an (almost impossible) asylum request. The previous observations of Cuttitta (2012) thus remained valid:

The history of Lampedusa testifies the ability of migrants to be subjects: to carry out their own projects, as well as interact with those of others; to bypass, and even modify, the migratory policies. […] the observatory offered by the island of the Pelagie archipelago allowed us to bear witness to diverse acts of protest and auto determination, of their desires and aspirations. (Cuttitta, 2012, p. 53)

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[39] This is a position justified by the rhetoric of "burden sharing".

Although immigration was not new in Greece, during the 1990s, the number of asylum seekers varied, according to differing contingencies, with most originating from neighbouring areas, including Balkans, the former Soviet Union and Asia (Kiprianos, Balias and Passas, 2003). This was still fairly low at the beginning of the 2000s but increased after the mid-2000s. In particular, 2006 marked the beginning of a new phase for the Aegean islands in relation to arrivals from Turkey (Triandafyllidou, 2014).

The island is used to welcoming refugees, but, anyway, this time it wasn't ready, no one was ready for this. One day we woke up, we went out to go to work and we met hundreds of people walking on the street. At that point we understood something was happening[40].

The spotlight fell on Lesvos due to the increase in arrivals between 2006 and 2008, until 2015 and the beginning of the "migrant crisis". According to UNHCR, 500,018 migrants arrived on the islands between January and December 2015, representing 59% of the total arrivals in Greece (UNHCR, 2015) and almost half of in the entire Mediterranean area (1,015,078) (UNHCR, 2016a) during that year.

This was not a completely new or unpredictable situation, despite being at a far higher level than anything previously experienced in Lesvos. There had been an almost complete lack of international attention until, at the end of 2009, the local inhabitants of Lesvos, along with migrants and international activist networks, succeeded in closing a detention centre in the industrial area of Pagani, located in a former two-storey warehouse with a total of nine cells. This had become the symbol of inhuman conditions of detention, being referred to by many as a "Guantanamo of the Aegean". MSF worked in the centre between June and September 2008, providing primary healthcare and psychosocial support, as well as improving the living conditions within the building. MSF stated that their team was obstructed, and experienced several difficulties in accessing the detention centre, which resulted in a decision to suspend their activities (MSF, 2009).

Following the closure of the centre in Pagani, a group of local activists known as "The Village of All-Together"[41] initiated the open-centre named PIKPA, in a former summer camp for children that had been closed for two years. This centre was opened and closed according to the eastern European routes taken, and which could change between the border at the Evros river and the Aegean islands (Alberti, 2010). Between 2012 and 2013, the

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[40] Daphne, Hotel owner in Thermi, Lesvos. May 8th, 2018.
[41] The name comes from the title of a Greek anti-racist tale by Sokratis Mantzouranis.

implementation of strict controls at the land border resulted in migrants once more passing through the islands. The camp was closed for a short period after the end of summer 2012, but reopened when newcomers reached the island in February 2013. However, because of these increasing numbers, several police stations across the island were full and many arrivals were living in the port area. At this point, the authority made the decision to award control of PIKPA to the Coast Guard. This change of status was made in March 2013, with the consent of individual activists.

Furthermore, during the same period, a decision was taken to create an official screening centre. This led to an insistence that PIKPA should be returned to its initial status as an open reception centre, operating with the support of the municipality. In September 2013, a new detention and reception centre was opened in a former military base within the village of Moria, approximately eight km from the centre of Mytilene. This was used by the Greek police, FRONTEX, UNHCR, and Doctors of the World (Trubeta, 2015).

At that time, and until 2016, an expulsion order was issued against migrants arriving on Lesvos: de jure an administrative deportation order from Greek territory, but de facto it gave migrants one month (six in case of Syrians) to stay legally in Greece before leaving the country (Lauth Bacas, 2010). This document was largely perceived as relating to "travel" rather than "expulsion" (Trubeta 2015), for, as noted by Franck (2017, p. 880): «while being deportable in a receiving country context is generally associated with depriving people of the right to remain (Peutz and De Genova, 2010), in the context of transit in Lesvos it was instead associated with obtaining the right to leave».

There are two main explanations for this apparently counterintuitive mechanism: on one hand, an application for asylum in Greece would almost certainly be denied, and on the other, the legislation approved in that period forced applicants to be interned for up to eighteen months, even for those recognised by UNHCR as eligible for refugee status (Trubeta, 2015). This indicates why the number of arrivals was far higher than the number of asylum applications. However, in 2013, this divide between asylum requests and arrivals was not so dramatic, when, out of 11,447 (UNHCR, 2017) arrivals, 8,225 (Eurostat, 2018) applied. But this began to change from 2014, with only 9,430 of the 41,038 arriving in Greece (Eurostat, 2018) applying for asylum. Similarly, an examination of the statistics relating to asylum applications in Greece in 2015 shows them to be dramatically lower than arrivals, i.e. during that year, there were only 13,205 applications for the asylum status in the whole country (Eurostat, 2018).

From 2015 onwards, a further dramatic change took place, with a document by the Missing Migrant project from the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) outlining the situation in terms of an emergency:

With the peak summer tourist season underway, most newcomers are unable to immediately secure passage on a commercial ferry to leave the island and travel to Athens. They therefore have to camp near the port and in parks in the old city of Mitilini. Shelters in Kara Tepe and Moria are already full to capacity. Migrants have to wait for a long time to register with the police, due to the crowds of new arrivals. (IOM, 2015)

The majority of landings took place in the northern part of the island, on the coast between the town of Molyvos and the village of Skala Sikamineas. This meant that migrants were often forced to walk to Mytilene from these beaches. In 2015, when a large number of people started arriving, there was no organised response. Initially, help was offered by the local population, together with tourists in Lesvos for their summer vacation, providing food, clothes and other essentials. At that point, international NGOs were not yet working in the north, but some were located in the camp in Moria. It was only at the end of the summer, that NGOs and grassroot organisations started working on the island in a more organised fashion and a number of international volunteers began to arrive.

The number of arrivals peaked between September and October 2015. At that time, there were already three main reception centres in Mytilene (i.e. Moria, Kara Tepe and Pikpa), along with the creation of temporary reception sites in: Molyvos, (in the parking lot of the night club Oxy just outside the town); Skala Sikamineas (called Stage 1); and Montamados, opened by MSF. Furthermore, over a short period of time, an assistance site was created at the port of Molyvos, behind the restaurant *The Capitain's Table*. Within these locations, locals, volunteers, grassroots and NGOs worked together to provide relief and assistance to migrants arriving by sea. After recovering from their journey, the migrants commenced the long walk to Mytilene, where they would be initially registered at the port, before being transferred to the temporary holding camp of Kara Tepe, and finally registered and fingerprinted for the Eurodac system (see also Trubeta, 2015; Kitching et al., 2017).

In September 2015, the centre of Moria was officially transformed into a Hotspot, with Tazzioli, 2016) noting that: «from that time onwards, Lesvos started to undergo rapid spatial transformations regarding its detention, filtering, containment, and identification functions». The island changed from

being a transit point into a form of prison-island. The activists of Welcome to Europe stated conditions in Lesvos were unbearable, with around 20,000 people were stuck on the island. Between September 5th and 7th, those awaiting registration at the port organised small demonstrations and attempted to self-organise a queue to register, however, they were repressed violently by the police (Ronja, 2015). This was the situation in Lesvos when the Hotspot officially commenced on the island. Within this context, the NoBorder Kitchen camp was opened by British, German and Greek activists in November 2015, as a safe space for migrants who refused to be identified in the Hotspot, thereby avoiding being fingerprinted (Tazzioli, 2016).

In a report published in December 2015 by the European Commission (COM, 2015, 678), the humanitarian crisis was used as the justification for the decision to implement the Hotspot system as soon as possible. At that time, after the meeting of the European Council of October 15th, only the Hotspot in Moria (which was not yet fully functioning) was open, with further hotspots in Chios, Samos, Kos and Leros planned to be opened shortly afterwards. Furthermore, work had started to expand and upgrade the Moria site. The same report established that «the Greek authorities need to develop a clear strategy for forced returns identifying priority third countries for engagement». Until the Greece-Turkey agreement of March 18th, 2016, deportation or removal was not yet officially the rule on Lesvos, while the agreement was based on the idea that the threat of return would act as a deterrent, thereby, it transforming high rates of return into an indicator of a successful border policy (Alpes, Tunaboylu and van Liempt, 2017). However, in practice, following the signing of the EU-Turkey agreement, the Hotspot in Moria has officially become a "closed facility", as defined by UNHCR officers on the island, i.e. a centre of first deportation (Tazzioli, 2016). Following the agreement between the EU and Turkey, there was a rapid increase in the number of asylum applications, due to the gradual closure of borders, as well as the risk of being sent back to Turkey[42].

These changes led to a decrease in the rate of arrivals on Lesvos, commencing with a sudden drop after 21st March 2016[43] (UNHCR, 2017, 2018,

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[42] This is also explained though the lack of (or poor) information migrants receive on arrival and in general practices that aim to discourage asylum requests. In addition, applications are often only registered if the asylum seeker is assisted by a lawyer (Dutch Council for Refugees, Finnish Refugee Advice Centre, Amsterdam, 10th November 2009).

[43] Only data relating to the national level are currently available for 2016. That year 173,450 migrants arrived in Greece, most arriving through the Aegean islands. However, the EU declared that since 21st March 2016 arrivals on the islands reduced by 97%, indicating that most arrived prior to that date (European Commission, 2019).

2019b). In 2017, 11,570 migrants arrived, with this number increasing in both 2018 (15,034) and 2019 (27,049). Despite arrivals never again reaching the numbers recorded in 2015, an increasing number are still hosted in the centres, being detained for several months or years on Lesvos, as well as on other Aegean islands. In September 2018, a total of 10,941 migrants (N.C.C.B.C.I.A., 2018) were detained in Lesvos, more than doubling by February 2020 to 21,725 (N.C.C.B.C.I.A., 2020).

Furthermore, this was possible because of decision N. 4375 of May 31st, 2016 made by the Asylum Service, which imposed the so-called "geographical restriction", i.e. preventing people from leaving the islands until they were given a response to their protection request. The conditions in the reception centres failed to improve, resulting in further clashes and tension, resulting in increasing frustration amongst the local population, while the island's administration accused central government of responsibility for the congestion in the camps (Smith, 2017).

It was at this point, that the first violent attack on migrants took place from a section of the local population. On April 22nd 2018, a group, including volunteers and activists, were violently attacked by a neofascist group while demonstrating peacefully in Sappho Square in Mytilene to support thirty-five people who had been detained in Moria since July 2017, as a result of the ongoing process in Chios following their arrest, i.e. «after a large demonstration in the camp against inhumane living conditions, restriction of movement and the slowness of the asylum process» (Nicolet et al., 2018, p. 5). During these years, similar to the events in Lampedusa, the representation of the island turned towards being humanitarian, marked by events including the diffusion of the photograph of the drowned toddler, Aylan Kurdi, in September 2015, the visit of the Pope to the island in April 2016 and the news that it could be awarded a Nobel Peace Prize in October of the same year.

As noted by Sciurba (2017):

Every spectator knew, from the very first look on that photography, that Aylan was one of the hundreds of thousands of people composing the so-called "migratory phenomenon", the one narrated as an invasion to contain. […] But nothing in his figure matched, in that very instant, with the representation that of all this, for decades, public discourses and visual elements that accompanied them, created. (Sciurba, 2017, p. 61)

In Greece, as in the rest of Europe, xenophobic and racist sentiments have grown over previous years. Trimikliniotis (2019) argued that, at the local level of Lesvos, the mayor shifted his position over time (and according to

circumstances) from one that was humanitarian to that of xenophobia. For example, at the end of 2018 the tone became alarmist concerning the situation in Moria, focussing, not on the living conditions, but rather emphasising that a number of security issues were posed by the circulation of drugs and episodes of harassment and rape.
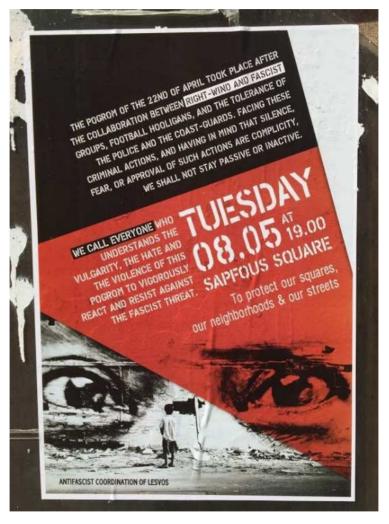

Fig. 3.6 - Posters placed around the streets of Mytilene to call for a counter-demonstration after the attack of April 22nd.

During the first part of 2019, the situation on the island seemed to be relatively quiet, partially because of transfers to the mainland. However, by the end of the summer, the numbers grew to a critical point once more, and in October, during the latest revolt in the camp, a woman and her daughter lost their lives. Nothing has since been done to address the situation other than attempt to keep migrants in Turkey.

Thus, at the beginning of February 2020, and despite the constant transfers, there were 21,799 people in Lesvos and 42,174 in the Aegean Islands as a whole. In addition, between the end of January and the beginning of February several demonstrations took place in the streets of Mytilene. In particular, on February 3rd a number of protests (repressed by the police) were held against the International Protection Act (IPA), which was implemented from January 1st, 2020, and rendered more asylum seekers as detainable, including for longer periods, and with fewer procedural guarantees (Mouzourakis, 2019). Until 2019, the strategy of the local administration for deter arrivals had been through a policy of not making refugees "too comfortable" (Trimikliniotis, 2019), at this point it became solely focused on repressing and silencing.

Finally, in November 2019, the government announced the construction of new "closed facilities" to confront the issue of the growing number arriving on the Aegean Islands (Hurst, 2019). At the end of February 2020, after an attempt by local administrators to find alternative solutions (Smith, 2020), the government sent ten special squads (MAT) to face the protests against the construction of a new detention centre in Karava, close to Montamados (Alexandri, 2020). In September 2020, the camp in Moria was burnt to the ground, with thousands of inhabitants being moved to the new temporary camp known as "Mavrovouni", next to Kare Tepe, where conditions were, if possible, even worse. Made up of tents and containers, this camp soon turned into the only reception facility on the island, particularly as the inhabitants of the Pikpa camp were evicted on October 30th, 2020, followed by Kara Tepe being closed on April 24th, 2021. At the time of writing, a new closed facility is being constructed in the north part of the island, located in an isolated area, planned to be opened in Spring 2023.

This chapter has questioned the "stereotypic" characterisation of islands as being isolated, remote, and lacking in mobility. This is seen as not only due to their locations, but also to the fact that they are spaces encompassing «historical and contemporary landscapes of mobility, encounter, displacement, and contradiction» (Mountz, 2015, p. 642). In this sense, Bernardie-Tahir and Schmoll (2014b) theorised a "counter-islandness approach", considering islands in terms of movement and circulation, immersed in logics of

globalisation and involved with both human and non-human mobilities. Lesvos and Lampedusa clearly demonstrate this point. The arrival of migrants, as subjects constrained in their movement and who risk being stuck in these spaces (which is never fully possible), attract and activate other forms of mobilities, often allowed by the mobility (in)justice theorised by Sheller (2018). In addition, kinetic elites, in the form of personnel belonging to national and international institutions (as well as the staff of organisations, volunteers and tourists), move to, and around, these islands due to being islands of migration. This movement of people also induces a movement of capital, to the point that Franck (2018), drawing on Klein (2007), defined "disaster capitalism" as the dynamics revolving around the migration crisis. Her reference was primarily to those commercial actors providing the technology and infrastructure for border enforcement, but also to everything that involves accommodating, feeding, detaining, managing, and deporting people on the move.

However, what makes these islands borderscapes (Brambilla, 2015a, 2015b) depends not only on the policies adopted, but includes the practices carried out by the various actors playing a role within the migration system. In addition, it refers to the discourses that, from the broader level of the European Union to the local, imbue the imagery of these islands, along with migrants' practices and the further elements outlined later in this work.

Moreover, one element that must not be omitted, concerns the migrants themselves. The constant changing of rules, laws, and contingencies, together with peoples' ability to adapt, reveal how migrants' projects and mobility evolve according to their trajectories and the spaces they traverse, as well as the people they meet. This was summarised by Bernardie-Thair and Schmoll (2014b) as follows:

> Most migration projects remain "works in progress" […] In other words, the island does not simply form a transit space (Collyer & De Haas, 2012; Collyer, Duvell, & De Haas, 2012), but is a territory that intervenes and interferes in an ongoing reshaping of the migrant trajectory, according to the evolution of local and international economic and political contexts. Less than a link in a chain, the island appears as a land of resources and constraints, which is traversed, lived, and even appropriated. (Bernardie-Thair and Schmoll, 2014b, p. 49)

To conclude, my final remark is addressed to those projects involving volunteer tourists that have developed over the last five to ten years in Lampedusa and Lesvos. Tourism has, over a long period of time, been described as a panacea for islands, in terms of connections and economic

income, despite it being also demonstrated that tourism tout court does not always mean encounter, relation and comprehension of the places visited. However, it is from this perspective that this book explores the practices of volunteer tourists. I therefore question whether they part of these carrefours of trans Mediterranean mobility only as in transit, or if they are they able to establish different types of gazes, relations and lived experiences in Lesvos and Lampedusa.

4. Into the Field

This chapter discusses the case studies employed in this research, in order to present an insider's perspective of volunteer tourism in the two islands under discussion. Firstly, I contextualise the development of volunteer tourism in Lampedusa (Chapter 4.1) and Lesvos (Chapter 4.4), as a consequence of the various "refugee crises" associated with these islands from the mid-2000s onwards. Secondly, I continue describing my participant observation, in particular in relation to the specific organisations with whom I volunteered, the reasons for their selection, along with my work, focussing specifically on the leisure time activities. Finally, I outline the profile of the volunteers participating in my research. This preliminary analysis also sets the scene for the second part of the study, as presented in Chapter 5.

1. Out of Sight, but not out of Mind: Volunteer Tourism in Lampedusa

In the previous chapter, I outlined the various phases and events related to the arrival of migrants on Lampedusa. Two of the "crises" attracting public opinion consisted of the "invasion" of 2011, and the "tragedy"[1] of October 3rd, 2013. Consequently, both events mobilised various groups, including politicians, activists, organisations, and local inhabitants. For the purposes of simplicity, I have taken 2011 as the starting point to consider the arrival of volunteers in Lampedusa.

Previous defence minister La Russa can be seen to frame the situation at that time when, during a visit to the island, he stated: «it is a great solidarity

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[1] The use of frames such as tragedy individualises events, as if they were single and separated one from the other, therefore masking the structural causes and responsibility for such incidents, and hiding the connection to the politics of the border (Pallister-Wilkins, 2017b).

work the one that is carried out here» (Ministero della Difesa, 2011), adding that, on behalf of the government, he wished to thank the military forces and the volunteers of humanitarian associations managing the emergency, while overlooking the fact that it arose due to choices made by his own government. During 2011, a number of associations and organisations travelled to Lampedusa to support the management of the reception centre, as well as assist with the landings, and to offer health services, these included: UNHCR; IOM; MSF; Save the Children; the Red Cross, National Institute for Health, Migration and Poverty (INMP); and the Italian Relief Corps of the Order of Malta (C.I.S.O.M.). In addition, they were accompanied by activists and volunteers with, for example, the Italian Recreative and Cultural Association (ARCI) sending volunteers as observers and supporters, and volunteers from the Volunteer Rescuer and Humanitarian Aid Association (SVAU) bringing donations, such as clothing and food items. The important element was the strict control over access to both the reception centre and Molo Favaloro (i.e. the military dock used for landing migrants), which proved a hindrance to the influx of these associations. This resulted in the arrival of humanitarian aid (or other forms of support) taking place in a scattered and discontinuous manner, with, as noted above, specific peaks, generally consisting of brief interventions or projects. The few exceptions were the NGOs and other associations working over the long term, i.e. C.I.S.O.M, whose paid staff and volunteers remained on board Italian military rescue ships from 2008.

Other projects commenced at various times, such as *MH*, a programme of the Federation of Evangelic Churches of Italy (Fcei), which is among the few (along with C.I.S.O.M.) working with volunteers having direct contact with migrants. This project was opened in 2014, as a reaction to the shipwreck of October 3rd, 2013, and has subsequently remained on the island. *MH* carries out activities of first reception, being (together with volunteers from the Forum Lampedusa Solidale) present at landings, in order to distribute isothermal blankets, water, tea or snacks, as well as to reassure arrivals. They also mediate between the local population of Lampedusa, the administration, and people on the move. Furthermore, *MH* carries out observation and gathers information on the phenomenon of migration in the Mediterranean, maintaining records of landings, and events related to migrants, NGOs and the island itself. They also, on specific occasions, provide legal assistance, giving information to compensate for the frequent lack of such help at the reception centre, including the relevant rights and procedures. In addition, *MH* also offers, for certain periods, an opportunity to use Wi-Fi connections or computers. They usually work with a team of two stable staff members,

supplemented by a small number of volunteers, according to necessity and availability.

The ASGI association arrived in Lampedusa in 2018, following the criminalisation of NGOs and the increased influence of the right wing in Italian politics. The association addresses various areas of immigration and migrants' rights, including antidiscrimination and xenophobia, the rights of minors and asylum seekers, along with issues concerning statelessness and citizenship. ASGI runs *In Limine*, initially a pilot project (from March to September 2018), followed by a second project set up in 2019, which continues to be active. Their main aims are to: gather information and monitor the procedures taking place on the island; submit strategic litigations before national and international courts; encourage advocacy strategies for a better protection of human rights; and undertake legal information activities, as well as offering legal assistance at the reception centre.

Alongside these more direct aid-aimed projects, a number of initiatives have been attracted to the "welcoming island", including: Amnesty International's summer camp; the volunteering camps of the association Libertà era Restare; the opening of the Exhibition *Museo del dialogo e della fiducia per il Mediterraneo* (i.e. the Museum for the dialogue and trust in the Mediterranean); the journalism international prise Prix Italia, organised by RAI (Italian Radio-television); the underwater photograph exhibition *StarS* by Salvo Galano; and *L'Europa inizia a Lampedusa*, a project undertaken by the Comitato 3 Ottobre (3rd of October Committee), which involves schools through the Ministry of Education, University and Research, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the European Union.

Within the context as set out above, I now wish to focus specifically on three projects, which differ slightly from those described so far. These are aimed at the local population and environment[2] and are generally closer to conventional forms of volunteer tourism, due to being structured in the form of one-week volunteering camps. However, they also bring with them new links and elements.

Firstly, the project *P'orto di Lampedusa* by Terra! Onlus, which was created by the project manager Silvia Cama, with the support of Fabio Ciconte, the president of the organisation, and, for almost ten years, the director of the Amnesty International Italia's Activism Office. During his visits to Lampedusa with Amnesty International, Ciconte established the first contacts and

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[2] Legambiente and the WWF also organise summer camps for volunteers, but as it will be explained, they are not considered here, since they have relatively few (or no) connections with the phenomenon of migration. For example, Legambiente organised their summer camps following the opening of the Natural Reserve in 1996.

gathered the input to create *P'orto di Lampedusa*. The project has a local referent in Katia Billeci, along with many other local supporters. It was launched in 2014, directly after the symbolic date of October 3rd. The goal was to create community gardens on the island, in an attempt to enhance the resources of the territory and create a place of research and aggregation for the local community. One of its central aspects is social inclusion, with part of the gardens being managed by men and women assisted by the day care centre of Lampedusa. Thus, agriculture has become a means of interaction and the gardens are spaces of exchange.

The first *Terra! Camp* was held in August 2015, in order to create the gardens, which were then divided between interested inhabitants, with part given to the day care centre. The summer camps were held for four years, with the volunteers starting by cleaning up the area, before created the parcels of land, building dry-stone walls to protect the plants and mark the partitions. In addition, they created two geodetic domes, a seedbed, and, in conjunction with the local community, planted the seeds that made the gardens come alive. The summer camp ceased after 2019, due to the organisation aiming to become a social cooperative. It was replaced by a summer school, which then selected a trainee to coordinate activities in Lampedusa, including helping to develop the project. However, some volunteer work and collective activities with visitors have continued, including with volunteers from Libertà era Restare.

Secondly, the library created by Ibby Italia, from a concept by Deborah Soria, who has been a volunteer and activist in Lampedusa since 2011. The library has several local referents (i.e. Paola la Rosa and Anna Sardone), but also a number of local permanent volunteers, many of whom are students at the local school and who "grew up" with the library. Ibby Italia opened the first library on the island, being specifically aimed at the children and young people of Lampedusa. This was a lengthy process, initially lacking any physical location, so volunteers arrived with books and ideas, with the rest left to their imagination and ability to involve others.

During my conversations with Deborah, she told me that the initial idea had been to provide books to children on the move with (or without) their families. However, after evaluating the situation in Lampedusa, the organisation decided to also create a project and a space for the local population. Over time, they found a temporary space, followed by the official library being opened in 2017. The camps were usually held during the low season, in spring and autumn, and, over the last three years, in November. Volunteers carried out activities in schools during the morning and at the library in the afternoon. The main goal was stimulating an interest in reading, alongside

other forms of cultural engagement. In addition, workshops, seminars and lectures were held for adults during the evenings.

In both cases, the main goal was to create a new vision of the island that would allow the inhabitants to narrate, with the help of the volunteers, their own side of the story, in order to empower residents and create a resilient community. The volunteers met various local groups and associations (i.e. *MH*, the Forum Lampedusa Solidale, the collective *Askavusa*, and the Historical Archive), in order to show Lampedusa "from the inside". The project manager of *P'orto di Lampedusa* noted that these projects could not (and should not) be aimed at migrants: firstly as those arriving on Lampedusa by sea are only permitted to stay on the island for a maximum of forty-eight hours (which is recognised as a human right), and secondly, because the aim is to work with the local community, while keeping the project open to everyone, including migrants passing through.

Thirdly, *Lampedusa Resiste*, which was created by the local *Askavusa* collective to restore the natural environment of the island and has formed an indirect connection to the arrival of migrants in Lampedusa, due to the collective being involved in campaigns and projects related to migration, i.e. the creation of an exhibition of objects belonging to migrants. Thus, although *Lampedusa Resiste* works on various different aspects, they are also a fundamental centre of observation and study of the phenomenon[3]. Volunteers offering their work for *Lampedusa Resiste* focus on understanding migration and militarisation, with most involved through the Brigate di Solidarietà Attiva (Active Solidarity Brigades)[4]. Its main unique features are that it is openly politically positioned, with its core deeply rooted in the local context, and that it has been created by the inhabitants of Lampedusa.

The above projects are frequently interconnected, with Terra! being supported by the library and *vice versa*, with the same being true for *Mediterranean Hope*. Moreover, they all form part of the Forum Lampedusa Solidale. In addition, their volunteers participate in each other's events, and became familiar with the various projects. However, *Askavusa* differs slightly, as it has a degree of connection with the others but can also, on occasion, prove controversial.

In summary: this brief review has demonstrated that, alongside the small number of projects directly aimed at migrants, Lampedusa tends to attract those desiring "to do something". This has been closely related to the process

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[3] The work of the collective in relation to migration came almost completely to an end.
[4] Their Facebook page describes them as: National Federation BSA, volunteering association based fundamentally on the breakup with the capitalist and militarist schemes.

transforming Lampedusa into a border, while simultaneously constructing the borderscape of the island. I found this aspect emerging in some of the interviews, for example with Silvia (Terra!) or Paola (Forum Lampedusa Solidale), who declared that they received many requests from volunteers wishing to support migrants, but could not (and had no desire to) satisfy these requests. This topic will be further discussed in the following section through the dialogues with volunteers, along with their experiences and my own encounters during my fieldwork.

2. Volunteering and Researching in Lampedusa

After outlining the types of organisations actively working with volunteers in Lampedusa, I now turn to my own experience as a volunteer. As described in Chapter 2, participant observation was central to this research. As noted by Watson and Till (2010, p. 134): «participating in the field means participating in creating knowledge, *with* people heretofore conceived of as "subjects" […]. In other words, ethnography is more about "doing" than it is about the procurement of "facts"». As an inexperienced researcher, I found this aspect difficult to understand until I was in the field, i.e. "being there" (Papataxiarchis, 2016). At the time of writing, I find myself facing the challenging process of turning these experiences into conveyable knowledge, one made up of a multiplicity of people, encounters, stories, first-hand experiences, objects, landscapes, and much more. Using my notes and observations, this section: firstly, examines my motivation for selecting the two volunteering experiences; secondly, outlines the main aspects of those experiences; and finally, illustrates the connections between my lived and observed experience and the research questions guiding this work.

I must begin by admitting that my first experience of volunteering in Lampedusa was not entirely planned. I was already familiar with the association Terra! from being in Lampedusa in 2016, but I had not planned to participate in their summer camp when I returned in July 2018. Instead, I was attempting to carry out my research with rigour, following planned steps. Therefore, although I had a general idea of the situation in Lampedusa, my aim was to collect information and updates about organisations and initiatives, as well as meeting the representatives of the associations active on the island, and interviewing the new mayor. My intention was to prepare for the next phase of the survey, along with the participant observation and interviews. However, as recorded in my field notes, I found that this did not take place as I had intended.

[…] Francesca says goodbye, introducing me to a group of people and among them I recognise one of the names and two of the faces I see. The first is Alberto, operator of MH, the two girls are Silvia and Katia from Terra!, the association that manages the community gardens. I am invited to participate to their summer camp that begins the next week, they will need help. […] Unexpectedly, the most interesting opportunities happen like this, by chance, when you are not looking for them or when your original plan is turning out to be a bit of a failure. (Field notes, 27/07/2018)

It was through this process that I found myself volunteering in advance, rather than following my original plan. As previously described, Terra! organises one-week summer camps, with that 2018 taking place between July 29th and August 5th. The participants were all accommodated at the island's campsite and spent the entire week together, both their working hours and their leisure time. There were twelve participants, who originated from various Italian cities, being aged between twenty-five and fifty.

The camp was structured as follows. The volunteers worked in the gardens during the morning, beginning quite early, to take advantage of the coolest hours of the day, particularly due to the heat of August in the Mediterranean. This was followed in the afternoon by meetings or workshops. During the week, the volunteers had different appointments including with: Legambiente, which manages the Natural Reserve of the island and is a partner in the project *P'orto di Lampedusa*; *MH* and Don Carmelo La Magra, the priest of the island, as a representative of the Forum Lampedusa Solidale; the library, where were introduced to Ibby's project; the Historical Archive of the island, created, and run, by Antonino Taranto; Porto M, where we were introduced to *Askavusa*'s activities by Fabrizio; with the people attending the day care centre, with whom we met and worked during the week and organised a final celebration at the gardens, to which the entire population was invited. In addition, there was an introductory meeting, along with a mid-week meeting and a final moment of common reflection on the experience.

Besides these structured activities, I found the volunteers spent their free time at the beach, or in the city centre, as well as at the camping site, where we often had dinner together and, on one occasion, partied at the camping club. In addition, some of those remaining s a few days longer after the end of the camp organised a day trip to Linosa. The volunteers were given a certain degree of independence, but, as the group was fairly compact, we tended to spend most of our time together.

The second volunteering experience I have included in my research was the *Ibby Camp* organised at the library. I had already been informed about

the project, but had never met its promoters. During my first period as a volunteer for Terra! I met Deborah (national referent), Anna and Paola (local referents). During the meeting organised by Terra! mentioned above, I learnt in considerable detail the story of how the idea of a library first arose and was then developed. When I subsequently met Deborah again, to outline my research, I was invited to participate to their camp (held in November that year), including to share my experience as a researcher in Lesvos.

These relationships, created over time, thus influenced the decisions taken during the development of this research. They allowed me to understand, during my first period of field work, that these two camps were, at that time, the two main expressions of volunteer tourism responding to the characteristics I was seeking. In addition, they were accessible, due to their length of time and the types of activities they undertook, which did not necessarily require professional skills. Moreover, both projects included a connection to migrants. Furthermore, they had many of the characteristics of "traditional" volunteer tourism, including involvement with the local community. These aspects gave me a perspective that differed from my experience in Lesvos.

On the other hand, I found *MH* to be the only accessible project allowing me direct contact with migrants. Nonetheless, after considering various aspects, including the organisation's minimum time requirements, and the number of volunteers with whom I could interact (i.e. a maximum of one or two), along with the type of experience (which is less accessible than others), I decided to investigate this project through alternative methods, including interviews with the operators and volunteers, and participating in their informal gatherings and formal public events.

Therefore, I considered that, of the few options available, volunteering at the library would be my optimal choice. The camp was held between October 28th and November 4th, 2018, with about twenty volunteers, some of whom arrived during the week and others having to leave early. The camp was structured into three main blocks of activities: firstly, those held in the morning with schools; secondly, those for children at the library in the afternoon; and finally, those for adults in the evening. Furthermore, some of our free time was also organised, when we were split into groups, with some remaining at the library and others having excursions or tours around the island. The recreational activities differed from those organised by Terra!. We were offered the opportunity to participate in excursions with Fabio, a high-school teacher who was passionate about wildlife and nature, as well as being an expert of the island's flora and fauna. Another organised activity was a visit to the cemetery of the island, guided by Paola La Rosa, as the representative of the *Forum Lampedusa Solidale*. One afternoon, we were invited to go to

the community garden to work with the guests of the day care centre. Moreover, the volunteers were given some free time for independent activities, i.e. going to the beach or visiting other places on the island. Compared to the camp organised by Terra!, I found this group spent less of their free time together. Thus, due to the way the activities were organised, we primarily socialised during meals, being divided for the remainder of our free time into smaller groups.

Finally, as my focus is on volunteers' free time and where they choose to spend it, this general overview on the volunteering camp includes the evening activities for adults. These took place after dinner, when we all met up at the library, where there was generally a workshop or seminar on a specific topic. On the first evening that year, Alessandra Ballerini, a lawyer specialising in human rights, was invited to speak about four concepts that are used (and frequently abused) in relation to migrants, i.e. security, degradation, legality, and rights. The main issue discussed concerned Salvini's *Decreti Sicurezza*, which had been recently approved and changed some fundamental aspects of migration management. The second evening was aimed at discussing the concept of "community", with a participative workshop held by Silvia Cama (Terra!). On the third evening I had the chance to present my work examining the situation in Lesvos in relation to the arrival and management of migrants, including the impact of the EU-Turkey deal, the reaction of the local population, and the work of NGOs and volunteers. I found this highly significant, as it allowed me to combine two significant experiences within my research, in front of those who formed part of my study.

I feel it is important to reflect on the initiatives organised both by the library and by Terra! in terms of their impact on both the volunteers and on the island, in order to understand the representations conveyed through these types of activities. Firstly, I identified considerable differences in terms of goals and type of activities. Thus, those organised by *Terra!* were intended for volunteer tourists, and aimed at sharing the knowledge of the territory, including looking at it from different perspectives. On the other hand, those at the library were primarily intended for the inhabitants of the island, who are seldom awarded opportunities to participate in cultural meetings and debates. However, volunteer tourists also participated, with the meetings I experienced including discussions of fundamental issues concerning Lampedusa.

The general aim of the activities organised by Terra! was to:

Reintroduce agriculture, as one of the cultural roots of the island, in order to incentivise the creation of a new imaginary of the island for the islanders themselves

towards their territory, but also a new representation of the island towards the outside. To create a new narration of the island, because too often Lampedusa is known, as we know well, only for tragic events connected to migration […] the aim is to strengthen the community empowerment, in order to guarantee the effectiveness of instruments that would reconnect the community and its territory, reinforce the sense of belonging and again, create a new imaginary based on environment, territory and community. (Siliva Cama, 15/07/2019)

The above reveals an intention to enhance the information available to the participants on the island, by means of interaction with local actors considered capable of voicing these different perspectives. This is fundamental to the way Lampedusa is represented to those volunteering with Terra!.

These voices confirm Lampedusa as a symbol of the "island of migration", contrasting with (although playing a similar role to) the racist rhetoric of an "invasion". This is supported (Edensor, 2001; Crang and Coleman, 2002; Bruner, 2005) by certain actors confirming the "authenticity" of Lampedusa as the island of migrants. The performative aspect of these narratives is condensed and embodied in many different ways, inspiring works of literature, art and performance. I was particularly impressed by the work of the following two individuals.

The first is Giacomo Sferlazzo (a member of the collective *Askavusa*), an eclectic artist who has produced several sculptures and paintings, as well as performances (i.e. the *Opera dei Pupi* or traditional storytelling) and musical creations. His art arises from studies combining local traditions with more recent events and politics. The second is Francesco Piobbichi, whose *Drawings from the border* trace several years of events, stories and people from the viewpoint of Lampedusa.

My own observations of the presentations of *MH* and the Forum led me to recognise that I continued to hear the same stories, until they appeared to be a script, and moreover one whose interpreters appeared, at times, weary of repeating. This was also my impression when listening to Fabrizio explaining *Askavusa* and Lampedusa to groups of both conventional and volunteer tourists visiting Porto M, and listening to Antonino Taranto telling me how he allowed his office to be used to enable some of the migrants to call their families.

I wish to emphasise that this is not intended as a criticism. Goffman (1959) argued that human beings constantly play a role during their everyday interactions. Therefore, although I (and those whose role was to convey them) may have found these stories repetitive, this was not so for the volunteers hearing them for the first time. For these volunteers, the stories formed

a breach in a wall made up of rhetoric and narratives, including both the hostility and racism of the far right, and the idealism of those referring to Lampedusa uncritically as the "welcoming island". These narratives tend to silence the perspective of those living at the border, and thus their ability to clarify the situation.

However, it must be acknowledged that this is not the complete picture. Through Terra*!,* the island is dissected to show its multifaceted reality. Next to the more structured and public actors, volunteers are able to meet the inhabitants of Lampedusa, who are able to give them insights into elements of life on the island that tend to be obscured by the main narratives. Thus, I was able to meet Anna, the elderly mother of one of the men attending the day care centre, and Damiano, a man with several life experiences, including fisherman, cook, and handyman. I also came to know Giovanni, one of the nurses working at the island's small health centre, and Simone, who had returned from Anzio in search of an authentic way of life. In addition, I met attendees of the day care centre.
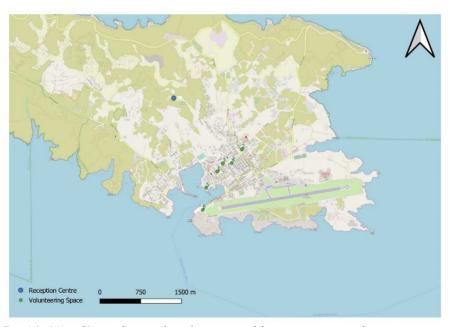

Fig. 4.1 - Map of Lampedusa marking the position of the reception centre, the memory spaces and the volunteering spaces. Legend of Volunteering Spaces: 1- Ibby library; 2- Mediterranean Hope; 3- Community Gardens; 4- ASGI; 5- Porto M; 6- ASGI. Elaborated by the author on OpenStreetMap base (Open Database License).

All of these encounters meant crossing single trajectories, being stories-so-far shaping the bundles (Massey, 2005) constituting Lampedusa. I found that these stories (along with many others I encountered) act to open cracks in the social reality of an island that is rich with considerably more aspects and challenges than the arrival of migrants, and has more to tell behind this single, although still fundamental, aspect. As argued by Pierce and Martin (2015, p. 1287): «the shape and contents of those bundles are constantly socially and politically negotiated». Thus, volunteers, through being present on the island, along with their encounters and experiences while there, are able to add trajectories to those bundles and participate in such negotiations.

3. An Insight on Volunteer Tourists in Lampedusa: The Survey and the Interviews

I found some of the preliminary data I gathered by means of the survey and interviews proved beneficial for outlining the profile of the volunteer tourists participating in this research. Twenty-three respondents completed the questionnaire[5] concerning Lampedusa, which had been shared through different channels, mainly using: the contact lists of the participants of the volunteering projects in which I personally participated; personal contacts, primarily volunteers working with *MH* and *Lampedusa Resiste*; and the organisations managing the projects. I also requested Terra!, Ibby, and Libertà era Restare to distribute the questionnaire to volunteers from previous camps.

The activities undertaken by the volunteers consisted of those outlined in the previous sections, with fifteen volunteering at the library, six at the community gardens, two with *MH*, and one worked with *Askavusa* to clean the island of rubbish[6]. Both during, and following, the fieldwork, I carried out in-depth interviews with nine volunteers working for *MH*, Terra!, the library and the project *In Limine* run by ASGI.

Out of a total of thirty-two participants, twenty-three responded to the questionnaires, twenty of these being women, while five of the interviewees were female and four male. Moreover, twenty-seven were Italian, with only five being international volunteers, i.e. one each from Spain, Latvia,

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[5] This is a lower number than those gathered in Lesvos, because in Lampedusa had a lower target population and contacting volunteers of projects no longer held on the island proved more complex. Furthermore, it is also important to bear in mind that many volunteers in Lampedusa are "repeaters".

[6] Note that there is a total of twenty-four answers, because one respondent volunteered both at the library and with *MH*.

Belgium, the USA, and the UK. In addition, the majority of the volunteers were aged between thirty-one and fifty. However, I should emphasise that I generally interviewed the younger volunteers, i.e. those between twenty-four and thirty.

The data revealed that most volunteers remained between one and two weeks, with some for one week (or less). It should be noted that this partially depended on the projects themselves. Thus, *MH* encouraged volunteers to stay for long periods of time, while *Terra!* and Ibby organised one-week camps, inferring that those remaining longer on the island were separate from the volunteering programmes. The *In Limine* project pre-determined that volunteers would stay on Lampedusa for one month. This reveals that the average stay of the respondents tends to accord with the average for holiday makers, i.e. between one and two weeks.

Furthermore, I found that many of the participants on Lampedusa had volunteered on more than one occasion. Over than half of the respondents to the questionnaire (i.e. thirteen) had been there previously, ten for other experiences as volunteers, and two for holidays, while one had volunteered while visiting family and friends. Furthermore, eight of these stated that they visited at least once a year[7]. In addition, five of the interviewees had previously stayed on the island. This indicates that many of these volunteers were repeaters, which is also a typical characteristic of Lampedusa's traditional tourists.

In order to quantify the volunteers' free time, I requested the survey respondents to state the number of days per week, and hours per day, they usually worked. This is indicative, as there is often a subtle distinction between time on and off volunteering on Lampedusa. In general, the volunteers worked either every day, or up to six days a week, with only three of them working one or two days a week. In addition (and as confirmed in part by my own experience) their working days were fairly full, even though time management was relatively flexible according to the current situation, with most respondents working between six and eight hours a day, and some longer. Due to its small size, the volunteers' free time was generally sufficient to allow them to explore parts of the island. Furthermore, many of the respondents to the questionnaire noted having attended the volunteering camps repeatedly, and therefore had developed stratifications of experiences, through knowledge of the island, as well as affection and personal connections.

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[7] Fifteen out of twenty-three had other experience of volunteering separate from their usual place of residence. Moreover, more than half (i.e. fifteen respondents) had some volunteering experience away from their normal place of residency.

4. Volunteer Tourism in Lesvos. The Boom in NGOs' Arrivals

Between 2014 and 2015, the international attention focused on Lesvos increased exponentially, resulting in a rapid mobilisation of the humanitarian response. The island began to attract several national and international NGOs, along with grassroots organisations, and activists from all over the world (Tsilimpounidi and Carastathis, 2017). Some individuals arrived in response to requests of assistance from European citizens living in Lesvos. For example, Eric Kempson (who now runs the *Hope Project* with his wife Philippa), became particularly well-known for his calls for support through a YouTube channel. Melinda McRostie, who also became particularly involved in the first response to the increase in arrivals, originates from Australia, but grew up in Greece and, with her husband, owns a restaurant in Molyvos. Following the events of 2015, she set up a non-profit organisation named the *Starfish Foundation*.

I discovered this multiplication of NGOs active in Lesvos was also evident in information released by the press and media, although it is difficult to find accurate records concerning the number of associations and organisations on the island. Many were created ad hoc, often by those who had previously helped or volunteered during previous months (Kitching et al., 2017), such as *Drop in the Ocean* (DiO) (Guribye and Mydland, 2018). Furthermore, many of these groups were informal in nature and (at least initially) were not officially registered with the local authorities. As noted by Franck (2018):

The unfolding emergency further attracted journalists, photographers, celebrities, artists, filmmakers, activists, researchers, as well as "voluntourists." The scenes in sites throughout Lesvos during the peak of the crisis can, quite frankly, be described as a "spectacle" that rendered not only the absurdities of the European Union's border regime painfully visible but also how the crisis had become "big business". (Franck, 2018, p. 200)

Between 2018 and 2019, I counted fifty-six organisations operating on the island. However, according to some of the interviewees, there are generally considered to about eighty, as confirmed by Franck (2018), with an article published in The Guardian (Nianias, 2016) noting the presence of eighty-one NGOs. According to Guribye and Mydland (2018), there are: «more than 120 different NGOs active on the island, some of them consisting of a single person» (p. 355). Furthermore, Kitching et al. (2017) estimated that between 2,060 and 4,240 volunteers worked on Lesvos between

November 2014 and February 2016. However, in May 2018, the *Coordination Committee for the Registration, Coordination and Evaluation of NGOs* of the *Secretariat General for the Aegean and Island Policy* stated that, from 2016, there may have been 114 NGOs operating out of Reception and Identification Centres, as well as potentially 7,356 volunteers (Refugee Observatory, 2018). My own request to the *Secretariat General for the Aegean and Island Policy* for access to updated data has been repeatedly rejected. Nonetheless, information from various sources has enabled me to gain an idea of the large number of actors who have passed through Lesvos in recent years with the aim of supporting migrants (see also Rozakou, 2016). Moreover, the University of the Aegean, together with the Hellenic Foundation for Research and Innovation (HFRI), recently launched the project *HUMANcITY*, aimed at mapping the multifarious elements composing the humanitarian landscape of Lesvos between 2019 and 2022. The project currently reports the presence of sixty organisations and/or initiatives.

Most organisations have their local headquarters either in the outskirts of Mytilene, or in neighbouring villages, as well as within (or in the immediate vicinity of) reception centres (i.e. *Moria*, *Kara Tepe*, *Pikpa*, as well as *Stage 2*). A smaller number are located in the northern part of Lesvos, currently in the village of Skala Sikamineas, although in 2015 some were also located in Molyvos, Eftalou, and Montamados. However, it must be emphasised that these NGOs and grassroots organisations are subject to constant change, in response to a number of factors. For example, following the last national election, the government attempted to put in place stricter rules concerning their operation, whose impact is yet to be seen. In addition, following the unrest in January and February 2020, others have suspended their work in the field because of security concerns, while the Covid-19 pandemic caused many to cease their work in 2020.

These organisations offer a number of services, including: assistance for boat landings; sea spotting; provision of food and drink; distribution and storage of clothing: medical care; cleaning; translation and cultural mediation; and legal assistance. In addition, they have opened safe spaces for women and children, as well as providing and educational opportunities, including classes for improving language and computer skills, along with recreational activities, i.e. sport, art and various types of workshops.

The structure and organisational characteristics of these organisations tended to vary considerably. Most did not ask volunteers to contribute financially, but some required some payment, varying from a small amount to cover the expenses of the t-shirt used as a "uniform", or to sustain the organisation, to higher amounts covering accommodation and food, or to fund the

organisation's programmes. Each organisation had its own policy concerning the required characteristics of its volunteers, depending on their activities and approach, and including skills or professions. Some organisations had less-specific demands, i.e. those distributing clothes or food. The specified minimum and maximum stay also varied, from one week to (in rare cases) over a year, according to the specific rules of each organisation.

In the following subsections, I aim to give an insight into the volunteer tourists in Lesvos from the various viewpoints I was able to adopt throughout my research. I commence with my own experience as a volunteer and as a participant observer, followed by describing the respondents to my survey and to finally, a discussion of the interviews. This includes examining the volunteer tourists operating within this multifaceted form of tourism, including how they worked and their motivation to travel to Lesvos.

5. Volunteering and Researching in Lesvos

Given the broad situation I have described, I now frame the experience of those volunteers participating to my research by means of the interviews and the survey. During my fieldwork, I spent three weeks volunteering for DiO, and two weeks for Refugee 4 Refugees (R4R). Unlike the process that led me to volunteer in Lampedusa, the choice of these two case studies required more detailed planning. This was partially due to the numerous volunteering possibilities in Lesvos, but also because I needed to consider two further aspects: I wished to identify organisations that would prove beneficial for my research, but for whom I could also be useful as a volunteer. In practice, this meant organisations that did not require professional skills, apart from in the field of education both with children and adults, for which I was qualified. Moreover, the minimum length of volunteering also needed to be accessible, which led me to select two organisations requiring a minimum stay of between ten and fourteen days.

Unlike my experience in Lampedusa, volunteering with these organisations required a certain level of preparation, primarily due to: firstly, the formality of the application process; secondly, the information material provided beforehand; thirdly, the higher level of rigour in organising the volunteers' time: and finally, because of the organisations' concerns about the wellbeing of their volunteers. Thus both DiO and R4R, requested volunteers to accept specific rules and provided guidelines concerning interactions with people, and in particular children. The introduction by R4R states: «please

remember you're here to help the refugees, not to party[8]». Another aspect underlined was the wellbeing of volunteers: for example, DiO distributed a document titled "Normal reactions after volunteering". While understanding the motivation, and the need to specify these details, the tone used (i.e. between reassuring, thankful and careful, but also condescending) was useful for noting the importance of organisations taking care of their volunteers. Moreover, the instructions included suggestions for finding accommodation, car rentals, and how to get to Lesvos, as well as encouragement to follow the organisation on social media and tips on how to fundraise.

DiO is a Norwegian organisation created in 2015, as a spontaneous reaction to the unfolding crisis, and the first trip of the founder to Lesvos. At the time of the fieldwork for this current research, it was active in several different locations in Greece, i.e. Lesvos, Samos, and Athens (Skaramagas and Elefsina), as well as in Northern-Greece (Nea Kavala). In Lesvos, its volunteers began with sea-spotting and first relief, although, over time, their work has become more structured. At the time I volunteered, DiO operated mainly in two spaces: the Drop Centre (in the village of Moria) and Section B, one of two sections set aside for unaccompanied minors in the Moria camp. It subsequently also opened also a Drop Learning Centre, and, until the outbreak of Covid-19, expanded their work in the camp to Section A, another area for unaccompanied minors.

The main activities carried out by these volunteers were the school for children[9], as well as classes in English, Greek, computer skills, chess and painting, along with a women's space in the morning, and a café and sewing workshop in the afternoon. They organised twice-weekly football training and cooperated with Team Humanity to manage its playground space. From September 2019, they also collaborated with recruiting medical personnel to assist Kitrinos Healthcare in the clinic located in Moria camp. Volunteers' arrivals were planned to take place twice a week. My own experience commenced with an induction meeting with a small group of fellow volunteers on Monday, April 29th, 2019, at 10am in Cafe Mare (at Sappho square) with Angelika, one of the coordinators in Lesvos. I noticed immediately that, although not all volunteers took part in the leisure activities, they quickly became travel companions, and generally tended to spend time together.

Despite finding the introduction document about "a normal day as a volunteer" somewhat intimidating, my first day was not as intense I had

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[8] "Volunteer Introduction Document", sent to volunteers once they have been accepted.
[9] Together with the association Beyond Borders, they offer non-formal education to children of Moria Camp aged between six and eight.

expected. I worked from 11:00 to 13:00 and then again from 17:00 to 19:30. This subsequently remained (with some variation) my schedule. I worked at the women's space, and participated in the afternoon activities with children at the playground and at the evening café, while also taking elementary English and computer classes for adults. Once a week, on Wednesdays, a team meeting was organised to discuss which aspects we felt were successful, in order to improve those we considered less effective. We also shared the emotions we experienced as a result of our work.

I quickly recognised the locations volunteers tended to choose to take lunch or dinner, or to have coffee. On my second night as a volunteer, I found a large goodbye dinner had been organised at the Grill House Tiganakia (Τηγανάκια), as several volunteers were about to leave. Other popular places consisted of the restaurant Nan, the bar Musiko Kafeneio, the cafè Palia Agora, or "the magician restaurant" (a place that was never called by its original name). The spaces we lived, and traversed, changed according to the time of the day. They included: firstly, Mytilene, where most of us stayed at night; secondly, Moria village, where we went to volunteer and, during lunch or coffee breaks, also went for walks, including to the ruins of the Roman Aqueduct, and for coffee at the "new café" (which was also never called by its real name); and thirdly, Cafè Skiniko, located in Panagiouda, not far from Moria, which also became a temporary office if needed.

As none of us worked on Saturdays, the coordinators organised weekly social events on Friday evenings. I found that free time was not only about sharing meals and experiencing the city centre of Mytilene but also for organising daytrips around the island. During my first Saturday as a volunteer, Nicolay (a long-term volunteer from Norway) organised a trip to the north of the island, as I noted in my field notes.

After Nicolay's initiative, we went hiking up north. His idea was to go to the life jacket graveyard, then go hiking, starting from the village Argennos, go for lunch at Skala Sikamineas and come back. This original plan was slightly changed because the resident volunteers were invited to come too. Apparently, they [*the volunteers*] do a trip once a month with them, and in theory we don't invite them more often otherwise they [*the coordinators/organisation*] fear the risk of not being always able to say yes, which could hurt them (I don't know if I completely agree with this point). In any case, in the end, only some of us went to the life jacket graveyard. Ricard and Nicolay went to pick up the guys [*resident volunteers*] and didn't come (the coordinators thought it wasn't a good place for them, again I don't know if I agree with this, maybe they could have asked them their opinion). […] in any case, I thought of it as a sort of "refugee tour", where all the significant places were included (except for Moria). (Field notes, 04/05/2019)

I found that the volunteers' free time was not only about being together, exploring the island and having fun, but also involved visiting specific sites and significant spaces. At the same time, it involved facing the controversies and contradiction of our role, including following the organisation's rules, with which we might not always agree. Thus, we were there to help migrants and make sure they had a positive experience and therefore could not allow them to see anything they might find distressing[10].

I will discuss this reflection in detail in Chapter 5. As noted above, there are several places on the island with a symbolic meaning, which is conveyed between volunteers through word of mouth, so, over time, constructing a tradition of a community made up of those who are mobile. I feel that this can be seen as appropriated knowledge, and tends to lead volunteers to recognise the markers theorised by MacCannell (1999), and so visit such places to recognise themselves in their role. The feelings and emotions connected to these kinds of trips were unique, as they went from curiosity to necessity; from rational to deeply emotional. In my double role as volunteer and researcher, I found myself constrained in the expression of my thoughts, afraid of influencing the views of others, but also needing to share my own experience and contribute to the discussions. However, I sometimes felt the need to share my little knowledge of the island. On a second trip, during which there was a planned stop at the life jacket graveyard, we visited the town of Molyvos, and I suggested going for lunch at the Captain's Table, which was also an emblematic place for those who had been in Lesvos in 2015.

Another aspect that I perceived as fundamental (particularly during my experience as a volunteer with DiO) concerns the relational aspect. Thus, during the longer period of volunteering I carried out for my research (three weeks in total, compared to the two weeks with R4R and the one-week in Lampedusa), and possibly because of working intensely in an environment in which I felt comfortable, I found that affection and trust developed more rapidly, and was deeper than I had expected, both with other volunteers and all those I met in the Drop Centre or the playground. This took place not only while we were working, but also (and probably mostly) during the time we spent together outside those spaces. For example, the first hiking trip in the mountains ended with a long run back through a storm, being described by Morteza[11] as something «I will never forget».

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[10] This is part of some reflections that emerged from informal conversations, when I was trying to further understand the reasons behind the choice of organisation. I found myself agreeing with the general aim, which was simply not to hurt people, while strongly disagreeing with the method.

[11] Resident volunteer with DiO.

Fig. 4.2 - A picture taken during the field trip, on our way back in the rain.

I experienced many episodes emphasising my experience as a volunteer with DiO. However, without overlooking the importance of the activities aimed at those living in reception centres, I (like many of my fellow volunteers) could not help feeling that I was the one benefitting the most from that time, that volunteer work, and those encounters.

From May 20th to June 2nd, I volunteered for the second organisation in Lesvos, i.e. R4R. This was created in 2017 by a young man from Syria, together with a Spanish woman[12], and is described on its website as follows:[13]

Syrian refugee Omar Alshakal fled his home town of Deir Ez-Zor in 2014, after ISIS took control and he was severely injured during a missile strike. Omar swam for 14 hours from Turkey to Greece to reach safety. The 23-year-old started

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[12] I wish to note that, although I was told that this woman was one of the founders of the organisation, she had completely disappeared from the official narration of the NGO, which centres on the story of the "refugee who made it".

[13] At the moment, this description has been removed. These contents were last accessed last in October 2019.

Refugee4Refugees to improve safety and support for other asylum seekers who have followed his journey, but he cannot achieve his goals alone. The non-political foundation works from the European border of Lesvos, Greece and responds to refugees in need of help as they enter EU waters and supports them in the initial minutes and hours after arrival. Since April 2017, we have supported refugees in their desperate journey towards Europe. We are at the forefront of this humanitarian crisis, based on the shores of Lesvos, Greece[14].

I do not doubt the veracity of this information, particularly as this form of foundation myth is popular for an organisation presenting itself in a fairly dramatic manner, including through its chosen images. In addition, this is not uncommon in the marketing of humanitarian organisations, as well as volunteer tourism (see Coghlan, 2006). The reason I wish to emphasise this aspect relates to the strict rules we were asked to respect, which involved signing a code of conduct, alongside being given a sense that we would be asked to undertake difficult work, which was also presented in a dramatic way. However, once I commenced my practical work in the field, I noted that R4R had difficulties in keeping the activities organised and well planned, as well as maintaining the shifts organised on the schedule. This tended to diminish the impression of an effective organisation. In my field notes about my first day, I wrote:

Ana gave me a very brief introduction to what they do, starting from listing the camps (I think she didn't go into details because I knew about them already) and then she quickly described the activities. We sat all together, and they "planned" what they would do with kids that day. Though nothing of what was planned was actually implemented, and I had the feeling of being, not only useless, but also that it was completely nonsensical to be there[15].

During my period with R4R, the activities included: firstly, the construction of the "Mandala" playground; secondly, children's activities; thirdly, the sorting of donated clothing items in "Habibiland" (the storehouse they rented to collect and store all donations); and fourthly, the distribution of ice-packs in Kara Tepe. At that time, due to the change of season from winter-spring to summer, the "shop", where people could go and collect donations, was temporarily closed.

I found a number of different areas were under construction in Mandala, which was located within an olive grove, and included a tree house, a small

[14] https://refugee4refugees.gr/.
[15] Field note, 20/05/2020.

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football pitch, a volleyball and basketball pitch, along with covered areas containing seats. Along with other volunteers, I mainly focused on decorating, while those who had appropriate skills or were in the building trade took care of the construction work. I also assisted in a number of children's activities. I was particularly impressed by the habit of everyone forming a circle at the very beginning and end of each session, as an opening and closing activity, remaining hand in hand and singing a song together, while performing a simple dance. The children loved this.

Alongside the standard events, volunteers undertook several additional activities. On my second day, I participated in a workshop focusing on working with children who had experienced trauma. I found this very interesting and useful, although we all felt the frustration of the difficulty of implementing the suggested strategies in an environment in which we were unable to speak the language. Other activities, usually taking place on Sundays, including beach cleaning or the collection, cleaning and preparation of life jacket material, which was sent to an organisation in the USA to be upcycled to make items such as bags.

I found that my free time with R4R was harder to define than my experience at DiO, not only because we worked longer hours, but also due to the flexibility of the organisation and the tendency to delay every plan. In general, we tended to spend breaks between activities at the same places, near to our working areas, in this case the Olive Grove[16] (where Mandala was located) and Habibiland (situated along the east coast just outside the village of Pamfila). We would therefore have lunch together at Habibiland, when one of us would pick up food from an organisation preparing meals for migrants, along with nan bread from an independent bakery, and we would eat together in the front yard. In the afternoon, we sometimes stopped at Café Skiniko for a coffee, particularly if we needed to wait for the shift at Kara Tepe to start.

Another reason why it was more difficult to manage free time with R4R concerned the fact that most of the volunteers shared an apartment located outside Mytilene, near the airport, but relatively far from where we were working. Moreover, the transportation was also shared (I was an exception since I was independent). This meant that careful coordination was fundamental to any ability to move from one place to another. For the same reason, social evenings were relatively limited and difficult to organise. In any case, this group of volunteers tended to frequent Bobiras Café, Kafè P, Nan,

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[16] The Olive Grove is the name given to an informal part of Moria Camp which was built in an actual olive grove.

Paratairon, and other popular "volunteer places". One unique location I discovered through this group of volunteers was a tavern in Afalonas called OuzoTerapia. Clara, an Italian volunteer who stayed for six months, discovered this tavern in a small village, following which she became good friends with the owner. Because of the difficulties in organising time off separately from the group, I tended to use my lunch or coffee breaks to interview the volunteers. It was not always easy to find the time to sit, or to have some privacy, although some did not appear to mind having other volunteers around us.

This overview forms an introduction to the second part of this chapter, which focuses on the volunteers, and their profiles, as well as the reasons for choosing to volunteer in Lesvos. Following this, the next chapter will focus on pulling all these strings together, in order to understand which spaces of the island the volunteers tended to inhabit.

Fig. 4.3 - Map of Lesvos marking the position of the reception centres, the memory spaces and the volunteering spaces. Reception Centres: 1- Moria Hotspot; 2- Kara Tepe; 3; UN-HCR first reception centre; 4- Pikpa. Volunteering Spaces: 1- Drop Centre; 2- Team Humanity + DiO; 3- Skiniko Cafè DiO office; 4- R4R warehouse; 5- R4R Habibiland. Elaborated by the author on OpenStreetMap base (Open Database License).

6. An Insight into the Survey and Interviews

This section discusses the questionnaire and interviews carried out in Lesvos, along with the participants' profiles. I contacted a total of forty organisations[17] by email, requesting them to forward the questionnaire to both their previous and present volunteers. A link to the survey was also posted on the Facebook page *Information Point for Lesvos Volunteers*. Since there are a higher number of organisations working in Lesvos than Lampedusa, it proved more effective for organisations to share the link to the survey, rather than providing me with volunteers' personal contacts[18]. Furthermore, the link was posted on the Facebook page *Information Point for Lesvos Volunteers.* This resulted in a total of seventy-three completed questionnaires.

I then used the survey to prepare the questions for the interviews, which focussed on the where volunteers spent their free time, including their practices and attitudes towards those spaces. I carried out in-depth interviews with twenty-eight volunteers, the majority of whom also worked with DiO and R4R, or whom I had met during my fieldwork. Of a total of 100 participants, seventy-five were female and twenty-five male. They were divided into six age-groups, with most being between twenty-four and thirty, and all other age groups being evenly distributed. Only three respondents failed to reply to this question. Their countries of origin varied, although most were European and North American. The largest group were from the Netherlands (nineteen volunteers), followed by the UK (eighteen volunteers) and the USA (fifteen volunteers), followed by Norway. The majority of those I interviewed were from Norway, due to Dapen i Havet (DiO), being a Norwegian NGO. Many of the Norwegian volunteers were already familiar with the organisation, as it promotes its activities by means of a strong network. Apart from the group coming from the UK (which does not appear at all in previous research), these nationalities are identical to those surveyed by Trihas and Tsilimpokos (2018), i.e. Germany; Canada; France; Spain; New Zealand; Australia; Greece; Austria; Belgium; Syria; Ireland; Italy; Poland; and Switzerland.

Most of the respondents (twenty-nine volunteers) remained in Lesvos for a period of between two and three weeks, or one and three months (twenty-four volunteers). Fourteen remained for over six months and twelve between three and six months. It was significant that only a few volunteers stayed for

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[17] Of the fifty-four identified organisations in existence at the time of the survey, nine did not work with volunteers and I was unable to contact six.

[18] This was also for reasons of privacy and consent. In Lampedusa, I already had a number of direct contacts, due to knowing people, or being on a mailing list, which allowed me to share the questionnaire with the participants. However, this was not possible in Lesvos.

a short period of time, with six remaining for one week and five up to two weeks. It is important to underline that their length of stay does not only depend on the time and economic resources of each volunteer, but also on the organisations' rules and guidelines, i.e. some require a minimum stay of a few weeks or months. This aspect was often brought up during informal conversations or team meetings, with the existence of short-term volunteers having considerable consequences for both the organisation and the migrants with whom they work.

A constant change of volunteers uses time and energy in training, creates a lack of continuity, with an impact on the quality of the work, i.e. by the time a volunteer is familiar with the requirements, it is time for them to leave. Furthermore, people become attached to each other, and the frustration of seeing so many leaving contributes to the issues already present in the refugees' lives, particularly when it comes to those working with children. On the other hand, there was a recognition that most employees can only take a holiday of between ten and fifteen days, and therefore a longer minimum stay could lead to organisations losing a number of potential volunteers. Moreover, this also reveals that time dedicated to volunteering is, in most cases, longer than the average holiday taken on the island, i.e. 13.5 days for foreigners (Rontos, Papanis and Kitrinou, 2018). Furthermore, volunteers also stay in Lesvos during the low season. These are relevant elements for the tourism of the island which (as discussed in Chapter 3) tends to be seasonal.

The respondents to the questionnaire had volunteered on the island between July 2015 and the summer of 2018, with twenty-two out of seventy-three still volunteering. In general, most had volunteered in Lesvos in 2018 (i.e. thirty-eight out of seventy-three) with eleven in 2015, eighteen in 2016, and twenty-two in 2017. In addition, the interviewees were volunteering during the period of my field work, i.e. between 2018 and 2019. It should be noted that sixteen of the respondents to the survey, and four of the interviewees, had undertaken more than a single period of volunteering in Lesvos, a sufficiently significant number to consider them "repeaters". This was confirmed also by the answers to another question, aimed at understanding whether volunteers went to Lesvos before, or after, volunteering there for the first time. Seven respondents were on the island for a vacation, either before or after volunteering, and three were visiting family and friends. This indicates the presence of a number of people who had formed a bond with the island (either before or after "the crisis"), that had led them to return, and which I believe goes beyond the sole goal of volunteering. Moreover, half (i.e. thirty-seven out of seventy-three) had other experiences as volunteers outside their country of origin. This is an interesting element to consider

when framing the type of people who become involved in these projects and activities, and who are often not new to these types of holidays.

The questionnaires asked volunteers how many days per week, and how many hours per day, they dedicated to their work. As already noted in relation to Lampedusa, this data can assist in understanding the volunteers' working hours and free time. This prompted various answers, with most respondents (i.e. thirty-six) working between four and six days a week, or every day (thirty-four volunteers), so indicating they worked for the majority of the week. At the same time, most of the respondents volunteered for less than three hours per day (thirty-three volunteers), or between three and six hours (twenty-nine volunteers), while only nine worked between six and eight hours per day, and two over eight hours. This shows that most volunteers would have spare time that they could dedicate to other activities, despite not having many full free days.

Most volunteers were both accommodated and worked in the main city of Mytilene (i.e. all of the interviewees apart from one). Forty-eight respondents to the questionnaire stayed in the capital, while the remainder were divided in smaller groups, with eleven volunteers located at Skala Sikamineas, three at Mithymna and two at Kalloni. The remainder lived in various locations, including Kleio, Kratigos, Dipi, Pamela, Panagiouda, and Pigadakia. These responses show how Mytilene is central to volunteers' lives, both for their working hours and free time. Moreover, those who did not stay in the town itself were accommodated in nearby villages, with the exception of Kleio, which is closer to Skala Sikamineas. In the questionnaires, I also requested information concerning their type of accommodation. The responses show that most (i.e. thirty-nine out of seventy-three) stayed preponderantly in a shared apartment with other volunteers, while fifteen stayed in private houses, and seventeen in a hotel, B&B, inn, or bungalow. Four stated that they were housed in a shared dorm, while only two shared an apartment with locals. Finally, two exceptions are one volunteer who stayed in a tent at Stage 1 (i.e. the temporary first aid camp at Skala Sikamineas), and another who remained on a boat with the NGO YWAM.

This illustrates that volunteers often experience similar forms of accommodation to that of conventional tourists, although this may change according to the individual, as well as the organisation for which they volunteer. Forty-five respondents had found their own accommodation, while twenty-eight were housed by the NGO with whom they volunteered, with most (i.e. twenty) sharing an apartment or a house with other volunteers, even though four stated they had a private apartment or house (one said they had both lived alone and shared an apartment), two shared a bed dorm, and three stayed in a hotel, B&B, inn, or bungalow.

5. Living the Island Space

The previous chapter outlined the profiles of the volunteer tourists who form the focus of my research. This current chapter draws on the theoretical framework presented in Chapter 2, in order to raise the issue of how (and to what extent) Lampedusa and Lesvos can be considered as lived space for volunteer tourists involved in migrant support, i.e. a space of representation which is directly experienced through symbols and images (Lefebvre, 1991). Firstly, I consider the representations of the islands from the point of view of the volunteers, including their direct lived experience of the islands' spaces and how this contributes to the borderscaping of Lampedusa and Lesvos. Secondly, I focus on a specificity of Lesvos, considering the centrality of Mytilene to the volunteers, as well as their lived experience of the city. Finally, alongside these questions, I consider the more general issue of how volunteer tourism generates a situated lived experience of a social space.

In order to answer these questions, I explored the spaces external to the participants' work, including those sites they occasionally visited for outings, as well as the locations in which they tended to spend their spare time. I found that the volunteers worked almost exclusively within dedicated spaces, i.e. reception centres or facilities managed by NGOs. These are enclave spaces, which can be considered "islands within the island", and, being where the volunteers spent most of their time, can be seen as rich in meanings, alongside having the potential to develop human relationships. However, it was notable that the volunteers only came into contact with the remainder of the islands' spaces during their free time, when they left the heterotopic enclave spaces (Foucault, 1986) conceived for volunteering, and related to the "normal" island space, through spatial dynamics and an evaluation of attractiveness. These were locations they sometimes shared with "traditional" tourists, while also being developed for a specific form of volunteer tourism

As suggested by Schmid (2016), the goal of this current work is not only to provide empirical examples of the three Lefebvrian categories, but also to

examine their relationships and analyse the dialectical interplay between the three dimensions. Therefore, following the descriptions of the context carried out in the previous chapters, I have undertaken the analysis of the three spatial dimensions through the words of the volunteers themselves. Thus, the chore of my analysis is based on personal perspectives, gathered through the questionnaires and interviews, and being held together by my own participation as a volunteer.

1. Volunteers Co-Production of Lampedusa's Space

I commence with my analysis of volunteers' representations of Lampedusa, followed by their practical and spatial experience of the island. However, I first need to specify my interpretation of the three levels of perceived, conceived and lived space.

For the perceived space, I mean the material spatial practices enacted by volunteers: firstly, their journey to Lampedusa and the movement necessary for volunteering (i.e. travelling from their accommodation to the library or the gardens); and secondly, exploring the island, including going to the beach and to the restaurant for meals, as well as evening walks along via Roma.

For the conceived space, I continue to focus on volunteer tourism, including; firstly, the process creating the preconditions allowing volunteers to arrive at the island (including the narratives around Lampedusa as the island of migrants' arrivals), and secondly, how the island space is rationalised and conditioned by policies that (on various levels) establish where (and under what conditions) volunteers are allowed access to certain spaces, including what they are allowed to do and when. Furthermore, this aspect of space also includes the circumstances determining where volunteers tend to secure accommodation, as well as how they move between locations on the island, and how and where they spend their free time. Finally, I take into account the idyllic stereotypical view of a Mediterranean island, which is frequently present in the tourism-oriented production of the island space.

When it comes to the lived space, this includes the volunteers' experience, as well as their interpretation of this experience, within the realms of both passion and the personal.

As already noted, twenty-three questionnaires were filled in by the volunteer tourists in Lampedusa. Two of the questions regarded their representation of the island and definition of Lampedusa. The first question was aimed at understanding each participant's personal relationship with the space of the island, while the second sought to demonstrate how they chose

to define Lampedusa to outsiders. It should be recognised that these two aspects are closely connected, as shown by the answers I received, which touched on very similar points. However, I also identified a number of interesting differences.

Considering volunteer tourism as a place-based phenomenon (Sin et al., 2015), and bearing in mind that spaces «take their meaning from the people who, and elements that, occupy them» (Wearing, 2001, p. 112), I have employed the data from the survey to understand the symbols and representations these volunteers generally associated with the island of Lampedusa. I therefore analyse how, for each representation, there is an emergence of the relative pre-eminence of one facet of Lefebvre's triad, which takes over the others (that are always presented as co-existing and interrelated dimensions of space). I did not univocally categorise every answer, since some brought more than one aspect into play, but rather broke down the answers into ninety-two thematic statements.

Experience: The first category I identified is that of the representation of Lampedusa as an experience, depicted as separate and different from the "normality" of the routine of peoples' lives. The volunteers represented the island as «an experience that changed my life», «a place to take a break from the rest of the world in which I live», and «an extraordinary experience that gave a powerful momentum to my life».

Moreover, on a more abstract level, Lampedusa was defined as: «a magic place», «a small powerful island», or the «island of my heart». These references to magical characteristics, with their powerful and rich connotations, tends to accord with a general conception of islands. However, in this context, it is strictly related to the island as one where migrants find safety, as implied in the sentence «a magic raft in the middle of the sea».

In this case, the preeminent facet that emerges is one of lived spaces. Thus, Lampedusa becomes "the experience" par excellence, something capable of promoting external and superficial changes, as well as internal and profound transformations. At the same time, defining Lampedusa as "magical" presents two sides: on one hand, it is the expression of a personal perception and feeling towards the island, while on the other (as noted above), the conceived idea of the island as a transcendent space (which assumes also a spiritual or supernatural connotation) can be traced back to the interpretation of the island as an archetypal magical space (Cavallo, 2013). I recognise this last remark as a conceived facet of space, which goes beyond the personal experience, and encloses the space of Lampedusa in a precise and typical interpretation of islands. This first aspect is accompanied by that of the

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salvific island, which I also include within the conceived level of the Lefebvrian triad. It is noticeable that the conceived level is present pre-eminently in the answers to questions asking for a definition of the island, rather than those focused more on a personal representation.

Humanity / Hope / Welcoming: The second most numerous answers were those referring to a representation of the island as a «welcoming» space, an island of «hope», or as a «route towards humanity». Indeed, six of the respondents to the questionnaire spoke of Lampedusa in these terms, while four defined it as a «safe port» or an «oasis».

The question concerning the definition of the island elicited similar answers from four respondents, who defined Lampedusa as a «welcoming land», or a «raft in the middle of the sea, a bridge, a gate that must stay open to welcome those arriving, no matter from where», as well as «an occasion of opening (unfortunately not fully expressed) », as well as «the place where you can check out your humanity».

This category is closely related to the conception of Lampedusa as a place where migrants land and, most of all, it reiterates the humanitarian language viewing migrants as victims to be saved and Lampedusa as the «welcoming island». However, these answers also express a willingness for Lampedusa to become a welcoming and open space, alongside a recognition that this goal has not yet been achieved. From this perspective, I believe that the facet of the lived space appropriates the level of the conceived space.

Human Relationships: Seven of my respondents stated that Lampedusa represents some form of human relationship. One referred to it as «friendship», «home», and «where I created very important ties, which I still keep and reinforce». It was also represented as a place where «two worlds (Europe and Africa) meet», but also where is possible «to see how people struggle to connect». Moreover, one respondent replied to the question «How would you define Lampedusa?» by stating that it is a «bridge between people», however another volunteer declared that «Lampedusa needs a network that involves most of the local population».

While some of the answers referred to Lampedusa as a place where connections are created, others suggested that these connections are not always possible or easy, and that they do not necessarily involve everyone, i.e. the local population. Viewing Lampedusa as a space of encounters and relationships is a clear expression of the lived level of the island space, even in its negative aspects, when volunteer's answers addressed the difficulties in forming (or the lack of) connections.

Border / Understanding: Three of the respondents considered Lampedusa a place to understand migration, or as representing the «opportunity to examine closely and intimately issues of migration and racism […] understand, share information and motivate each other to do what they can to help» and «where you can face the problems of the world». However, it is also «the place where the project of the library materialised, as an opportunity for the young people of the island» and «a battle to restore rights for all… especially for children». This indicates that the island's struggle for rights relates not only to migrants.

Moreover, six volunteers also gave similar answers concerning the definition of Lampedusa, which they depicted as «a piece of Italy turned into one of the borders of Europe» and «an outpost between Africa and Italy». Roberto reminded me that «we shouldn't forget the specificity of what Lampedusa is and induced one […] Lampedusa is a border, because it was constructed as such in time, through policies and discourses[1]».

These answers give the perspective of Lampedusa being conceived, not solely as a borderscape (an idea expressed through the definition of the island as a border recognised as "constructed"), but also a space in which to struggle for a change on a local level and beyond: an improvement in the lives of the inhabitants, as well as those just passing through. It is on this level that the lived space, formed of the imagination and passions (as recalled through relationships with others), meets the conceived space. It is literally impossible – and it would be pointless to try – to disentangle in the words of the volunteers those aspects of these representations and definitions more closely connected to a stereotypical image of immigration in Lampedusa, and which are related to a pure internal thrust coming from the lived experience on the island. The two are necessarily entangled and non-exclusive, and, to be more precise, they feed each other. However, volunteers tended to define Lampedusa as a physical border, despite its position as a place of safety as a landfall. Thus, when answering questions about their representation, the lived space was found to be more evident through the idea of the observation and understanding as well as a place of active struggle.

Laboratory: Another common way of conceiving islands is as microcosms. Lampedusa is no exception, being represented (by six of the volunteers) as such, both on a personal level and in general. One volunteer noted that Lampedusa is «the world, I found everything there», while another stated that it represents «Life». However, leaving the personal for the universal, it

[1] Interview with Roberto, 19/09/2019.

was represented as an «open air laboratory» and a «a little model of the world», as well as «potentially a centre to study and share information on topics such as: rights, migration, legality, and multiculturality». In addition, in responding to the question related to definitions, one volunteer described the island as «a human and social laboratory».

Once again, these answers can be seen as a manifestation of the conceived level of space, as Lampedusa is "reduced" to its stereotypical characteristics. Nonetheless, confirmation that Lampedusa is really a «model of the world» has been emphasised by the arrival of migrants on such a small island, along the related policies and rules, and the consequent appearance of NGOs and volunteers, as well as humanitarian workers, followed by media attention and every element constituting the borderscape. However, as emerged from further information provided in the questionnaires and interviews, volunteer tourists do not fully experience (or if they do it is only partially), nor have direct contact, with all aspects of this microcosm, despite forming one aspect of the whole.

It should be noted that not every volunteer is able to directly experience directly all facets of Lampedusa. However, some of the participants were not only aware of the events on the island, but were able to gather additional experiences. For example, a number of similar arguments appeared during the interviews with Mattia and Hanna, suggesting that, although they did not define Lampedusa as a laboratory, the content of their statements indicated a similar meaning. Mattia affirmed that «it is too small for what goes through it. It bears such a load that it should sink into the sea… and still it doesn't. I'm not only talking about migration, but of tourism, and having the spotlights on it all the time. It should be as big as Sicily to sustain it, but it is only Lampedusa»[2]. Hanna amplified Mattia's observation, describing Lampedusa as follows:

A piece of driftwood; Fortress Europe. The island of hospitality, the island of salvation (not just for migrants). Beautiful beaches; "not as clean as Linosa"; a spectacle; a theatre workshop for politics to play out; a stage for which ever dominant political opinion needs a photogenic megaphone. The extremity of Europe; "basically Tunisia"; part of the tectonic plate of Africa […]; home of eleven military institutions; and "legally uninhabitable", due to the proximity to asbestos and radar. The island of parallel, never intersecting, fluxes of people: migrants and tourists. An island affected by a wind that makes everyone "go a bit mad". The islands of saints, the island of people who do what any humans in the same situation would do. The island of hostility to media attention, the island that is whatever you expect (and

[2] Interview with Mattia, 29/09/2019.

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want) to find. The island of exponential police presence, the island that becomes a haven for SAR missions in distress […]. The island that "only people coming from outside care about" leverage for putting pressure on government […]. The island where the picture of the arrow-shaped boat picture was taken, symbolising the fear of the invasion, and the desired success story of policies of closure (or deflection)[3].

These descriptions of Lampedusa show various aspects of a conceived space inevitably entangled, crossing and clashing with each other. All are simultaneously true, each showing a piece of the mosaic that composes a partial reality of the island. However, these words do not appear to consider the lived space with a desire to appropriate and modify, but simply to recognise the existing situation, as personally experienced, alongside the discourses and the voices found in Lampedusa. The conceived space of «an about to sink Lampedusa» is partly re-appropriated in lived spaces, which are able to take and deconstruct these discourses, viewing them under different lights.

Dichotomy: This represents opposing aspects of the island. The respondents defined Lampedusa as the «island of contradictions» and also as «a magic island, but disfigured by the rubbish and where *omertà*[4] reigns», as well as «an astonishingly beautiful, and also tragic, place». Moreover, Mattia stated in his interview that Lampedusa « (is) a beautiful island from the naturalistic point of view, but horribly administered, extremely exploited, and devoured by tourism»[5].

The generalisation of the first comment allows me to frame the two other answers into that large container represented by the contradictions of this island. Here, the lived experience emerges strongly from the comment relating to rubbish, as well as the counter positioning of the beauty of the island and the dramatic events it has experienced. However, if the first aspect (the beauty and the rubbish) are directly experienced, the second (i.e. those connected to its tragic characteristics) are more mediated and indirect.

Natural Beauty: Only a small number of the volunteers defined the island in relation to its natural beauty. Thus, despite this aspect being one of the characteristics most expected of a Mediterranean island, its aesthetic was only mentioned in two answers. However, this gives me the opportunity to reconnect two sides: firstly, the experience of the beauty and secondly, the conceived level of an idyllic and stereotypical Mediterranean island.

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[3] Interview with Hanna, 05/11/2018 (updates on 27/07/2020).
[4] Conspiracy of silence.
[5] Interview with Mattia, 29/09/2019.

Isolation: One volunteer defined the island as isolated, confirming another characteristic often associated with islands. This forms the implicit precondition for Lampedusa to act as a «social laboratory». However, as the respondent had been a regular volunteer from 2011 onwards, this sense of isolation may also be due to seeing Lampedusa as central to certain dynamics connected to migration, while simultaneously remaining «forgotten» in its own terms, i.e. its lack of any library.

Memory: One respondent defined the island as «an exemplary place, rich in memory». This answer (from the volunteer who defined Lampedusa as isolated and a social laboratory) contributes an additional insight into the construction of the island's space. Each place has its own memory, but this specific remark plays on two levels.
Firstly, the public, in which Lampedusa is a place where the passage of people has left signs, both materially on its surface (i.e. the boat graveyard; the graveyard; the graffiti; monuments; museums; art pieces; and the reception centre) and in the collective memory (i.e. fishermen who saved lives; locals who helped out in difficult times such as 2011; those who protested against migrants; those who supported them against unjust treatment; and those who tried to collect voices and stories). Secondly, the personal, as demonstrated by the volunteer who travelled annually to Lampedusa for eight years, in order to contribute and carry on the library project. This definition is thus an element underlining the aspect of the lived space in Lampedusa.

Finally, I wish to emphasise some specific comments made by the respondents relating to the village. I did not choose focus on its specificity (as I do for Lesvos and Mytilene), due to the size of the island and the fact that is the only settlement of Lampedusa. However, the volunteers' statements concerning the village reinforce some of the categories mentioned above, being generally more concrete and specific («it is a mess during the summer») and thus able to demonstrate the direct experience of volunteers. The topics mentioned in their answers include: human relationships: «it rich with interesting people»; and comments on the beauty and idyllic characteristic of the place: «idyllic, slow, friendly, school children getting pastries on the way to school, lots of big shaggy dogs all about», or «very colourful, quite cute, but a little bit sad and strange, then empty, but with a lot of homeless dogs». However, there are also comments relating to the reaction of the inhabitants to the arrival of migrants. On one hand, they are depicted as welcoming, while on the other they are viewed as indifferent and more interested in having a quiet summer season, so that tourism can flourish. This shows that volunteers represent the two sides of the same coin.
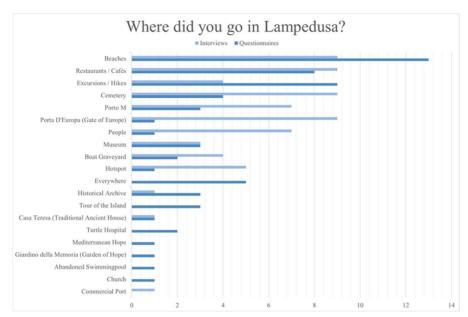
Fig. 5.1- Places visited by volunteers in the island. Source: questionnaires and interviews.

I argue that it is thanks to this direct experience that visual details can be evoked, i.e. stray dogs or children going to school. Furthermore, it is specifically due to their experience outside the volunteering spaces that these elements tend to become part of the volunteers' representation of Lampedusa. Therefore, in the next subsection I examine in greater depth the spaces and places of the island visited and traversed by volunteers, including identifying those they found important, and why.

I have utilised the questions relating to the representation and definition of Lampedusa to understand how the level of the conceived and lived space emerged from the experiences of the volunteers. I now consider the spaces in which they spent their free time, i.e. when not undertaking their volunteering work. These have been briefly discussed in Chapter 4, however I wish to underline that most volunteers spent their working hours in spaces that are both separate and well defined from the rest of the island space, i.e. the library; the community garden; the *MH* office; the Favaloro dock (although *MH* also work in other areas that are more closely entangled with the remainder of island life); and the dock from where ferries leave (where ASGI's volunteers go to monitor the transfer of migrants to Sicily). On the other hand, these are all spaces in the centre of the village, where tourists and locals pass

by or spend time, while the library and the gardens are primarily for the local population.

Moreover, determining where volunteer tourists spend their free time (see Fig. 1), and so exploring their perceived level of space, allows me to depict a wider (and more complete) range of interactions and relationships both constructed in the space and with the space of the island. In addition, the analysis of this final level of the Lefebvrian triad allows me to recompose the volunteers' contribution to the production of the space of Lampedusa. I commence by considering the whole island space, followed by focusing on the village of Lampedusa.

The space the volunteers stated frequenting the most during their free time was the beach (i.e. twenty-two out of thirty-two volunteers), with eleven specifying that they went to the *Isola dei Conigli*, and four to *Cala Pulcino*, while one mentioned *Portu 'Ntoni* e and one *Cala Maluk*. This data is not surprising, as Lampedusa's beautiful beaches are its main attraction, with *Isola dei Conigli* being the best-known. This indicates that those staying on Lampedusa tended to spend their free time by the sea, as demonstrated by Francesco: «if it's only the three or four of us of *MH*, when it's nice weather we go to the beach, when it's bad weather, we watch Netflix[6]». This shows how volunteer tourists are sometimes more volunTOURISTS than VOLUN-tourists (Daldeniz and Hempton, 2011). However, the sea is not only the space where "sun, sea, sand" tourism takes place. Many of the interviewees revealed another aspect connected to the practice of spending time on the coast, near to the sea. Carlotta told me:

I went for a first tour, I passed by the *Guitgia* beach, and I went towards *Cala Croce,* walking along the coast on a path among the rocks. I arrived, and there was this rough sea and a bit of wind. It was sunny, but the sea was really noisy, but you wouldn't have realised it looking at the port from *via Roma*. However, there was this noise of waves breaking on the rocks and this wind from everywhere. It was so powerful and wonderful. And so I stayed there, listening to the wind and I didn't realise that time was passing, I skipped lunch. When a man passed with a dog, we instinctively started talking, as if it was obvious to share, as if we knew each other because we were there. And he reminded me that if we remained for a bit longer, we would see the sunset[7].

The sea is typically a carrier of several symbolisms and meanings, and here becomes a place of leisure and reflection. However, there is a spatial

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[6] Interview with Francesco, 05/11/2018.
[7] Interview with Carlotta, 01/11/2019.

distinction between the beach and more isolated areas of the coast, where the perceived space, layered with symbolic meanings, opens to the personal, so anchoring the space to the lived experience. This is also observable in Mattia's words:

The end of the commercial dock, there were the ferry leaves. It is a place I like, because of its serenity. And it faces south, I always saw it (a bit) as an opening port. Symbolically, it is also important. But unconsciously, I like it because it opens towards another continent, it opens towards the sea… and being there physically allowed me to open up too and imagine other things. Because the island is small, the community is small… […] the truth is that you always look to the inside. […] Therefore, going there helped me to open up to ideas and perspectives, and thoughts, which the everyday life of the island tried to compress towards the centre[8].

Furthermore, seventeen volunteers noted that they spent time in bars or cafés. When it came to other "classic" touristic entertainment spaces, thirteen volunteers engaged in excursions and hikes around the island, which were either organised autonomously, or in groups. Five mentioned that they toured the island by car, six had visited the museum, and four the Historical Archive, while two had been to the turtle hospital managed by WWF and two had visited Casa Teresa. These destinations and spaces frequented by the respondents reveal that the volunteers spent their free time in much the same manner other tourists, as demonstrated by Enrico's description of volunteering and free time:

Well, the Terracamp was totalising, so… we had a siesta, but most of the time you were so tired you didn't do much. The first year [*I participated in the camp*] there was a sort of rush to discover new beaches… and yeah, there wasn't a lot of mixing with the locals, probably also because I stayed only for the specific time of the camp… or because the work was so exhausting. Thus, the free time I didn't spend within the Terra! activities, was reduced to after-dinner activities. We spent a lot of evenings in the centre, dancing and drinking, for example at Glenadin, listening to the local idol Spank[9].

However, as stated by Valentina, free time did not only imply leisure activities:

I did things I found interesting, but also for leisure […]. I found Nino [*Antonino Taranto of the Historical Archive*] interesting, because he has a critical and historical

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[8] Interview with Mattia, 29/09/2019.
[9] Interview with Enrico, 27/09/2019.

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perspective of the island. Then, I can have my ideas about him… but he is someone with important historical knowledge, who is active in a certain way and collects information which otherwise would be impossible to obtain[10].

In addition, further visits show another aspect of volunteers' free time, more closely related to the wish to understand Lampedusa as an island of first arrival of migrants. Thirteen volunteers visited the cemetery of the island, ten the Gate of Europe Porto M, and six the boat graveyard. In addition, six went to see the Hotspot, and one volunteer had meetings with *MH* and another with the Garden of Hope, along with visiting the dock where the ferries leave, and (as mentioned above) the museum. These are all places related to the passage and presence of migrants, and to their voyage to Lampedusa, including those who have died in the attempt, along with the representation and narration of part, or all, of these elements. I will dedicate additional space to some of these aspects in the next chapter, with my focus here being on the interest expressed by the volunteers in these places. Ten respondents to the questionnaire, along with five of the interviewees, emphasised that one of these spaces was particularly important for their experience in Lampedusa. I suggest that visiting these places was partially a means of counterbalancing their lack of direct contact with migrants (i.e. only six worked directly with migrants), and thus justifying and confirming their role and presence on Lampedusa. This is underlined by many stating they were on the island to understand. However, my (as yet, unanswered) question is whether this was also a means of self-absolution from the clear need to change the management of migration. Furthermore, I also found that, for many, this was the first time they had experienced a place like a Hotspot, including seeing people disembarking after a perilous voyage on old small boats or dinghies, which thus become a significant experience. Moreover, these places are, for people volunteering with *MH* or ASGI, significant as the core of their experience.

My participant observation led me to conclude that some volunteers are guided (or recommended) to visit certain places, as demonstrated by the following examples. Firstly, the volunteers at the library are often taken for a tour of the cemetery guided by a member of the Forum Lampedusa Solidale; secondly organised discussions are arranged between the volunteers of Terra! and members of *MH* and Askavusa; and thirdly, volunteers with *MH* are, on arrival, taken for a tour of the island, accompanied by a brief introduction, as well as taken to see the cemetery and the Hotspot. This is

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[10] Interview with Valentina, 27/09/2019.

propaedeutic to an understanding of the working context; nonetheless, this does not exclude the fact that these tours or guided experiences are seen as part of a volunteer tourism "package", which includes time for "entertainment" outside volunteer work[11].

One additional element I wish to emphasise concerns the description of the places the volunteers visited during their time in Lampedusa and specifically of those where they spent their time in the village. Most of the volunteers mentioned bars and restaurant in the village centre, including the Bar dell'Amicizia, Ciccio's, the bar Royal and Glenadin, as well as Porto M (as a place of sociality and entertainment, rather than its role as an exhibition space).

Furthermore, almost all referred to the via Roma and surrounding streets. It is crucial to emphasise these names, as they confirm that these places are where volunteers tend to encounter the local population and other tourists. On one hand, places such as Bar dell'Amicizia and Glenadin are also frequented by locals, as well as tourists during the summer, with the first containing a strong meaning of community. On the other, Ciccio's, Royal and Porto M are strongly associated with the "alternative" groups of people on the island.

Porto M was the place I frequented for the events in the evenings as entertainment though… when I arrived, I imagined it more as a social space, but I didn't find it like that, I didn't find openings from this point of view. It is more a space for the development of art and culture […] And then, other places… well, there is Ciccio's, which is basically "the" meeting point… outside the tourist environment. […] And then… Bar dell'Amicizia was our most popular place to socialise, day and night. We were often there[12].

These spaces have thus become venues attracting certain types (i.e. volunteers and activists), due to being perceived as open spaces and allied to particular causes, resulting in volunteers being happy to sustain them economically. It is interesting to note that, during the interviews, many of the volunteers mentioned that it was not only important where they spent their free time, but with whom.

The thing is that when I just arrived they introduced me (us) to their friendship network, which is also the work network, because there are people from Askavusa, or from the Forum. And they are the people we go out for dinner with, or go for a

[11] This "package" is not meant in a commercial perspective, since the initiatives are not for profit.
[12] Interview with Mattia, 29/09/2019.

beer. We also go together to Porto M when Giacomo plays, and so are spending a lot of time together and it is working out pretty well[13].

Certain spaces (i.e. Porto M or Ciccio's) are important as attracting various groups of people who may not work together, or even have the same vision of migration, but share a common ground and sufficiently close political positions. These are reference points for those seeing a specific type of encounter and exchange, even though (as underlined by Mattia) they are not *spazi sociali* (social spaces). For example, Valentina argued:

You know, there are various sorts of areas. When I arrived, they told me immediately: "that one is the cops" bar, that is the "friends' one". Therefore, I come here to the Bar dell'Amicizia, at Royal, it's a nice place where we work, too[14].

During the previous year, Hanna had said: «the meeting place for activists is Port M. If you're not involved in this environment, you wouldn't go there, you wouldn't even know about it, as it is not advertised and is quite hidden[15]». Indeed, Porto M, and the way it is lived and managed by the collective, has changed over the years, and in particular in 2019, when, as suggested by Mattia, it was turned more into a cultural space.

In any case, it is important to remember that (apart from Porto M) the only places of socialisation tend to be activities and establishments, i.e. bars and cafés. When I asked Valentina where she spent her free time at the village she replied as follows:

[*I tend to spend it*] here, at the Bar dell'Amicizia, because everything else is a mess, it's all for tourists, so you either go to eat or to drink (for crazy prices), and there's nothing anything else. No other spaces exist. If you want to sit and just stay in peace, or at an Internet café, a cinema… a cultural centre… I would have gone… but nothing. I go to the Bar dell'Amicizia because there is Wi-Fi there, so I can sit and work[16].

The picture I have presented so far is lacking in one aspect, i.e. that of the interactions between free time and volunteering time, and therefore space. The volunteers spent part of their free time visiting locations that, for others, constituted a space for volunteering, i.e. volunteers working with *MH*'s or ASGI continued to spend time at the library when they were not

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[13] Interview with Francesco, 05/11/2018.
[14] Interview with Valentina, 27/09/2019.
[15] Interview with Hanna, 05/11/2018 (updates on 27/07/2020).
[16] Interview with Valentina, 27/09/2019.

volunteering, while the library volunteers spent their free time at the community garden. Thus, on the one hand, the lack of other activities or cultural spaces tended to encourage the volunteers to choose to spend their free time in these spaces, although, on the other, these interactions and exchanges did not happen by chance. Thus, the volunteers were invited to join due to the relationship between the different groups, and in particular Ibby, *MH* and Terra!. These volunteering spaces have been created with the aim of being open and safe, and have benefitted from these relationships. This has resulted in the volunteers engaging with a variety of groups, including the local inhabitants, so experiencing differing aspects of social life in Lampedusa. I found that they experienced spaces transversally, which allowed them to traverse spaces designated specifically for migrants and military forces (the Molo Favaloro), as well as those typically considered directed towards "traditional" tourism, alongside the island's inhabitants (i.e. schools or the cemetery).

I would like to draw attention to one final aspect, highlighting similar interconnections. This concerns the statement of one volunteer who emphasised that, when at the village, she had spent her free time with migrants in the streets. This was an individual who had volunteered in 2016, and had thus experienced a different situation from my own time as a volunteer. However, it shows an interesting inversion in the roles of the volunteer. This person had travelled to Lampedusa to volunteer at the library, only to find it to be primarily dedicated to local children. Thus, since her motivation had been «the desire to meet migrants during their arrival»[17], she spent her free time in the streets. This episode confirms the *trait d'union* between the practices of volunteers and tourists, as those who view Lampedusa as a place offering a concrete possibility of encounters, i.e. with migrants.

Following the above consideration of the various aspects of the representation, and experiences, of the volunteers in Lampedusa taking part in this study, I wish to put forward some initial reflections.

Firstly, I found that the conceived, perceived and lived spaces coincided more closely for some volunteers than others, in particular those experiencing direct contact with migrants. These volunteers' preconceived idea of Lampedusa as the "migrants" island' is confirmed in their practical and direct experience, which suggests a clearer recognition of the conceived space structure in which they moved, and also emerged when they spoke of resistance.

Secondly, I found that, for a number of others (i.e. those working with Terra! or Ibby), the level of the conceived perceived space did not always

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[17] As stated in a questionnaire.

coincide. This does not mean that one aspect excludes the other, as these levels continuously co-exist, but rather that the lived space of the island became more romanticised, often accompanied by connotations of "the experience" *par excellence*, capable of transforming a volunteer's own life. However, as suggested in the previous section, the idealisation that often assigns "magical" aspects to the island tends to move between the personal and the conceived.

My observation of the locations in which the volunteers generally chose to spend their free time revealed that firstly, they physically traversed and perceived a large part of the island's space, particularly due to it only encompassing twenty square kilometres. However, I also found that the volunteers did not go to see everything (even though they did, at times, claim that they had), rather selecting those aspects considered relevant to those visiting the island as volunteer tourists. Indeed, the way they chose to spend their free time confirmed the volunteers as tourists, i.e. enjoying the most beautiful beaches, and partying at establishments as Glenadin.

Moreover, the distinction noted at the start of this section between volunteers who did, and did not, work directly with migrants, led me to further reflections regarding their visits to certain spaces. I consider that symbols of the passage of migrants through Lampedusa (i.e. the cemetery and the boat graveyard, as well as the Hotspot), have become a form of compensation for those unable to experience an actual encounter. In this sense, I feel the volunteers experience a form of «melancholia […] of the absence» (D'Eramo, 2017, pp. 123-124), due to the motivation impelling many to travel to Lampedusa being strictly related to its borderscaped essence, followed by their desire to help and support migrants remaining unfulfilled.

This reflection can be related to Vietti's (2019) suggestion concerning the "tourist gaze" on Lampedusa, which views migrants as always either too close (i.e. when tourists would prefer not to see them) or at too great a distance, while never maintaining a comfortable balance. Indeed, Vietti (2019) described a situation well-known to those who have spent some time on the island: at some point, someone will ask you "where are migrants?". This takes place because, even if tourists (including volunteer tourists) do not actively look for migrants, they are disappointed not to see those who have made Lampedusa known throughout the world.

Nonetheless, there is one common element between the two types of space described above: they are both tourist markers (MacCannell, 1999). This generally happens to well-known sites, such as the Porta d'Europa, or the boat graveyard. They are signs (in the sense intended by semiotics) of a constellation of a social myth (Barthes, 1957). Nonetheless, I wish to argue that this

also happens to other sites, which are less universally recognised, but that, through the same processes, assume a significance for a specific group of tourists (this is true for every type of niche tourism), i.e. Porto M for activists and volunteers.

Fig. 5.2 - A volunteer visiting the boat graveyard.

The volunteers in my study emphasised certain spaces as being more important to them precisely because they were where various groups of people gathered together, including who may not work together, or even have the same visions about migration, but have a common ground and similar political positions. These are reference points for those seeking a specific type of encounter and exchange.

Under these conditions, the meaning assigned to such spaces by volunteers stratifies, adding to the conceived space signifying the location consisting of a bar, restaurant, or library. Ciccio's therefore ceases to be simply a pizza place, the Bar dell'Amicizia (Friendship's bar) confirms its own name, and the library is not simply a place for local children to find a book or to play (as demonstrated by the fact that on some days I met more adults and

volunteers in there than children). Similarly, the community gardens are also a place where those coming from a distance can familiarise themselves with a piece of the island[18] and where locals can find new ways to relate, both to their territory and each other. Thus, these spaces are constructed and changed by those who volunteer within them. I felt that, in the case of the community garden, this was physically observable through the transformation arising from the construction of dry-stone walls, or the vegetables growing within them. However, most of all, these changes are made up of human beings.

2. Lesvos through Volunteers' Eyes. Representations and Experiences

The first part of this chapter has focussed on the analysis of Lampedusa as a lived space for volunteer tourists. I now continue exploring this aspect in relation to Lesvos, examining the representations of the island by the volunteers, alongside their direct experience of the island space. Moreover, I also consider the specific case of Mytilene, as this is the city in which most volunteers tend to stay during their time in Lesvos, as well as being the location for the headquarters of a number of NGOs.

As noted above, my focus is on the spaces outside the "enclaves" of volunteer work, both those where volunteers occasionally go on outings and where they usually spend their spare time. Volunteers in Lesvos work almost exclusively within dedicated spaces, i.e. one of the three reception centres (Moria, Kara Tepe and Pikpa) or other facilities managed by NGOs.

Firstly, I commence with my analysis of the survey, to individuate the symbols and representations the volunteers generally associated with the island of Lesvos. Secondly, I continue examining how, for each representation, the relative pre-eminence of one facet of Lefebvre's triad emerges and takes over the others (which are always present as co-existing and interrelated dimensions of space). Thirdly, I investigate how these representations intertwine with the volunteers' direct experience of the island as a whole (including specific touristic destinations), in order to reveal their relationship within the island space. I will undertake the same process in reference to the town of Mytilene in the following subsection. The answers given by the volunteers [19] enabled me to identify six main categories, which I defined as different representations of the island.

[18] Enrico for example told me: «I thought that for me Lampedusa is Damiano»; and thus, through a metonymy in the community garden, Lampedusa can be found.
[19] Seven respondents did not answer this question.

Humanity: The first identified category concerned the humanitarian representation of the island, which emerged from the words of one volunteer who associated Lesvos with the word «humanity». Another volunteer described Lesvos as «a safe haven for refugees», while others, found it «a place of intense need and compassion» and «a place filled with helpfulness». A number emphasised the aspect of «contributing» and «working for a good cause». When representing Lesvos in this way, the volunteers included the dimension of their personal lived humanitarian space, with its strong feelings (i.e. compassion), while simultaneously embracing the conceived space of the institutionally borderised island, and, in particular, the conceived space of the humanitarian NGO's governance.

Beauty: A second category that is relevant, due to its frequency of appearance (i.e. seventeen responses), concerns the beauty of the island. This element shows how, even though the goal of the volunteers was to assist migrants, they were also aware of being on a «beautiful island», one that is a popular Mediterranean tourist destination. This element also emerged during my participant observation. As we chatted while travelling to our destinations, I found many volunteers noticed the beauty of the landscape, or demonstrated a fascination for ancient villages. This aspect also arose during the interviews: «the place where I go swimming is so beautiful; the colours, the combination of colours of the ocean and then the sky or the clouds, and the flowers, and the rocks»[20]. Olivia also stated: «I would define it as a beautiful island with lovely people»[21]. Although they perceived some landscape features in terms of their aesthetics during our daily routines, I found that it was the dimension of the lived space that allowed them to "feel" the beauty. Nonetheless, I do not wish to underestimate the internalisation of the commodified image of «the Mediterranean island», as conceived by destination marketing and branding.

Dichotomy: I found many of the volunteers employed expressions related to dichotomy to describe the island, generally to underline the contrast between the beauty of the natural landscape (which is connected to the previous category) and the ugliness of the migrants' conditions[22]. For example, they noted that Lesvos has «two faces: a beautiful island, with amazing nature, but also the most horrible living conditions I've ever seen in refugee

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[20] Interview with Kasha, 24/05/2019.
[21] Interview with Olivia, 04/06/2019.
[22] Please note that when the concept of "beauty" was associated with another dichotomic concept, the expression has only been counted in the category of dichotomy.

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camps», and that it encompasses a «sharp contrast between natural beauty and human tragedy and misery». Others defined it as encompassing «beauty, hope and despair», or «a place of incredible beauty, but with incredible suffering». The same dichotomic process also emerged during the interviews, with Ana noting that «right now, Lesvos is a beautiful big cage in which thousands of people are being held»[23], as well as some interviewees focusing on a more political contrast between «bad institutions and good people», as demonstrated in the description of Lesvos as a «limbo between failing of European Union and solidarity».

I find Lesvos is very special. It represents a place that is condensed and intense. Here, you can see the two sides of the same coin with extreme clarity. I feel it puts you in the middle of the context and lets you live it intensely, including its negative and tragic extremes, the darkest of this time and of this phenomenon, while at the same time you come face to face with the most beautiful side. I feel this is what makes this island special. I don't know if there is another place where you can find two such opposing sides, both so far away from each other, but at the same time so intense and rich[24].

By giving this dichotomic representation, the volunteers expressed their awareness of the complexity of the facets of space involved in their experience: they alternated between the conceived aspect of the borderised Lesvos, and the lived dimension of both affection and beauty. However, the dichotomy between beauty and hardship can also be interpreted as a short circuit between two conceptualisations of space, i.e. the touristic Mediterranean island and the borderised island.

Human Relationships: A fourth category associates the island with human relationships. One volunteer stated that Lesvos became «home» due to the relationships built there: «I left my heart on Lesvos, mostly because of the people I met».

I really love Lesvos, and I feel really comfortable here, for a variety of reasons. First of all, because I love this volunteering community, I love to be surrounded by young people, who are smart, intelligent, and want to make a difference in people's lives. Also, I just love to be surrounded by Greek people, because I find them very funny and friendly and, so far, everyone has been super nice. And I love refugees. I can honestly say I have only interacted with great refugees. I'm sure that there are some refugees who are

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[23] Interview with Ana, 25/06/2019.
[24] Interview with Clara, 29/05/2019.

stressed, just as there must be some volunteers who are experiencing stress, as well as some Greeks. But, for whatever reason, God has put me, so far, in front of people who are a lot of fun. So, I feel that there is a happy spirit, there is a good spirit[25].

MacCannell (1992) claimed that the "true heroes" of tourism are those who know «their future will be made of dialogue with their fellow travellers and those they meet along the way» (p. 4). Human relationships and encounters (Bruner, 2005; Tonnaer, 2010; Simoni, 2014) are (or should be) a key element in every touristic experience and, as remarked by Wearing (2001) and Madsen Camacho (2004), this is also a fundamental aspect of volunteer tourism. Here, the domain of the lived space (i.e. the spatialised lived situations with others) gains prominence, while the conceived borderised/humanitarian Lesvos remains in the background.

Migration/Crisis: This category associates Lesvos with migration, generally related to the concept of crisis and emergency. For example, one volunteer stated that Lesvos represents: «a humanitarian crisis» or «the frontline of the refugee crisis» as well as a «complex emergency context». This is the only category of representation that tends to convey a negative image of the island, which is not surprising considering the reasons motivating the volunteers. In addition, it is also dominated by the facet of the conceived space. This aspect emerged in particular during Ottar's interview, who defined Lesvos as:

The failure of this refugee policy, and the failure of how to welcome refugees, and how to deal with them. I feel there are a lot of refugees here who have no need for any protection. But when there are so many, and the system breaks down and you're not able to separate who should and should not stay, and who should wait or who should be going to the case office, everything breaks down. I consider that Lesvos has become the symbol of everything that has gone wrong, mostly on the European level, because I think it's insane that the rest of Europe has said "okay this is up to you now", the same as in Italy. I think the situation here is worse, both because Greece is a country in a dire economic situation, and the number of refugees is probably much higher, something like 10,000 people arriving in one day[26].

Experience: the final group of answers relates Lesvos to significant personal experiences encountered on the island. For one respondent it felt like «the beginning of a new path», while another described it as «an experience.

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[25] Interview with Kasha, 24/05/2019.
[26] Interview with Ottar, 14/05/2019.

It's tough to say», or even «maybe the most powerful experience of my life – a really hard experience but a beautiful one at the same time from a human perspective». A tourist experience is also a formative moment, with Wearing (2001, p. 9) noting that tourists «launch themselves into a journey of personal discovery», while volunteer tourism affords the opportunity to experience travel as a mean of self-improvement, which is likely to be more permanent than one induced by other forms of tourism. I therefore find it unsurprising that, in these answers (as in the fourth category), the respondents gave prominence to the dimension of the lived space.

An overall view of the five categories of responses revealed that the representations of the island given by the volunteers can be defined as symbolic, political or, at times, idealistic. These representations appear to relate to their preconceived image of Lesvos as the «island of the refugee crisis», connected to their role as volunteers, as well as to the reasons behind their arrival on the island. On one hand, Lesvos' space emerges as Europe's border and a symbol of the migratory crisis, to the point that one volunteer defined it as such during an interview: «so, I don't know how it turned to be like that, but as you have the graveyard, you have Moria, so Lesvos has turned out to be somehow a symbolic place»[27]. The prevalent Lefebvrian facet is the conceived space, which embeds the institutional power of the EU, but also the non-governmental power of NGOs.

Nonetheless, these answers also reveal the aspect of volunteers' lived space: they drew attention to those aspects they had experienced and lived, as well as underlining the beauty of the island and the positive relationships they had built during their sojourn. For example, those who defined Lesvos as «home» formed an expression of a spatialised social interaction that is not ideologically connoted, nor pre-constituted, but shaped through affection and a sense of belonging.

A peculiar element exemplifying how the two aspects of space can be seen to emerge with greater clarity in this sub-section, in particular with the conceived and the lived being entangled. This is the category I named "dichotomic", i.e. a place intended to be conceptualised as "the" border, the symbol of the crisis, is discovered to be beautiful and enjoyable. I found that, in many of the interviews, the volunteers experienced this aspect as a moral clash, expressed through a form of guilt in affirming that part of their experience was enjoying their free time.

[27] Interview with Ottar, 14/05/2019.

It is nice, but it is a bit weird. And there is nothing bad about it. Of course you're allowed to go out… and everyone who comes here is not getting paid and volunteers are doing something for a good cause and… it's nice weather, so it's ok to go out on Saturdays and it's just a big bonus. But it still gives that weird feeling […] like if you're volunteering and you're not suffering, it's like, you're doing something that feels almost wrong[28].

And:

All of this island is a constant jarring experience of… like you're on this Greek island and it's beautiful, the sea is beautiful… it feels such a weird place to work somehow, because you get so much enjoinment out of the fact that it's beautiful, and you can just drive around…[29].

Or, as with Che, they could be surprised to discover these two sides to the island:

It's interesting, because I haven't seen much, only tiny bits. […] so, I didn't really know what to expect of it other than… [*she implicitly refers to migrants*, A.N.] and then, on the flight, there were all these holiday makers! So, it is a holiday destination! So, that was quite surprising[30].

As discussed, one aspect I chose to investigate further concerned how these representations are connected to volunteers' direct knowledge and experience of the island in its different spaces and territorial features. Volunteers, as noted during the field observation, generally spent their free days exploring the island. Therefore, as most stay for a relatively short time, they only have an opportunity to visit one or two areas of Lesvos, also demonstrated by the results of the survey. The most visited places are shown in Fig. 5.3.

Most of the volunteers (sixty in total) visited Mithymna, often referred to by its ancient name of Molyvos, which is the best-known heritage town on the island. This is noteworthy, because it shows how the interests of this particular type of tourist tend to assimilate with those of traditional tourists. Thus, during their free time, the volunteers behaved like any other foreign visitors receptive to the attractions offered by the island, and it appeared that the conceived tourist space (based on "must-see" places) played a role in their choices of destination when taking a break from the role they played as volunteers.

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[28] Interview with Nicolay, 11/06/2019.
[29] Interview with Kaayn, 16/05/2019.
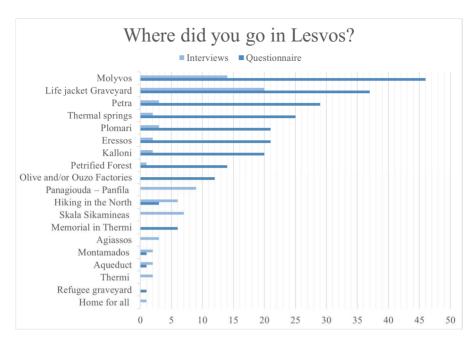[30] Interview with Che, 18/05/2019.

Fig. 5.3 - Places visited by volunteers in the island. Source: interviews.

The same reasoning is valid for a number of other tourist sites visited by the volunteers. Thus, thirty-two had visited Petra, not far from Molyvos, which is famous for its beach, with the central (and most ancient) part of the village being built on a large rock dedicated to the Virgin Mary Glikophilousa. In addition, twenty-three volunteers had travelled to the various thermal springs located around the island, as well as to the western side of the island and the town called Eressos, the birthplace of the poetess Sappho. Furthermore, sixteen volunteers had visited the nearby Petrified Forest geo-park and the village of Sigri. Of all the participants taking part in the interviews and questionnaires, twenty-four had visited Plomari, a town in the south of the island, while twelve had travelled to places related to the manufacture of local products, i.e. the olive oil museum or the ouzo factories. Finally, a smaller number had visited various towns or attractions, including Skala Sikamineas, Agiassos, Montamados, and the Roman aqueduct in Moria, as well as travelling to mountain areas to hike.

A different kind of location, but of considerable relevance to this work, is the second most visited site, the "life jacket graveyard", which was visited by thirty-seven respondents to the questionnaire, as well as twenty

interviewees. From 2015 onwards, the world's press has begun to publish photographs of this feature (termed by one respondent to the survey the «heart-breaking mountain»), which has rapidly became a symbolic place. It now even receives reviews and ratings as a "spontaneous monument" on Google Maps.

This is indicative of how interest in the phenomenon of migration can lead to the transformation of the role and the significance of certain places. In this specific case, a landfill site has been turned into an attraction, or a place of interest, for various categories of visitors, including journalists, tourists, researchers and (most of all) volunteers, to the point where it has become a powerful symbol of the migrant crisis. A small number of the interviewees, and the respondents to the questionnaire, stated that they had only visited the life jacket graveyard. It is therefore interesting to analyse the interplay of the three levels of Lefebvre's triad in relation to this specific case.

Firstly, on the perceived level, the majority of the volunteers gained a direct experience of the site, having travelled to view the graveyard. Secondly, on the conceived level, the life jacket graveyard is considered a must-see place: «quite a lot of those who have been before said "you just have to go there"»[31]; or «I think it was important to go, because than I could maybe get an idea of the magnitude of the problem»[32]. It thus forms part of the volunteers' duty, one that confirms their role as part of the humanitarian borderscaping of the island. This is also proven by the fact that some NGOs institutionalise the visit, systematically organising tours for their volunteers. The need (or duty) to visit this area can be interpreted as evidence of the humanitarian space of Lesvos as conceived by NGOs, i.e. a response to the borderised space conceived by EU policies. Thus, this is also a staged performance of their role as volunteer tourists that influences how they perceive and move through the space, and also shapes their experiences (Crang and Coleman, 2002; Bruner, 2005; Tonnaer, 2010).

Thirdly, on the lived space level, I found that, while some lived the experience emotionally (i.e. praying, crying, or simply walking silently and gravely around the site), others challenged the "imposed" symbolism of the site, preferring to focus instead on the human relations built within the space of the island: «For me… it was simply… just a dump. It didn't give me much. […] I was far more moved by seeing the people living in the camps and listening to their stories… I didn't get the dimension of this phenomenon

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[31] Interview with Ottar, 14/05/2019.
[32] Interview with Isabel, 20/05/2019.

from the life-jacket graveyard, but I did from the people I met»[33]. A number also challenged that site could contribute to the stigmatisation of migrants, with Kaayn saying: «I feel like… it has the potential to make the situation seem more like "those poor refugees"»[34].

In general, I argue that a relevant number of volunteers go to visit the graveyard as a place to confirm the representation of Lesvos they choose to embrace, and which makes this vision visible and sacralised: an informal cemetery of objects (i.e. life jackets) that stand for people's bodies, evoking their suffering or death. Thus, the life jacket graveyard stands as a place in which the conceived and the lived facets are able to achieve a form of balance, i.e. the normative and NGOised aspect of the migrant crisis, alongside the emotional side unique to each individual volunteer.

A similar, but less popular, monument is a small memorial in Thermi, which was visited by six volunteers, and is dedicated to migrants who have lost their lives during their journey to Lesvos. This is not as well-known as the life jacket graveyard, but I believe that the volunteers had a similar motivation for visiting this location, one that went beyond that impelling them to view the life jacket graveyard. Thus, this visit formed a means of seeing the tragedy with their own eyes, in the form of a material object confirming the depth of the crisis they were working to address. Moreover, it should also be noted that most places visited by volunteer tourists during their stay on Lesvos are located on the part of the island more closely involved in the arrival and passage of migrants, i.e. the northern and eastern coast, along with the main road between Mytilene to Kalloni.

In certain cases, it appeared that the volunteers undertook a "classic volunteers' tour" of the north of the island, with the principal destination being the life jacket graveyard, partially due to its geographical position, but also because it is, once again, a practice in which they were expected to engage as volunteers. This was confirmed on two different levels during a number of interviews: firstly, there were the personal perspectives of volunteers who interpreted this tour as a «traditional road trip to the north»[35], and secondly, as noted above, I was informed that an institutionalisation of this tour had been put in place by some of the volunteering organisations. During these trips:

We were shown the path that refugees first took once they arrived in the north […] We went along the road, and we were shown where the migrants made bonfires,

33 Interview with Clara, 29/05/2019.
34 Interview with Kaayn, 16/05/2019.
35 Interview with Clara, 29/05/2019.

so that people were able to see them during the night and … basically a lot of stuff from the beginning when people were first arriving on Lesvos[36].

In summary: this chapter has demonstrated that the results from the survey, the interviews and the participant observation, have revealed the direct experience of the volunteers outside their places of work as being necessarily partial, sporadic and limited in both space and time. In addition, I found that the volunteers' trips and spatial practices revealed Lesvos to be a "halved island" (Cavallo and Di Matteo, 2021), shrunk to the spaces and networks related to migration hot spots, while the remainder of the island was blurred, lost or simply ignored.

Fig. 5.4 - Detail of the Life Jacket Graveyard.

This therefore demonstrates how the dominant aspect appears to be the level of the conceived space, particularly when compared to the other two

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[36] Interview with Kaayn, 16/05/2019.

Lefebvrian levels (i.e. perceived and lived space). Thus, volunteers (even when visiting the island as tourists) tend to go to certain areas, which have been identified as representative of their role. In doing so, they are contributing with their practices to the construction of a borderscape, intended as the space continuously negotiated and produced by a variety of actors and where border practices take place (Brambilla, 2015a). The volunteers' answers are the expression of their mental image of Lesvos, which is influenced by geopolitical and social discourses acting upon their representation of the island's space. However, the volunteers also challenge the space as pre-conceived by the main humanitarian discourses, including at the life jacket graveyard.

3. A Focus on Mytilene: Representations and Spatial Practices

Following the previous overview of Lesvos, this section focuses on the capital city of Mytilene. There are various reasons why I chose to look specifically into the relationship between volunteers and this urban space. As mentioned previously, this is the geographical area where migrants converge, being the location of the three reception centres, as well as all related services, and the island's port and the airport. For these reasons, most volunteers tend to work in this area of the town, with the data from the survey showing that 65.7% were accommodated nearby.

I analysed the volunteers' answers to the questionnaire, as well their statements during the interviews, to understand their representation of the city. In the survey, I asked them for a definition of Mytilene, subsequently categorising the responses, as in the previous section. I individuated seven categories: the first three discussed below are those comparable with the ones found previously for Lesvos.

Human Relationships: Some of the volunteers' definitions focussed on human relationships (fifteen answers). One stated that it is «easy to feel at home» in Mytilene, while others considered Mytilene «welcoming», or «friendly». Finally, three volunteers drew attention to the «mix of volunteers, locals and refugees and the relations between those groups», as did Christos during his interview:

It's nice to see how people from all around the world, including Greeks, gather together in such very nice, chilled places, to work, have coffee, and socialise. […]

And I like to spend my time here at Bobiras and Musiko Kafaneio. I like places where there is good music, a nice environment, and open minded people – or at least people who are trying to be open-minded[37].

In this case, the dominant dimension appears to be the lived space. It is significant that, considering the relative size of Mytilene, this representation is noticeably more relevant than for the island in general. Mytilene is thus not only the place where volunteers sleep and eat, but also where they generally gather to socialise.

Migration/Crisis: A second group (ten answers) provided migration crisis-centred definitions, paying particular attention to crisis management and its impact on the town. For example, one volunteer described it as filled with «protests and dramatic attempts by the refugees to reclaim their dignity», so underlining the «growing dissatisfaction of locals with the way EU is handling the refugee crisis». Another respondent described it as «a city that has become the chessboard for international politics», while others simply said it was «tense», and «in conflict due to the dire situation». Reading through these representations of the town allowed me to observe the clash between the conceived, normative and (to some extent) oppressive space, and the desire to find a response, or an outlet. I addition, I found that the three levels of the triad unfolded even more than in the representation of Lesvos, with all their conflicts: the perceived tension (i.e. the periodic demonstrations in the town); the conceived space (as informed by the institutional control of the «chessboard»); and the lived space, which enabled migrants to maintain their dignity.

Dichotomy: The third category of definitions (eight answers) restated the dichotomic discourse already found for Lesvos. The respondents highlighted the contrast between the beauty of the place and the difficulty of the situation, i.e. «beautiful, but fractured, and under pressure», or «a sad mix of angry Greeks, desperate migrants, and a beautiful small town». On a different level of contrast, one respondent emphasised that the town is «a hospitable place for young people, and tourists, but lacks the same hospitality for refugees».

Nevertheless, the volunteers also provided definitions of the town that differed from their representation of Lesvos itself. I found two almost antithetical groups of answers, with some respondents defining Mytilene as a «hectic town» (twelve answers), as well as «chaotic», «lively and loud», or

[37] Interview with Christos, 02/06/2019.

even «aggressive». During their interview, Sara and Kath stated: «for us, one week in Mytilene is like one month, and one month in Mytilene time feels like a year». Conversely, eleven participants described the town as «small, and provincial», or «cute, provincial and calm», or as a «quiet town». However, it should be noted that the volunteers' country of origin may have had some influence on their answers. In the context of the current study, we can say that the lived aspect of space is preeminent, and that Mytilene was perceived differently by each volunteer on the basis of their individual experiences.

Beautiful and Idyllic: Twenty-two volunteers described Mytilene as «a beautiful/idyllic fishing port», or as «picturesque», «ancient and beautiful» and «quaint». Thus, as with Lesvos as a whole, the perceived and lived aesthetic, as well as the conceived ideal of the island town, played a role in the way the volunteers represented Mytilene.

Practical: On the other hand, ten volunteers described Mytilene from a highly practical point of view: «small, but just large enough to provide all essential services», with «friendly shop keepers and hotel staff», or with «cosy bars and nice cheap restaurants». In addition, one volunteer described Mytilene as «the less provincial part of the island. The centre of commerce, and tourism; a thriving port town». Thus, the perceived facet of space, as expressed through the elements of the daily routine, is again the most relevant. In general, it can be said that the image of Mytilene reported by the volunteers in this study was more practical and realistic, in comparison to the symbolic representation of Lesvos as a whole.

The other aspect I considered concerned where the volunteers spent their spare time in Mytilene, including investigating their spatial practices as tourists within the town. Twenty-four respondents to the questionnaire were not accommodated in Mytilene during their time on the island, of whom, eighteen noted spending time in the town. Therefore, approximately 84% of the respondents spent some time in Mytilene during their stay on Lesvos. In addition, all of the interviewees were accommodated either in Mytilene or just outside, and all tended to spend part of their free time in the town.

The majority noted primarily frequenting taverns, bars or restaurants, as well as public spaces, shops and supermarkets. Most of those accommodated in Mytilene also said they visited local beaches, in particular the ones

adjacent to the street leading to the airport and near to the port[38]. The perceived space of the town emerged from their daily activities: shopping and eating, as well as time dedicated to rest. In addition, the volunteers tended to have a preference for specific establishments, particularly those considered refugee friendly.

The three main bars I would include in this category are: Kafè P, Bobiras and Musiko Kafaneio, all of which are located in the city centre and considered friendly and a safe place for both migrants and volunteers.

I have something to say which relates to what I said before about the multicultural vibe of Mytilene and its surroundings. There are these three places: Bobiras, Musiko Kafeneio, Kafe P, which I love, all three of them[39].

There is a sticker on the door that sums it up, it says "Ferries, not Frontex"[40]. So, they are very open minded: people can come in just to get water. They did a lot during the hardest time, they did a lot of different things, and they were always very nice. It's a safe place[41].

Some of the other bars here are not super happy about the refugees, so at least here you can talk about everything [*she points at other people working for an NGO sitting at the bar – AN*], it's just a place for everyone, a sort of meeting point[42].

The same can be said of the restaurant Nan, which was opened by a group of local activists (who also supported the opening of the Pikpa Reception Centre) and which soon became well-known among volunteers. As I was told by Efi Latsoudi:

This [*the idea of opening Nan*] had already occurred in 2014, before the big crisis, because we were all involved in Pikpa and solidarity groups. We were thinking of a restaurant where local people and refugees could cook together, to create work to combat xenophobia and racism, and to create a place in town where people can meet and exchange cultures through food. That was the idea. It took a long time to prepare, with fundraising, renovating the place, and dealing with a lot of bureaucracy. It's still struggling to survive, because it's a business. So, even though it's social, we employ either refugees who we train, or Greeks who are unemployed, or from one

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[38] Those whose accommodation was located outside the town tended not to use these beaches, because they had the opportunity to go swimming in other areas of the island.
[39] Interview with Christos, 02/06/2019.
[40] Name of an initiative endorsed by organisations such as Watch the Med, Alarmphone, Seawatch and Jugend Rettet.
[41] Interview with Kath, 22/05/2018.
[42] Interview with Sara, 22/05/2018.

parent families. It's very critical to be able to survive, you have to deal with all the taxes, and social security… But we are happy because we are creating a team, we are exploring the food, we are bringing ideas and recipes together. It's already important what is happening, but it's difficult[43].

Its relevance was also confirmed by several volunteers stating: «I think Nan is absolutely a place where international volunteers go, because it not only fits with the mentality of why people are here, but also the food is good. I think it has a really good reputation amongst international volunteers»[44].

There are a number other key places in volunteers' life in Mytilene, apart from restaurants, bars and cafés[45]. For example, Sappho Square, which is the central square of the town, and where volunteers distribute food to migrants in critical times and where people gather for demonstrations, as shown by the posters left up on the walls of the city. A final place of note is Mosaik House, a support centre that opened in July 2016. Here, migrants, volunteers and the local inhabitants of Mytilene can meet, take part in activities, and spend time together. Although only four of the respondents to the questionnaire stated that they frequently spent time there, my participant observation indicated that a large number of volunteers attended the activities provided by the centre, i.e. classes in the Greek language and yoga.

These observations reveal that the three aspects of space (i.e. its perception, representation, and lived experience) create synergy, since they are not only frequented by volunteers, but are created and transformed by social encounters between volunteers, migrants and locals. If, as suggested by Watkins (2005), the level of the lived space enables those unconventionalities that form an essential aspect of social encounters, this emerges as particularly evident when considering the scale of Mytilene[46]. I observed how the experience of the city is more direct and takes place on a daily basis, which is why volunteers often provide an image of the city connected to highly practical elements. Here, from a certain point of view, the level of the perceived space appears dominant. The

[43] Interview with Efi Latsoudi, 30/04/2019.
[44] Interview with Kaayn, 16/05/2019.
[45] It seems that spaces such as squats, or associative and public spaces, stay at the margins for volunteers. I assume this is due to the fact that people arriving in Lesvos for such a short time struggle to become familiar with such spaces, while commercial varieties are more accessible and advertised. Another interpretation is that we generally tend to spend our free time at home in establishments such as bars and restaurants, as squats or associations are reference spaces for smaller groups of people.
[46] The division between the space of the island and the space of the city is simply a tool to assist with the analysis. I recognise that, on one hand, these two scales are interconnected, while, on the other, it is natural that the urban space is lived differently than the non-urban island space.

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conceived space is defined (directly or indirectly), either by an authority or a logistic matter that determines where (and how) volunteers work and live, as well as what is accessible to them and what is not.

Furthermore, the third Lefebvrian level, the lived space, is enhanced where volunteers build relationships that challenge, and have the potential to deeply change, the space which they live. This is made tangible by places in Mytilene, such as Nan or Bobiras or Kafe P, which are particularly dense with relational and identity meanings. There, spatialised practices take place that do not exist in other spaces of the island[47]. The presence of volunteers not only brings a physical transformation of the space, but «also alters the imaginative, affective, sonic and social qualities of this space» (McCormack, 2008, p. 1823) through the networks and relationships they build. Moreover, the connections with people and places are created through immaterial ties, so that volunteers make those places «theirs» and perceive them as «safe» and as «home».

As I also personally experienced, going to any one of these places meant to arrive among friends, those you might have met already, or who you will potentially meet. As such, this is one of the few location where some spatialised glocal practices involving locals, migrants, activists and volunteers from all over the world (without excluding traditional tourists) can take place. For example, at Nan's, individuals from diverse backgrounds are able to work together, cooking traditional food from their own home countries with local activists, resulting in the creation of a place in which the phenomenon of migration, and those who are a part of it, reside in an environment of normality, together with locals and tourists, as well as volunteers and migrants In this sense, volunteer tourists, locals and migrants move into each other's spaces and transgress a «prevailing spatial pattern?» (Bruner, 2001, pp. 895-896) «reaching together beyond the limit of the borderzone and moving relations from "performance time" to "real life"» (Simoni, 2019, p. 115).

4. A Comparative Gaze: Producing Spaces

My field observation revealed that the presence of international volunteer tourists in Lampedusa and Lesvos not only exerts an impact on the conditions

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[47] An exception could be the village of Skala Sykamineas, where there is a first reception centre and where a number of volunteers work and live. Here, they build particularly strong relationships with the village and its habitants, although this was generally outside the scope of the current research.

of migrants, as well as the local inhabitants (primarily in Lampedusa) as recipients of services, but also contributes to the alteration of the fluid and transformative island space. This chapter has, through the lens of the Lefebvrian spatial triad, sought to unpack the various levels involved in the construction of space and to understand volunteers' role in this process. Even if volunteer tourists primarily experience spaces reminiscence of "enclaves" (i.e. those opened by NGOs and associations, along with receptions centres or other related facilities), this work investigates their relationship to the "normal" island spaces. In Foucault's (1986) terms, this refers to those outside those enclave heterotopic spaces specifically conceived for volunteers and migrants, or the beneficiaries of volunteering activities, although it should be noted that these are more permeable in some cases relating to Lampedusa. In addition, "non-migrant oriented" spaces, with their liminal nature concerning volunteers' motivations and presence on Lesvos, can potentially unveil the less evident processes involved in the construction of space. Previously in this chapter, I questioned how volunteer tourism may generate situated lived experiences in the spaces in which this takes place. I now attempt to draw some connections between the two examples of Lampedusa and Lesvos.

As previously reported in this chapter, the categories of the representation of Lampedusa and Lesvos (individuated after examining the volunteers' statements), are essentially the same, with the exception of two additional categories relating to Lampedusa. The main difference between the two analyses is not traceable in the categories themselves, but in the frequency of their appearance.

The most recurring categories concerning Lampedusa related to personal experience, humanity, and human relationships, while the volunteers in Lesvos tended to focus on representations of the island as a place of humanity and beauty, or where natural beauty contrasts with the plight of migrants. In Lesvos the humanitarian or migration related representation is stronger, while less frequent is the representation of the island as an experience. I feel this is most likely connected to the aims expressed by volunteers (i.e. helping others, rather than themselves) along with their more direct contact with migrants.

However, as already noted on a number of occasions, references to Lampedusa include the humanitarian aspect, as well as the representation of the island as being connected to migration, despite the fact that most volunteers tend to work with local children or in the community garden. On a different level, it is interesting to note that, despite the volunteers' exploration of the island, there is little consideration of Lampedusa's beauty, although it has been acknowledged in different contexts.

This leads to a second observation of the differences between the results of the analysis for Lampedusa and Lesvos. When it came to Lampedusa, all of the respondents affirmed that, due to having the opportunity to experience different parts of the island, they felt they had in-depth (and therefore all-round) knowledge of the island. Lesvos on the other hand, to some extent due to being larger, tends to only be partially experienced. My observation of the areas most frequently visited led me to the conclusion that, for volunteers, Lesvos is an island of two halves. Volunteers have a predilection to visit those areas connected to the aspects that have brought them to Lesvos, i.e. the spaces linked to the arrival (and stay) of migrants.

Moreover, I observed that, in Lampedusa, those spaces considered to belong to volunteering demonstrate far looser borders when compared to Lesvos. This is due to the different type of activities, goals, and receivers of the services provided, as well as the laws and rules connected to the various contexts of volunteering. However, beyond the conceived (in Lefebvrian terms) aspect of these spaces, the way they are lived exceeds any strict limits dictating how (as an example) a library should be used. As already discussed, the volunteers taking part in this study generally spent their free time there, also using it as a place to meet up and forge connections between each other or with the local inhabitants, i.e. to celebrate the anniversary of the library's opening Alongside their public function, another aspect influencing the use of these places is connected to their position, i.e. both the community gardens and the library are located in the heart of the village. In Lesvos (with the exception of Mosaik House), most of the activities with migrants take place at the margins, where they are less visible, and in spaces meant only for migrants, where access to externals is often not allowed.

Finally, both islands demonstrated that some spaces of consumption (i.e. bars or restaurants) have become spaces of encounter and confrontation, while the practice of choosing these specific places confirms the human relations emerging from the representation. However, I identified a primary difference between the two islands: in Lesvos, these encounters (even though only partially) include migrants. By contrast, this rarely takes place in Lampedusa, due to the management of migrants' arrival and stay at the Hotspot. Moreover, the need to meet up in these kinds of places indicates a lack of alternative spaces functioning outside the logic of consumption (as underlined by Valentina referring to the Bar dell'Amicizia). This is not only true of these islands; however, it may be considered more pronounced for volunteer tourists, as commercial activities are more immediately accessible and advertised than other types of common spaces, which may be more connected to local life.

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Exceptions attempting to fill this gap are Mosaik House in Lesvos and Porto M in Lampedusa.

In addition, I wish to discuss the fact that, on both islands, volunteer tourists visit spaces of memory or symbolic places linked to the arrival and transit of migrants. In Lampedusa, visiting certain spaces has become, for those volunteers not working directly with migrants, a form of compensation for that missed encounter. In Lesvos, by contrast, visiting those spaces becomes the confirmation of their role as volunteers. In general, the practice of visiting these spaces is the expression of the peculiar type of tourists they embody.

In summary: the presence and practices of volunteers on both these islands can transform, or co-construct, spaces deeply connoted in this sense. This is true for commercial establishments, such as those discussed above, or places of memory, i.e. the life jacket graveyard. Moreover, even if the facet of conceived space (embedding both the institutional and non-governmental spatial codification) is dominant in borderised and humanitarian islands, the dimension of the lived space gains pre-eminence through some of the volunteers' spatial practices, which relax the normativity of the border, enabling a more creative and participatory co-construction of space (e.g. at the library in Lampedusa or at Nan's in Lesvos).

Thus, the presence and practices of volunteer tourists do not act on the island space in an isotropic manner, but their potential for challenge and transformation unfolds in some areas and in specific places. In Lesvos, this is through a change in scale (i.e. from the whole island, to the urban scale of Mytilene), which enables the dimension of the lived space to become dominant. Thus, volunteers' practices allow some spaces in Mytilene to be released from the normativity of the border (whether institutionally or humanitarianly conceived), so enabling the encounter between volunteers, locals and migrants to take place in a context of normality and sharing. In Lampedusa, this primarily occurs through the deconstruction of the limits defining the various groups of volunteers and the deeper involvement with (part of) the local population, in particular through projects designed for this purpose.

The above discussion does not overlook the strong power dynamics in play, and the control exercised (including through volunteer tourists themselves), on migrants, as well as on the local population. However, I found that some volunteers' spatial practices can re-negotiate the balance between perceived, conceived and lived space, informing it with a separate identity. In a general perspective, this summarises the importance of examining the practices and performances of volunteer tourists outside of their working space and time.

6. Mobility and Resistance against the Border Regime

This chapter employs the analysis of the spatial experiences and practices of the volunteers, as presented in Chapter 5, to undertake the following. Firstly, discuss whether volunteers perceive their presence and work on these islands as forms of resistance. Secondly, to identify, on the basis of the field observation, if (and under what conditions) volunteer tourism can be encompassed under the common denominator of a resistance to the violence of the border and the injustice of unequal mobility, as well as the system that produces them. The analysis focuses on Lampedusa and Lesvos in turn, followed by a discussion of the differences and commonalities between the two islands, along with the practices of volunteer tourists. My aim is to identify how the different types of volunteer work, the relationships developed, the spatial practices enacted, and the lived spaces can potentially lead to resistance.

1. Fields and Practices of Resistance in Lampedusa

The topic of resistance, as introduced in the second chapter of this work, is wide and multifaceted. However, it has been frequently used within the field of migration studies to delineate practices aimed at countering the violence that can be enforced at borderscapes, as well as at a more general level, i.e. against the structures of global capitalism and neoliberalism generating and reiterating inequality. In this section, I consider the unique context of volunteering, and the differences between the various activities undertaken by my participants. I commence with a discussion of how the volunteers in Lampedusa perceived their presence and work on the island, including whether volunteer tourism in Lampedusa can be viewed as promoting resistance practices. As already noted in Chapter 2, it is fundamental to bear in

mind that my participants did not belong to the oppressed group, and therefore the type of resistance open to them was that of allies. Furthermore, in contrast to the migrants, they can be seen as the embodiment of kinetic elites (Sheller, 2018), as well as possessing the privilege of freedom of movement.

I begin with the examination of the interviews, in order to establish whether volunteer tourism can be seen as a form of resistance to the violence of the border and unequal mobility, or whether it belongs to the system that produces these inequalities. During my research, I attempted to understand the volunteers' personal views, and how each applied these to their role, position and practice. This led me to pose this question directly to my participants. Due to the differing activities undertaken by volunteers in Lampedusa, which (as noted in Chapter 4) involves working with contrasting groups of people, I received a considerable variety of answers. It is therefore vital to take such differences into account during the interpretation, and consequently these are highlighted where applicable.

The first element to note when analysing the collected data is that my participants generally found the question straightforward. Only a small number requested some form of clarification, including Francesco, who stated: «I struggle to define my volunteering activity in Lampedusa as resistance. Resistance to what? To barbarism, to violence, to oppression, to occupation, to capital?»[1]. In general, there seemed to be agreement concerning the meaning of resistance, which I interpreted as arising from common cultural references related to the history of resistance to fascism, as well as the general background of political activism shared by many of the interviewees.

I found various positions emerging during my conversations as to how volunteering in Lampedusa can be viewed as a form of resistance, both in relation to the volunteers' type of experience on the island and their backgrounds and environments.

Firstly, two of the interviewees did not interpret their volunteer work in Lampedusa as a form of resistance. Roberto stated that resistance means taking a radical political position, which he did not consider a factor in his activities as a volunteer. However, Francesco recognised the work carried out by volunteers as deeply ingrained, framed into an institutional plan and that «it is easier to be controlled by it, conforming to its logic to maintain an activity, rather than resist»[2].

Their reasons shared a commonality, which was expressed by Roberto as follows: «in order to become resistance, activism must step forward, which

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[1] Interview with Francesco, 05/11/2018 (updates on 27/07/2020).
[2] Interview with Francesco, 05/11/2018 (updates on 27/07/2020).

probably means reaching some kind of breaking point… (I'm really trivial-ising this) and getting to a point of no return»[3]. In this sense, such as breaking point may, as noted by Francesco, be interpreted as volunteers distancing themselves from the institutional framework by which migration is managed. From this point of view, none of the case studies contain elements of re-sistance, as volunteering projects in themselves are not considered a form of public disobedience taking place through rebellions, strikes and revolutions (Lilja and Vinthagen, 2014). However, tactics may be individuated within the field of the volunteers' actions. Francesco and Roberto recognised many of the «actions taken by *MH*, the Forum Lampedusa Solidale and by activists are encompassed within the field of resistance, the dimension contributing to the creation of forms of resistance[4]», and that the «practices of solidarities are attempts at resistance against the violence enacted against migrants (amongst other things)[5]».

Therefore, resisting may also infer establishing subtle balances and com-promises, as well as working within contradictions, in order to counter the unjust system from the inside. This was one of the main topics to emerge from the interviews. Thus, five of the volunteers mentioned the need to find a compromise to differing degrees. Specifically, they referred to two types of compromise, one in relation to the authorities, and the other the local pop-ulation. For example, Hanna, explains the process of finding a compromise by negotiating relationships with institutions:

I think volunteering on the island is absolutely a form of resistance. But it is one undertaken within very particular constraints: anything that borders on true and ob-vious resistance risks jeopardising the delicate balance on the island, and the rela-tionships nurtured and created with the authorities[6].

The above indicates that, although the established rules are considered unacceptable, it remains necessary to accept a compromise in order to con-tinue operating. This reflects the fact that, in the field of social services, the correct course of action does not always concur with what is allowed institu-tionally. This gap between what is, and what should be, is particularly evi-dent when considering the whole context of migration, from arrival and re-ception to the regularisation (and often expulsion) of those deemed "unde-serving".

[3] Interview with Roberto, 19/09/2019.
[4] Interview with Roberto, 19/09/2019.
[5] Interview with Francesco, 05/11/2018 (updates on 27/07/2020).
[6] Interview with Hanna, 05/11/2018 (updates on 27/07/2020).

Hanna further suggested that «the line between conformity and resistance is by no means definite. Sometimes, it only becomes apparent when accidentally or intentionally crossed»[7]. She reported the example of when «someone asked us for legal advice as they landed, when they were surrounded by the police and military presence. I knew that anything that was not strictly in line with the contradictory EU policy would risk the loss of our authorisation to be present during the "military operation" of the landing»[8].

This subtle line mentioned by Hanna is particularly relevant when considering self-surveillance and discipline as instruments of disciplinary power. Not being present when migrants arrive, and thus leaving them under the complete control of institutional and police actors, would be to renounce the small space of action won through the authorisation for the volunteers to entering the dock on behalf of civil society, and having an external gaze and testimony. However, being there is, in itself, insufficient, if this practice is not accompanied by a denunciation of the unacceptability of this system, along with countering it by practical means.

Hanna stated that: «on the other hand, anything you do that does not rebel against the blatant injustices leaves you feeling complicit in a system that is outside your control». From this point of view (and according to other volunteers such as Valentina), a compromise is possible only if coherent with an ideology. For example, she suggested it is unacceptable to continue to sustain the idea that the Hotspot system is the only available solution for managing arrivals, and that, as it cannot be changed, people must find a way of working around it. I found the following statement by Francesco to be particularly pertinent to this issue:

The context within which these organisations operate, is structurally and consciously created by the authorities (primarily, but not only, the Ministry of the Internal Affairs) as a political choice. The fact that you are inside it is due to its existence and the way it is structured defines and limits the possibilities for any intervention (for example: it is not possible to avoid the bureaucratic procedures, you can just make them easier)[9].

Volunteers working with *MH* and ASGI (i.e. the associations having direct involvement with migrants) are more conscious of being part of the creation of a borderscape, and that their work may be used to sustain an unjust model. Nonetheless, Valentina believed it possible to undertake a form of

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[7] Interview with Hanna, 05/11/2018 (updates on 27/07/2020).
[8] Interview with Hanna, 05/11/2018 (updates on 27/07/2020).
[9] Interview with Francesco, 05/11/2018 (updates on 27/07/2020).

resistance (i.e. through giving information to migrants about their rights[10]), although forced to work within certain compromises. However, this view was not shared by others such as Francesco and Roberto.

The other field of compromise to emerge from the interviews concerned the need to work within the local community. Beatrice said: «since Lampedusa is very small, you have to reach a compromise, you can't pretend that others [*with different positions*] don't exist, or treat them disrespectfully. Because people know who you are, where you live, even just for yourself it is not easy». In this case, the compromise regards the local population and the different positions held by the community. A comprehensive discussion of this issue requires a separate space, however, it is vital for this discussion to establish a brief overview. Many in Lampedusa do not accept the right of migrants to land and be held on the island[11]. Moreover, racist and xenophobic behaviours are not new on the island (as in any other part of Italy), but their presence is exacerbated by the idea that this cannot happen on the "welcoming island", i.e. it was considered surprising that anyone could vote for the *Lega Nord* party[12] or protest against the arrival of migrants. The inhabitants hold many different positions, which cannot be summarised here, but the main fear is generally related to any potential damage to tourism. It is within this context that *MH*, as well as Terra! and Ibby, have made an effort to involve the local population, which can require a number of compromises, including being recognised as "pro migrants" while never fully challenging the status quo. This does not mean that they failed to express any views related to aspects such as the status of the Hotspot, or to the practice of holding vessels at sea for days before allowing them to land. Nonetheless, the maintenance of this balance results in a defuse response, or less radical action.

I feel it is important to make a distinction between volunteers working with Terra! and the library, and those working with *MH* and ASGI[13]. As discussed in Chapter 4, the first two generally work with the local population

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[10] This may not seem particularly rebellious, however very often people arriving in Lampedusa are not told about their rights and possibilities, as mentioned in Chapter 3.

[11] This requires more complex discourse on not wanting migrants to arrive in Lampedusa as the only solution for stopping the instrumental use of the island on the mediatic level, as well as on the closure of the reception centre, due to it being an inhumane and unacceptable space to hold people. However, in this case, I refer to those who generally object to the arrival of migrants due to racist and xenophobic sentiments.

[12] An episode that resulted in national exposure was related to the EU Parliamentary Election held in 2019. On that occasion, most of votes in Lampedusa went to the *Lega Nord* party; however, it must be said that only 26.6% of the voting population participated in these elections.

[13] A distinction should be made also between MH and ASGI, due to their separate approach and kinds of work on the island.

rather than migrants. This raises the issue of the existing conditions, and to what extent their action can be considered within the field of resistance against both the violence enforced at borderscapes, as well as the structures of global capitalism and neoliberalism that generate and reiterate inequality.

In considering which practices may be considered to constitute resistance, Beatrice (*MH*'s volunteer) argued there is an aspect of direct lived experience that tends to change the way some volunteers view the condition of migration:

It gave me a different perspective on the whole migratory phenomenon. Because when you arrive [*in Lampedusa*] and assist with a landing, you see these people, in those conditions… including children. At my first landing, there were eleven children… the oldest was about ten years old. I found it very moving[14].

Thus, as suggested by Roberto, the experience of being a volunteer can be interpreted as a means of increasing awareness: «In everything I do, there is a part of… what I would call an oriented conscience or interest, but would need something more to be defined as resistance». However, although some considered promoting a new level of awareness as insufficient to consider volunteering as resistance, this was not true for everyone. Carlotta told me: «for me, it has been, on the one hand, a beautiful surprise; on the other, I told myself: "did I need to wait to be forty years old before reaching that awareness?" Well, apparently I did, but at least I got there[15]».

Carlotta's words also indicate another element of the volunteers' experience. She considered her time on Lampedusa as a form of resistance, primarily in relation to the community, and a feeling of belonging. Thus, in these terms, resisting requires encounters and relationships with others.

[*It's*] the creation of a network of people that changed my life. Before, I had enormous issues in sharing a certain point of view, or discussing certain topics. From the moment I arrived in Lampedusa, I found people to talk to about my experiences, and to share them. […] I felt this strong sense of community, which gave me the opportunity to share my thoughts and feelings and to keep some positions. And this also allowed me to contact people who were not in Lampedusa, but whom I came to know thanks to that experience, so creating a net here where I live. From this point of view, it was certainly an experience of resistance… for me, it is important to see it like this. Because resistance is a word that fits, I feel I resist, and I feel united in this resistance[16].

[14] Interview with Beatrice, 10/07/2019.
[15] Interview with Carlotta, 01/11/2019.
[16] Interview with Carlotta, 01/11/2019.

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Mattia employed similar terms when discussing the experience of Lampedusa, arguing that:

Some of the relationships forged with other volunteers have reinforced practices of resistance, including those doing similar activities, maybe with different goals, but are motivated in a similar way. In that sense, and with some subjectivity, we have created something through the exchange of studies, practices, and experiences. I believe that a hummus of resistance has been reinforced, in a more theorical than practical way, but still...[17].

As disciplinary power aims to avoid self-surveillance and discipline, resistance tends to take the form of turning discourses, and the creation of new subjectivities, into something power interests are unable to exploit. After considering the statements of the interviewees alongside the context I observed in Lampedusa, I feel that these can reveal something about the issue of countering disciplinary power.

I wish to begin by considering the work responding to the needs of the local population (i.e. the opening of the library and activities at the gardens for the disabled), which is carried out by those who also attend protests against the rejection of migrants. These types of practices are able to create counter narratives concerning the island. Thus, the creation of a sense of community, while simultaneously facilitating individuals like Carlotta to explore a new type of space of confrontation and personal growth, can be considered a practice also capable of countering disciplinary power. This is true particularly when placed into the perspective of personal stories.

From this point of view, Carlotta told me that she had left for Lampedusa knowing her employer was unhappy about this specific choice, and recognised that «leaving for a camp isn't in itself an act of resistance, but, because of my situation, it wasn't viewed in a positive light. I decided I didn't care, because it was absurd, therefore I did it again this year… and maybe this will have consequences in December [*at the end of her contract*], but, honestly, it doesn't matter[18]».

Moreover, the networks mentioned by Mattia expand this argument from the individual to the group. Thus, the idea of sharing practices, knowledge, and information becomes the practice of solidarity enabling resistance. A first step in fighting those disciplinary discourses impelling us to think and act in obedience to an imposed norm is recognising who we are as a collectivity, as well as when we recognise normativity as unjust. The creation of a

[17] Interview with Mattia, 29/09/2019.
[18] Interview with Carlotta, 01/11/2019.

sense of community was also mentioned by Beatrice, who referred to it as a double-edged sword, as being in contact with:

[A] small community that wasn't afraid to stand up and say what it thinks, that was happy to do it, and that wasn't ashamed. A community that would always keep a certain level of tolerance and comprehension towards those who thought differently, even when it wasn't easy. […] Nonetheless, what I sometimes missed, was feeling that I really participated. I often felt excluded, particularly because a month is so short, you only have enough time to understand what you have to do, and to get to know people before it's time to leave. Thus, sometimes I felt I wasn't necessary, like… what am I doing here? Who am I, how am I contributing? In the end, am I doing something more for my own benefit than for others?[19].

Beatrice's words reveal a specific difference between the feeling of belonging to a group made up of volunteers remaining on the island for only a short period, and being part of a more extended community, one that includes local inhabitants. The latter not only seems more difficult to achieve, but staying for a short period of time does not allow for deeper participation and involvement, leading to the question of whether volunteer tourism, in these conditions, can allow practices of resistance, or is it simply a selfish practice. What emerges is that both aspects form part of the full picture. However, the fact that such a comment was made by a volunteer with *MH* is not surprising, since these tend to stay for an longer period in comparison to other volunteers, and work within a project that involves a relationship (sometimes controversial) with migrants, as well as the local population.

Enrico highlighted the benefits of developing relationships in order to understand the island. He argued that he had more interest in the «Lampedusa as land, than the Lampedusa of the sea», i.e. he preferred to focus on the local population rather than the issue of migration.

I don't see the island as a gate to the mainland [*of Europe*], but as something completely unique. […] this is why I'm interested in it. […] All the rhetoric about open ports, closed ports, right, left, welcoming, rejecting… everything begins from a different paradigm. If you really want to understand what happens here, you can't find it through the schemes used on the mainland. You have to get to know the people, such as Damiano. For me, Lampedusa is represented by Damiano with his immense sensitivity[20].

[19] Interview with Beatrice, 10/07/2019.
[20] Interview with Enrico, 27/09/2019.

This demonstrates that Enrico, as a volunteer working with Terra! (and despite being an educator working with unaccompanied minors) was not primarily interested in the issue of migration. Instead, his main aim was to understand Lampedusa, and its inhabitants, as he felt this was key to fully understanding the island within the mainstream narratives.

I feel it is necessary to make a final remark concerning the relations between volunteers and local community in response to a reflection of Mattia during his interview. He answered my question on volunteering and resistance with a premise regarding the different groups with whom he generally interacted while in Lampedusa. He suggested that the role of volunteers in practices of resistance is never independent, but is created within relationships. He first referred to the local population, as follows:

Regarding the island and the community living here, I'd say no, I don't believe we are able to trigger resistance practices. Because, as we said before, the life of the local population is detached from the issue of the border. […] I have observed that, over the last few years, the management of migration has been completely institutionalised, thus creating distance from the local community. This has made me feel that there is no possibility of resistance connected to the local community. What we do here, including our relationship with the territory, has been minimal, because one month is too short. Wherever we were in the world, we wouldn't be able to really involve the community in a single month… it is impossible[21].

However, this must also be considered in relation to Mattia's role as a volunteer for ASGI, whose team is present briefly on the territory (although often), rather than lengthy and continuative periods of time. Moreover, this project is focussed completely on migrants and does not aim to carry out any activities with the local population.

Next to these more indirect interpretations of resistance, some of the interviewees also expressed their idea of resistance in Lampedusa in other terms. Valentina explained her view of what it means to resist in the sense of creating a disturbing element and declaring that she intended to work in opposition to the system currently in place:

Wherever I go, at some point I need to take a position and be a bit of a bugger. So yes, absolutely, I'm here with this project because I believe in what is done through it and because I believe in its mission, and want to participate in denouncing the system and take a position. And I don't agree with what goes on in here, thus I observe, I point things out and talk about the issues. […] How could I come to terms

[21] Interview with Mattia, 29/09/2019.

with it? I don't. I do this work because I believe that the Hotspot approach is barbarism and must be fundamentally changed[22].

In this case, the work carried out by ASGI through the project *In Limine* can be considered to involve practices of resistance, in particular through the collection and diffusion of information, setting in motion legal action, and supporting migrants with their asylum requests, exploiting the existing legal framework to combat oppressive and unjust practices. Moreover, Mattia suggested that resistance means creating alliances, supporting the migrants' struggle. This approach can be seen as valid in terms of both human rights and political conscience, as he argued when I asked if the work he carried out as a volunteer could be considered a form of resistance:

For what concerns migrants, for sure. In particular, you tend to trigger something through the provision of legal information. More specifically, we did some work with a group of men from Tunisia: those who occupied the square for a few days[23]. There, we had first-hand evidence that this encounter had some influence. I'm not saying that it all came from us, because, of course, if on the other side there is no conscience at all, you can't construct anything. However, this is always true in every field and so it is within migration. In other words, you aren't bringing knowledge, it is the others who already have goals and practices. And it is about encountering and sharing different knowledges, different practices, a different wealth of experience. That example has been significant, because in that particular group almost everyone was able to become an asylum seeker, apart from a few cases that we're still following. But this is an exception, because usually what happens to Tunisians is that they're taken to expulsion centres. So yes, there, I feel that resistance mechanisms have been activated with migrants[24].

As demonstrated by some of these examples, it is impossible to overgeneralise when it comes to practices of resistance, but it becomes a matter of context, and of personal stories. This is not to say that individualisation is the

[22] Interview with Valentina, 27/09/2019.
[23] From September 18th, 2019 a group who had arrived from Tunisia and were being held at the Hotspot in Lampedusa began a protest occupying the square in front of the church with a sit-in, as they did not want to be repatriated. Instead, they asked to obtain a *foglio di via* (as already mentioned, an act stating they have to leave the country within seven days for people who are declared not eligible for protection), in order to be able to stay illegally in Italy, or cross the border towards other countries. This is a tactic that is often used by those coming from countries considered "safe" and thus (illegitimately) automatically excluded from the request for asylum or other forms of protection. In this case, legal action allowed them to demand asylum, although this is an exception.
[24] Interview with Mattia, 29/09/2019.

answer to countering the neoliberal and capitalist system, which (together with an increase in nationalism) has increased violence towards some for the profit of others. Lorde (1984, p. 110) pointed out that we know «the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house». However, the stories of the volunteers I encountered tell us something about how the experience of volunteer tourism can, at different levels, open opportunities for change, as well as developing cracks into which (within the entangled relationship between power and resistance) individuals are able «to operate within disciplining systems, turning formations of disciplinary power against themselves» (Gill et al., 2014, p. 375). Thus, the borderscape can be crossed through the structuring of alliances and networks, despite being formed of firstly, imposed routes or immobilities; secondly, centres of detention; thirdly, police control and securitisation; fourthly, humanitarian responses and narratives. In addition, it can be countered using the tight corridor of international protection to exploit loopholes to allow those who are not (at least on paper) eligible to pass through. All of this can be understood through the direct experience of those who would otherwise have never fully comprehended the subtle mechanism of the migration system and borderisation present on the island. In particular, it takes place in those spaces which become of locations of aggregation, both within and outside volunteer work.

2. Volunteer Experience and Spatial Practices as a Form of Resistance in Lesvos

The main idea of resistance expressed by the interviewees on Lesvos was that of an open and firm opposition and dissent, manifested through public demonstrations, active struggle and advocacy, all of which were exercised through any means available, including illegal action. This indicates that not many of the interviewees intended their own action as resistance in this sense. However, while conversing with some, I found a number of considerations, interpretations and new possibilities, demonstrating that many had formulated a definition of their own methods of resistance. Although some volunteers had partially reconsidered their initial position concerning resistance, and many others held a middle-way position, in which they considered some elements of resistance, five out of the twenty-nine interviewees stated that they felt volunteering had no relationship with resistance.

Within the context of Lesvos, the most frequently shared vision of resistance related to the EU governance of migration. The majority (i.e. sixteen) of the interviewees interpreted and related resistance directly to the

system put in place by the European single States and the EU to manage migration, i.e. the apparatus that has been named Fortress Europe. However, not everyone recognising the connection between their role as volunteers and a general rejection of the way Europe[25] manages immigration, associated either the goal, or the impact of volunteering, with resistance. This led to differing degrees of positioning, including those who openly stated their opposition, such as Ana, who said: «I feel that by going to Lesvos as a volunteer, I am opposing the way the EU is managing this crisis. And I will continue going until things are done differently»[26].

Furthermore, Isabel noted: «volunteers are a sort of uprising against that, and pushing back against it, as well as pushing the boundaries concerning what is acceptable, but also what is needed»[27]. Furthermore, a number of respondents did not take a precise position for themselves, but recognised that:

Obviously, many people, when they come here and they see all of these sad things, they have either already questioned the policies or they begin to question them. But you can also do the volunteering […] even if you say "I support fully how things are done, but I want to come and support the daily life of these people"[28].

More than one volunteer expressed the idea that someone else «could influence their political environment [… *and that*] there are political activists who then go back to their countries and who may influence the world situation in a big or small way»[29]. This shows how attitudes and aims may change some of the impact of activities that are either identical or similar in nature. Moreover, some volunteers did not see their work as being in any way related to resistance or to view the issue as political, while nonetheless affirming that: «I'm for sure having a different opinion about how everything should be arranged in Europe, rather than how it is now»[30]. Furthermore, one participant believed that «most of those who go [*to volunteer in Lesvos*] are already pretty against [*the border system*]. They would prefer free borders… I'm not, I am maybe not one of them, or maybe a little bit, but I'm not one of those who says we should open everything, because I don't think that is

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[25] Here, I mean to include the EU and individual countries, as different volunteers referred either to the EU in general or to their own country, or to Greece.
[26] Interview with Ana, 25/06/2019.
[27] Interview with Isabel, 20/05/2019.
[28] Interview with Heta, 09/05/2019.
[29] Interview with Kasha, 24/05/2019.
[30] Interview with Olivia, 04/06/2019.

sustainable at all»[31]. However, another interesting point of view was expressed by Maike, who stated:

I have never thought about volunteering as a method of resistance. I never made it conscious, but I definitely disagree with the system. When profit is more important than human life, there is definitely something going wrong, very wrong. But I'm not sure if, even as a volunteer, you're doing the completely opposite of resistance. I'm doing the work... you should do the work (of the government or Europe) and I'm coming and doing the work for free. So, it could be the complete opposite of resistance, it depends on your point of view[32].

The issue was summed up by Maike is one that is fundamental, creating a link to the exercise of power. As already discussed, there remains a dilemma concerning volunteers' contribution to the borderscaping of Lesvos, so feeding the same system they wish to criticise. Hanne stated: «because we do something differently than what our government wants to, I can see it [*as a form of resistance*]»[33]. However, the question that should be asked is: do we ever actually do something that our governments do not want us to perform? A similar position was also expressed by Mark, who further deepened this reasoning by trying to delineate what resistance would mean to him (referring, for example, to the occupation of Palestinian territories), followed by expressing the idea that:

This institutionalisation and professionalisation of solidarity […] are methods of control […]. But I think the question of whether it is valid to go and work in solidarity in the way people do in Lesvos is very complicated and there are many, many, different ways in which people come and try to work in solidarity, and I think it's not a bad thing to do. But I think people should recognise this process of institutionalisation and professionalisation and see it as a method of control. And obviously people need money [*to sustain organisations*] so, people should be conscious, and think about whether their actions are radical, and motivated by a wish to… challenge the border regime, or at least to actually make the system less oppressive for the people here[34].

Another aspect closely connected to the concept of the need for resistance to counter the management of the current asylum and migration system, is the idea that both the work of volunteers, and the presence of NGOs, has the

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[31] Interview with Nicolay, 11/06/2019.
[32] Interview with Maike, 02/06/2019.
[33] Interview with Hanne, 03/06/2019.
[34] Interview with Mark, 27/05/2019.

potential to impact the policies carried out by the local government or the EU. Not everyone considered this matter, with only six volunteers mentioning this in their interviews. However, these tended to hold the following views: «I don't think that volunteers have made policies in Europe any different»[35]; and «the border is closed, and it has been for many years, and NGOs have been here for many years, so I don't think that NGOs can do something about it»[36]. Juliette, for example, suggested that «if every single person was rioting or doing big demonstrations... or if, I don't know... 2000 people come to Greece to volunteer and Greek tourism exploded, I believe that politicians would then think twice about it. But I think that it doesn't matter too much to politicians»[37].

However, over the years, there have been many examples of the (sometimes limited) impact of the presence and pressure of civil society on migration policies. Thus, for example in Lesvos, it is no longer forbidden to drive migrants around the island, due to the action of many volunteers, and in particular Daphne Vloumidi who was prosecuted for her efforts[38]. Another consequence of international volunteers helping to draw attention to the conditions of migrants in Lesvos, has been an improvement in the conditions within the Kara Tepe camp, as well as preventing the closure of Pikpa[39].

When it came to the question "resisting what?", some volunteers pointed out that they found themselves concerned by the fact that their presence on the island could be perceived as an act of resistance against Greeks, resulting in rejection as a consequence of invading their space. Che noted:

I think we're maybe having a negative impact if we're not very careful about how we behave... but hopefully in a different way... if we can spend our money in all of the different shops, they might be happy. Ultimately, that's what makes them to pay their bills, and send their children to school and all that... I just think... people's attitude is so swayed by those sorts of things[40].

Although the general concept of what they wished to resist was broadly shared, the recognition of volunteers' practices as a form of resistance varied among the interviewees. Thus, fifteen stated they felt the main aspect of their volunteering was to offer relief to those who were experiencing disadvantage. Babak said:

[35] Interview with Nicolay, 11/06/2019.
[36] Interview with Marta, 06/08/2019.
[37] Interview with Juliette, 13/05/2019.
[38] It was considered smuggling. Interview with Daphne Vloumidi, 08/05/2018.
[39] Despite considerable local and international support, Pikpa was finally evicted at the end of October 2020.
[40] Interview with Che, 18/05/2019.

I don't think it's a form of resistance, because I think we should be working in cohesion with each other […]. This isn't a war, this is human beings who are just trying to stay alive. […] I think it's just an unfortunate circumstance, as a result of bureaucracy […]. I'm talking about the moment now of getting them to different countries, that's where the problem lies. Because let's be honest, there is no way Sweden, Denmark, England, Germany, etc, will open their borders to these people and help them to integrate. We need to help both sides [*migrants and Greece*] as much as we can. Of course, for me, my part it's about refugees, because they have half their lives here and they're comfortable and happy, to a certain extent, and life is full of highs and lows[41].

Here, the work of volunteers has become a matter of assistance and of giving those in adverse conditions a positive experience, while simultaneously mediating with the Greeks, who are also in a difficult position. There is no wish to challenge the fact that these people are stuck there unjustly, because of a specific system put in place to manage migrants' movements and lives. Rather, it is seen as a problem of bureaucracy, despite this having been put in place with a specific aim. In addition, a further element emerges from these statements, which is the idea that the *status quo* should not be challenged, because «people are happy, to a certain extent», or, as noted by another volunteer: «the situation later on will be much worse, and they will have nothing. Here, they have their football practice, they can go to school, attend English classes, and of course it's hard, but…»[42] I would add that, being refugees, why should they demand more?

Another volunteer considered the main point as being to balance a privilege and share one's own wealth, underlining why it must be in Lesvos as follows: «I'm so rich in Holland, I have so many things to give, and I can't give them to people in Holland, because everyone has enough. So, it's not resistance, it's only love»[43]. On the other hand, another volunteer stated that: «the work we do here it's not resistance in itself, I think it's more empathy», and a volunteer who considers herself «not a very political person», argued that her «scenario is more about sympathising with them, rather than fighting against the rules and regulations[44]». A further participant suggested that «the experience we have here builds a sense of community on planet earth[45]».

These statements highlight part of the nature of volunteering, and it is true that often such feelings of empathy and humanitarianism do not lead to

[41] Interview with Babak, 02/06/2019.
[42] Interview with Gro Helen, 09/05/2019.
[43] Interview with Bea, 12/05/2019.
[44] Interview with Maryam, 15/05/2019.
[45] Interview with Kasha, 24/05/2019.

change, instead perpetuating existing inequalities. Nonetheless, the idea of the importance of empathy and material assistance does not necessarily clash with the hope that volunteering may lead to some form of resistance. This was the view of Clara, who stated that she felt volunteering was a form of resistance, but added: «of course, the practical assistance we offer is very important, but the human support that we can bring as international volunteers is much more important»[46].

I do not wish to suggest that either these sentiments or goals are insignificant, or that they should be disguised as being apolitical, particularly as solidarity is based upon many of these values. Despite the presence of volunteers being fundamental to conveying solidarity and compassion (Gill et al., 2014), there tends to be a lack of any additional (and in particular politicised), steps. Hanne stated: «I think that most of the people I really connected with while have been here would say that they do this as an act of resistance, but I have to say that a lot of people are more like… "charity"».

A final point of view expressed by the volunteers demonstrates similarities to the those expressed above, but also focuses on the relationship between assisting those in need and the more general assertion of universal human rights. Maike said: «I'm here because every human being deserves basic human rights, so for me it's just… if you're in trouble, you want somebody to help you. And here there are so many people in trouble and […] the system is not able to provide these rights to everyone. It's just about creating a bit more dignity for people here»[47].

In order to answer the question of the title of this section "resisting how?", one of the main themes arising from the interviews was the potential for awareness raising to become a form of resistance. The positions regarding this matter varied greatly amongst the volunteers. In general, as argued by Barry: «volunteers, people, can help and, however simple this might be, it should be encouraged, because they go home and can spread the word amongst their friends and family[48]». Most of the volunteers approved of the idea of advocating either communicating in person, or through social media, with one stating: «I guess that many of us undertake some kind of resistance, at least in social media, when you're here or when you're back at home. So it's like a continuation, and that is quite interesting[49]». Another volunteer noted: «I'm connected to many of the other volunteers through social media, including what they post, both during and after their time here. This kind of

[46] Interview with Clara, 29/05/2019.
[47] Interview with Maike, 02/06/2019.
[48] Interview with Barry, 30/05/2019.
[49] Interview with Hanne, 03/06/2019.

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advocacy has been more like "resistance", things like spreading the message of what's not working in the system, or that we need help, or that we need to change this[50]». In addition, many agreed that: «my choice of approach would be raising awareness, rather than fighting against it [*the system*]»[51].

It is significant that, during her interview, Marta employed the word 'witness': «we are like witnesses, we can show what's going on, what's happening. And we have shared it, on Facebook and YouTube and Instagram and… nothing has changed. But still, people can't say that this is not happening… we create awareness, at least. So yeah… we are witnesses»[52]. This allows me to expand my reflection on the issue of "raising awareness" Drawing on Fassin (2008), the word "witness" leads to the very specific imaginary of humanitarianism, i.e. «(a) key political figure of our time» (p. 552). Fassin (2008) suggested that humanitarian workers often «transform their witnessing into advocacy, and make themselves spokespersons for the supposed voiceless» (p. 535). This further underlines the significant fact that, when it comes to political causes, the testimony of humanitarian agents is frequently more impactful than the voice of those directly involved. He further argued that humanitarian testimony plays a role in the construction of victim subjectivities, which may be then used by social agents to demand justice. These claims can facilitate an escape from the logic of compassion, but they must also be appropriated to «find spaces of freedom» (p. 554). However, there are also a number of positions to bear in mind, with Ottar suggesting that even though «it is an important part, I don't know if people who are volunteering are thinking of themselves as spokespeople for the situation»[53].

Moreover, the role of the witness must be considered also from the aspect of the tactics discussed in Chapter 2, and analysed by Gill et al. (2014), with the physical presence used to observe the behaviour towards migrants, and «to enable spiritual and emotional connections with them». This viewpoint draws on Askins (2015), who defined these tactics as the "quiet politics" of "meaningful encounters", as revealed by Christos' position: «I'm trying to put my energy into something practical, rather that posting [*on social media*] and raising awareness, which takes time and a lot of effort. So, I prefer like… to make a practical response»[54].

One final remark I wish to make regarding raising awareness concerns volunteering in order to counter narratives, imaginaries, and stereotypes. For

[50] Interview with Heta, 09/05/2019.
[51] Interview with Maryam, 15/05/2019.
[52] Interview with Marta, 06/08/2019.
[53] Interview with Ottar, 14/05/2019.
[54] Interview with Christos, 02/06/2019.

this, Che's declaration regarding being in Lesvos can be seen as emblematic: «it is resisting the narrative we're told in the media and in politics. Because we're told of all these people who want to go to Britain and swamp our little island, and it's going to be too full… and I have barely met anyone who want to come to Britain!». She further stated that she viewed her actions as a way of resisting popular stereotypical attitudes. Her statements included a degree of self-reflection, demonstrated by the following extract:

If I think about my dad, who's from India, when he was young worked in a community centre and people could be very racist, but not to him. They'd be "you're alright, it's the rest of them". You can challenge that, and be like "well you've now met five people, and they're all so nice and friendly, so which one is it "the rest"…" So, we're hopefully changing that attitude, and when I go back home, people will ask about my experience and we may make people think a bit more about it[55].

This reveals how connections can be drawn between the volunteer's own biographical life and the refugees' experience (Stavinoha and Ramakrishnan, 2021), so creating another element of reflection, not only about the reasons encouraging people to volunteer, but also their attitudes towards wider goals.

A number of further opinions emerged from the discussion concerning the role of volunteers, including a critical view of volunteering. This was sometimes expressed as a short comment, such as that by Isabel: «I don't always think volunteers coming is a positive thing; it can be negative, if you're not aware of the broader situation». In this case, the issue was not volunteering itself, but rather the volunteers, including their background and preparation for the role. In addition, Sara, for example, argued that:

Everyone has good intentions, but sometimes volunteers are given jobs they don't understand or know how to do. It's one thing wanting to do good, but sometimes you can do more harm than good. There are ways of distributing, and there are ways of doing things, that's why people study these things. [*The result*] is a continuation of what made this island remain in a continuous emergency response[56].

Kath added:

It is a very sexy topic. People want to come, and save people from the water. That's part of it! Sometimes, there is a difference between doing good and feeling good. Of course, it's important to feel good about what you're doing, but it's also to

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[55] Interview with Che, 18/05/2019.
[56] Interview with Sara, 22/05/2018.

get the right amount of knowledge about what's going on here, and to be able to go home and tell other people about it. People come here thinking that the most important part is to save refugees from the sea, when there is a lot more, and it usually takes a long time to actually grasp what's really going on here[57].

Another factor mentioned by Rose concerned, not only volunteers' preparedness, but also the aspect she defined their «conflicting political believes». She gave the following example: «I'm thinking of Americans [*US citizens*], and I think it would be highly probable that Americans could come over here because they want to help the people they see across the world. But then they're not necessarily advocating for immigration reform in the US, or even aware of how many people we have in US detention centres[58]».

Moreover, the political issue can be extended more generally. For example, Sara and Kath did not limit their criticism to individual volunteers, but expressed an interesting criticism of NGOs, including their political position. In particular, Sara argued that:

It is also important what you communicate as NGO, for me it is impossible to be apolitical in such a situation: if you actually made a choice to help refugees, then you're not apolitical. If you say you're apolitical, you're already taking a political position… so, does apolitical even exist? This is one of the reasons why, in the end, I chose not to work with an NGO, because I don't want to be apolitical. And working with NGOs meant that we had a lot of restrictions about a lot of things I disagreed with. It was like being under a sort of umbrella that has to project an image all the time. I feel that the message that should be sent out is one of advocacy and information. Most of their [*NGOs*] time is spent for fundraising, but I think there are more important things sometimes. One of the problems is that a lot of the people that are getting the most funding is not sending out the right message. And that's a problem[59].

Babak also suggested an important criticism of NGOs, which concerned the effectiveness of short-term volunteers. This, like the other criticisms of NGOs, was not new, but was interestingly combined with another point. Babak argued that organisations tend to prioritise the desires of volunteers (who tend to donate money that sustains NGOs) over the needs of migrants. Thus, Babak, in agreement with Sara, noted that: «resident volunteers should be the one who runs here, not international volunteers. Okay, unfortunately you can't have a resident volunteer as a coordinator, but you have longevity with resident volunteers, they should be the ones running the whole operation (more or less)».

[57] Interview with Kath, 22/05/2018.
[58] Interview with Rose, 25/05/2019.
[59] Interview with Sara, 22/05/2018.

A last remark I wish to make here relates to a small number of comments from the interviews hinting at that we, as white (and frequently wealthy) Europeans, often demonstrate privilege and unconscious supremacism, as expressed below:

Because they [*migrants*] have a long route to establish themselves as good citizens of the world, because they're in this waiting mode. My philosophy of life is: if you cannot get what you want (which for them is to receive asylum and permission to work today and they are denied) then we say: you have to like what you have. So, they have to make the best out of this free time. And I think this is what we all try to do[60].

I believe there is no need to comment about migrants' need to become «good citizens of the world», or to explain that being stuck in a camp like Moria is far from being «free time». This confirms the lack of an exclusive definition of what volunteer tourism is and how it is approached. The critics of neo-colonialism, along with forms of supremacism towards those viewed as inherently inferior, are often well-funded. I believe that in different ways, as volunteers (but not only), we should all confront such deeply ingrained assumptions. This can not only make us reflect on these sorts of comments, but also reveal the power dynamics put in place by volunteers, as the first step in deconstructing the privileges we embody is to name both the power relationship and oppression (Bonanno et al., 2020).

I will open a short parenthesis here at the conclusion of the discussion of the categories individuated from the interviews, in order to undertake a more in-depth examination of this point, to use as a bridge to a further analysis of the intertwined links between power and resistance. I wish to undertake this through an episode I experienced during my own experience as a volunteer.

As mentioned in Chapter 4, one of the NGOs with whom I volunteered once a month organised a team-building trip with all the volunteers, both resident and international. This was not only intended to be time we could spend together away from our work, but also to allow resident volunteers to travel outside Moria and Mytilene to see other parts of the island, and enjoy themselves as a form of reward for their volunteer work. However, during this specific episode, one of the volunteers suggested visiting the life jacket graveyard. While the coordinators agreed, they also asked us not to include the resident volunteers, who would instead join us for the second part of the trip. This was justified by the assumption that this visit could bring back some of their traumatic experiences. However, no one asked the resident

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[60] I preferred to anonymise this interview.

volunteers themselves if they wished to join us, thus completely denying them agency (Di Matteo, 2023).

I feel that this incident reveals that migrants were generally not considered capable of taking responsibilities, as from previous examples, e.g., running volunteering activities (and could not, in any case have been employed as coordinators), but were rather seen as vulnerable subjects, or as victims, in need of protection. However, these mechanisms have been put in place (including through hierarchic power) by those who are there to demand human dignity. Moreover, power dynamics are not only expressed within the previously discussed enclave spaces of reception or volunteer work, but also become evident in external aspects, such as at who is, and is not, awarded the capacity to travel and visit certain places (Di Matteo, 2023).

Sheller (2018) argued that this issue goes far beyond the material and physical possibility to move «in relation to the surrounding physical, social, and political affordances for movement», but that it is vital to consider how «such uneven network capital also distributes harm unevenly» (p. 135), including that harm can take different forms. Therefore, it is fundamental to understand the connection between the different regimes of mobility encompassing the racialisation of bodies, including the detention of migrants and their imposed immobility contrasted with «the ease of travel for global elites» (Sheller, 2018, p. 135). In this specific case, there are, on the one hand, international volunteers, journalists, and researchers, who possess full freedom of movement, both in reaching Lesvos and within the island. On the other, there are the refugees who, although formally free to move inside the space of the island[61], lack the means (i.e. to rent a cars, due to the difficulties of reaching many places by public transport) or are prevented by other forms of control, i.e. hostility from the local population, or paternalistic protection from volunteer tourists.

Those of us acting as researchers, journalists, humanitarian workers and volunteer tourists are both in a privileged position allowing us a relatively "frictionless" travel (O'Regan and Hannam, 2017), and can travel to observe and understand the dynamics of borderscapes (or, for example, to view the favelas in Brazil or the townships in South Africa). We can then include these experiences in our curriculum vitae, as fundamental forming experiences.

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[61] Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, both migrants and the local population were under a national lockdown in 2020. However, when this was suspended for the summer, undocumented migrants were forced to stay inside camps and almost completely lost their freedom of movement (MSF, 2020).

Fassin (2007), took this argument at its extreme[62], stating that volunteers «have the freedom to sacrifice themselves for a good cause» (p. 507). The refugees, on the other hand, who remain stuck in Lesvos, are striving to survive, as they do not have any other choice: «in contemporary society this inequality is perhaps both the most ethically intolerable, in that it concerns the meaning of life itself, and the most morally tolerated, since it forms the basis for the principle of altruism. And it is this truth that humanitarianism reveals» (p. 507). This is also what prompted one of my participants to put forward the following:

I don't think this [*Lesvos*] is the worse place, and maybe not as bad as it has been described. But we haven't seen the camp, and we haven't been in the olive grove… and maybe I would have been more in a fighting position if I had seen the worst, because I mentally prepared for much worse than what I have seen. So, maybe if I had been to the olive grove, and had the opportunity to visit someone inside the camp, it might have made me angrier, or to question "what is this, how on earth, why is this happening?". Maybe, I will just go home and think that it's not the camp or the situation here for the refugees that is the worse, but actually the political situation in Europe… the landscape that we have all over Europe… everything is just heading towards the blue side [*negative side*] and the… "me and money" and maybe this is the thing that I feel is more dangerous. I originally thought I would go home and tell so many tragic stories about people and what I have seen, but I'm not going to do that, because I haven't seen the tragic side, or rather, what I have seen is just the tip of the iceberg… So maybe it's just how it works: how long they [*refugees*] have to wait for a stamp, how long they have to wait for an answer, how long they have to wait for conversations and meetings. This kind of stupid system that makes me angry and… when it comes to the boats, it seems suddenly Mediterranean law doesn't exist anymore and it's crazy[63].

The reflection shared by Gro Helen informs us on three aspects: firstly, the role of direct experience in volunteer tourism and in the formation of knowledge and awareness; secondly, the volunteers' expectation of facing tragedy and suffering; and thirdly, what can happen if these expectations are (or are not) met. Her reasoning seems to bend towards a reflection on what she discovered about the migrants' conditions of immobility, being in limbo, and lengthy periods of waiting, as well as other aspects, such as the whole "political situation" in Europe, or the problem of forcedly illegal trips.

[62] Fassin develops this argument in relation to the context of humanitarian workers in Iraq, demonstrating the extreme consequence of a mechanism also occurring, although to a different degree, in Lesvos.
[63] Interview with Gro Helen, 09/05/2019.

I argue that there remains a lack of any more radical criticism, as evident in statements such as those made by Heta and Ottar, who argued that, despite recognising the failure of the political system, they did not view their practices as a form of resistance. The lack of a deeper politicised challenge can be explained by Butcher's (2011) conception of volunteer tourism as «an individualistic, narcissistic, and incredibly limited approach to politics» (p. 75). As already discussed, I do not wish to reject the scholarly approach that sees humanitarianism as an individualised challenge of being a caring, responsible, and active citizen of the world, which simultaneously risks hiding the structures of global capitalism that generate and reiterate inequality (Sin, Oakes and Mostafanezhad, 2015). Or, as argued by Mitchell (2016), the contribution of emotional modes of governmentality connected to humanitarianism to a «depoliticized global "care citizenship"» (p. 290). However, in the view expressed by Gro Helen (as well as many others), I see some cracks opening up potentially facilitating citizen-humanitarian spaces at the frontier of Europe becoming spaces of resistance and solidarity (Stierl, 2017).

It is clear that any resistance made by volunteers must consist of a firm and clear position, which denies and distances itself from the system of laws and privilege creating mobile inequalities, detention and violence. Otherwise, they risk becoming complicit. However, this raises the issue of how to conciliate this view with that of volunteer tourism (even though volunteers do not consider themselves tourists), which, in itself, is a manifestation of privilege.

The first element to bear in mind when attempting to tie up these loose ends, is that most of the volunteers taking part in my research stated that they desired to better understand and experience the phenomenon of migration at the core of the "refugee crisis". There are various reasons behind such motivation that are outside the scope of this work, but I believe that no one is born a revolutionist, but there are many paths to begin recognising injustice and inequality, as well as to then criticise and challenge, which are deeply rooted in our own biographies. Some have been personally faced and directly experienced, while others have been observed from a distance. However, being present, and trying to understand, is one of the ways to subsequently take action and demand change.

Among the many volunteers I met during my research, I have seen different stages of a growing awareness of this aspect. Some, I feel, will never change their conception of how we live in a deeply unequal world, but others are clearly striving for more radical change. In this sense, I believe that, if movement is not in itself revolutionary (as immobility is not inherently reactionary) (Giubilaro, 2016), it is possible to develop a more profound

conscience by travelling to the border, along with living and producing the borderscape through embodied presence and action. Furthermore, as argued in the first part of this chapter, this occurs both within and outside the enclave spaces of volunteering. It happens in spaces that allow some form of liberation, i.e. where relations and encounters open the process of *conscientizacao* (concsientization), in accordance with Freire's (1993) view that «liberation is praxis: the action and reflection of men and women upon their world in order to transform it» (p. 79).

Therefore, considering the different types of powers theorised by Foucault, and the various forms of resistance that may consequently arise, I argue that, in this case, resistance cannot be considered as countering sovereign power. This is due to the volunteers themselves being involved in its exercise, in particular through the NGOization of their work, thus demonstrating the capillary nature of power, including disciplinary power and biopower. I do not infer that they are extent from this last type. Volunteers are involved in activities including: distribution; the coercion of people into long lines to obtain insufficient food, or other essential goods; the management of camps with inhumane living conditions; and the maintenance of an asylum system that has been proven both inadequate and unfair[64].

Nonetheless, resistance (in the sense outlined above) addresses disciplinary power, and partially biopower. Firstly, I believe that the work of assistance and empathy facilitate avoiding migrants to be reduced to their essential needs, but also the establishment of dignifying relations. This happens both within and without the volunteering spaces, although it is through the latter that this can prove more radically effective. Secondly, I consider that it can lead to the rejection and reformulation of the gaze on the "other", as well as an understanding of the system that places some in camps, while allowing others to travel freely around the world. There are some volunteer tourists who: «want to understand oppression»[65], and who, despite their actions or positions often failing to prove politically radical, find their experience on site can lead them to question the status quo in Lesvos. Moreover, the goal of "raising awareness" and being witnesses can enable volunteers to develop a personal tactic of resistance. It is this practice that plays a fundamental role in the interplay between the territorialisation of the experience

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[64] The legal support of activists, volunteers and organisations in general has shown tactics of resistance, particularly finding cracks and strategies to use the law in favour of migrants and asylum seekers. However, this is beyond the scope of this current research, and I therefore refer more generally to the fact that all volunteers work within the current asylum and migration system.

[65] Interview with Mark, 27/05/2019.

(in Lesvos in general, but also in those specific spaces produced and changed by volunteers) and the deterritorialisation of its echoes, i.e. volunteers' increased awareness leading them to identify their main means of resistance (Mitchell, 2016).

Furthermore, this process may be seen as the sprouting of a specific political subjectivity derived, through a spatialised experience of volunteer tourism, from citizen humanitarianism. This is possible, starting from the self, which by means of reflection and relationships, enables the creation of alliances, intimacy and knowledge. This is possible if, within such relationships, created in safe spaces, our practices reveal the oppression we were not previously capable of recognising. I acknowledge this is a lengthy process, but, as stated by Freire (1993): «consciousness is a process» (p. 69).

3. Mobile Spaces of Resistance

Volunteers' perceptions of their practices within the spaces of the two islands form part of the process viewing space as the product of a continuous negotiation between power and struggle (Foucault, 1989). Considering those aspects presented thus far, I will now examine the similarities and differences between Lampedusa and Lesvos, in order to inform my empirical information with the theory presented in the first part of this book.

The first information to emerge is that the positions of the interviewees varied greatly among both groups, in a gradient that went from the identification of their activities as resistance to the complete rejection of this juxtaposition. Moreover, while there seemed to be an implicit agreement and understanding of the meaning of resistance in Lampedusa, those I interviewed on Lesvos often asked me to clarify what I meant by (as well as stating their own understanding of) the word resistance. In clarifying this point, I found that, on both islands, some of the volunteers recognised their presence and work as being part of the borderscaping process, some also expressed critical views of volunteering.

Nonetheless, as argued by Butler (1990), it is within the inevitable involvement with power that transgression can occur. I therefore, individuated against "what" the volunteers thought they were resisting. Alongside the answers criticising the management of migration in Europe (i.e. at the local, national and international level), one of the more interesting elements to emerge, is that a small number of volunteers in both Lampedusa and Lesvos highlighted the delicate equilibrium in the

relationships with the local population, which could be hostile or show a willingness to become an ally.

When it comes to the "how" of resisting, the main keywords of the interviews I held in Lampedusa consisted of: "compromise"; "disturbing presence"; "oriented conscience"; "network"; and "community". The general point emerging from these interviews is that volunteers' practices of resistance are never independent, but rather created within relations. When it came to Lesvos, I found a stronger emphasis on a humanitarian approach, with the keywords I wish to highlight including "assistance", "advocating", "awareness" and "witnessing".

Finally, I would like to dedicate a few words to the "where" of these tactics, or forms of resistance. In order to do so, I will attempt to entangle the role of volunteers in the production of space, and their role in resisting the dynamics of the border and the management of migration. I begin by considering resistance and its practices, in particular as enacted by volunteers as an expression of the lived space. Thus, I found that they re-signified the conceived level of space by imagining the space of a library outside its traditional role, or ensuring they could be present on a military dock, as well as finding spaces to gather and create new alliances in certain bars or restaurants. In addition, I found that this also takes place through the forms of resistance embodied by the volunteers. Thus, I consider that there is a match in Lampedusa between the elements emerging when speaking of resistance, and the lived and perceived spaces.

However, besides the useful distinction drawn so far between what, how and where, it is fundamental to consider the mobile aspects of resistance as an aspect of the volunteer experience. On Lampedusa, resistance is linked to mobility from a number of perspectives: firstly, it is enacted through actions (i.e. those taken by ASGI with the group of Tunisians), which ease the friction, viscosity, and stoppages of migrants' mobilities (Sheller, 2018). Secondly, it is related to mobility, due to these forms of resistance taking place in specific spaces involving the presence of volunteer tourists and their practices on the island, both as volunteers and tourists, encompassing all movement involved in these roles. Thirdly, it includes the movement of migrants, enabling these two groups to mingle on the island.

Thus, the space of the island is the «product of relations-between» (Massey, 2005, p. 9), constantly reproduced as volunteers create new networks and give new meanings to the above-mentioned spaces of Lampedusa. Networks tend to create strong connections within the groups, and with the island, as demonstrated by so many of the volunteers choosing to return to Lampedusa both for volunteering and for holidays. Therefore, using a term

borrowed by tourism studies, such networks tend to "retain" tourists for this destination.

In Lesvos, I found the level of lived space corresponded with practices of resistance as follows. Firstly, the spaces of volunteering, which were the main focus of actions taken to enhance migrants' permanence on the island. Secondly, the important relationships established through volunteer work. Although I did not focus on this aspect, I feel it is vital that these should be acknowledged, including the fact that they are only able to survive when continued outside those spaces, rather than remaining solely within the conceived domain of the migrants' "enclaves". Thirdly, the lived level of space takes the shape of tactics of resistance in those places frequented by volunteers outside their volunteering time, i.e. those preserving traces of the evolution of migration in Lesvos, as well as where individuals are able to create encounters in the "normal" space of the island.

In addition, the interpretation of resistance as the creation of awareness, along with the act of witnessing, creates a movement projected towards the outside of the island. This happens both with the use of social media, through sharing pictures (i.e. of the life jacket graveyard) and the mobilisation of material objects (i.e. the "safe passage bags"). The main difference is that this mobilisation focuses more on the individual than a network.

Finally, there is the intense borderisation process of both Lesvos and Lampedusa, which has given form to a condensed version of Butler's (1990) "power pervasive presence". It is within this condition that the ability to apply tactics is produced. Bodies, and the spaces they co-produce, can only be freed from the impact of power through an involvement with power itself, i.e. engagement is the sole means of transgressing power. This is why, as suggested by Shindo (2016), I have integrated unintentional and veiled practices into studies of resistance, as well as encompassing an understanding of those aspects potentially constituted as mobile (Sheller, 2018).

To conclude: in considering the two cases of Lampedusa and Lesvos, I have drawn on Merriman's (2012b) concept that «[m]obility is not secondary to the events of spacing and timing, rather the unfolding of events is characterised by a prepositioning and turbulence, and by material, experiential and relational effects of spacing, timing, movement, sensation, energy, affect, rhythm and force» (p. 21) to highlight how these are all qualities adding sense to the unfolding of events of resistance. I consider that these events are taking place due to a spatial presence at a specific time, but only with the constant mobility of all the subjects discussed, who are involved bodily, kinaesthetically, and proprioceptively.

Conclusions

This work aimed to answer the following questions. Firstly, what is migrant support volunteer tourism and how did it develop on Lesvos and Lampedusa? Secondly, what representations of the islands do volunteer tourists carry and what experience do they have of the island space? Thirdly, how do they transform the space in which they live? Finally, can volunteer tourism express forms of resistance to Fortress Europe?

I began by defining the phenomenon I named "migrant support volunteer tourism", as being comprised of the intersection and interaction of the two main forms of human mobility: migration and tourism. Migrant support volunteer tourists are those who travel (either for self-centred and/or altruistic motives) to a border space outside their usual environment, with the intention of bringing support and relief to migrants, or to join migrant-related projects and initiatives. In particular, I analysed the experiences of volunteer tourists on two emblematic borderscaped islands of the Mediterranean Basin, i.e. Lampedusa and Lesvos.

Islands are both historically and contemporarily spaces of «mobility, encounter, displacement, and contradiction» (Mountz, 2015, p. 642). I consider that Lampedusa and Lesvos demonstrate their contemporary significance as spaces immersed in the logic of globalisation and human mobilities (Bernardie-Tahir and Schmoll, 2014c), so disavowing the stereotypical characterisation of islands as isolated, remote and immobile. In this study, I found that, on these two islands, the constrained arrival and obstructed mobility of migrants attracts and activates other forms of mobilities, namely that of volunteer tourists, which can be interpreted as a manifestation of those power dynamics producing injustice when it comes to the ability to travel (Sheller, 2018).

I will begin to draw my conclusions by considering how, and why, migrant support volunteer tourism developed on these two islands, which have

become symbols of the "migrant crises", partially, but not solely, due to their geographical position. The very premise concerns the high level of "borderness" (Cuttitta, 2014) of Lampedusa and Lesvos, which has been demonstrated in the extensive literature focusing on these two islands as border spaces (Sciurba, 2009; Cuttitta, 2012, 2014; Mountz and Briskman, 2012; Mazzara, 2015; Trubeta, 2015; Papataxiarchis, 2016; Alpes, Tunaboylu and van Liempt, 2017; Proglio and Odasso, 2018; Tazzioli and Garelli, 2018; Orsini, 2015). Thus, despite the differences between the two contexts, their commonality encompasses many of the reasons that make these two islands attractive for volunteer tourists.

In considering the definition of borderscapes (Brambilla, 2015a, b), I wished to show that the cause and effect of borderscaping on Lampedusa and Lesvos arise not only as a result of policies and political choices (e.g., the establishment of detention centres, and the presence of border guards and patrol boats) or humanitarian borderwork (Pallister-Wilkins, 2017a), but also from volunteer tourism. Thus, volunteer tourists are attracted by the presence of migrants, as well as by the narration of these spaces, while simultaneously (i.e. through their presence and tourist practices) participating in the borderscaping of these islands.

In order to further understand the role of volunteer tourism, I have explored the relationship between volunteer tourists and borderscapes. I did not focus on spaces specifically designed for volunteer work, (i.e. those opened by NGOs and associations, along with reception centres or other related facilities), but rather on volunteers' relationship with the "normal" island spaces, i.e. those outside the heterotopic enclave spaces (Foucault, 1986) of volunteer work. Part of my analysis drew on Lefebvre's (1991) categorisation of the perceived, conceived and lived space, to develop a lens though which I studied volunteers' representations of the islands and their experience of their spaces.

In this study, I found that the volunteers' representations of Lampedusa and Lesvos tended to confirm the reasons motivating volunteers to go to these islands. The most frequently appearing categories of representation in relation to Lampedusa were those related to personal experience and humanity, alongside human relationships. When it came to the volunteers working in Lesvos, the humanitarian or migration related representations proved stronger and were often defined in dichotomy with the beauty of the island, as well as in relation to the more direct contact with migrants.

Thus, the common representations of Lampedusa and Lesvos are those related to being humanitarian islands, confirming the process of borderscaping. However, the representations emerging in this study also revealed other

aspects of the conceived spaces of these islands: the archetypes of the island as magical or as a laboratory (as for Lampedusa), as well as a beautiful place and idyllic tourist destination (as for Lesvos). The two islands were generally bothconceived in these terms, although Lampedusa also contained an additional category of representation, i.e. the island as a space of memory.

What does this mean in terms of perceived space? Naturally, the two levels are connected and inform each other. The volunteers' representations of the island played a role in their choice of where they tended to spend their free time on the other hand, while the spaces they visited during their free time also informed how they represented the islands' space. In practice, I found that, during their free time, the volunteers behaved like any other tourist of the island, i.e. at the beach, hiking, visiting the cultural attractions of the islands, and (in the case of Lesvos) touring the well-known heritage towns and villages, as well as traditional taverns and bars and restaurants. However, I found they also visited places embodying the borderisation of the island, including: the Hotspots; Porto M; the Gate of Europe; Mosaik House; the life jacket graveyard; and the cemetery.

I suggest that, for many volunteers on Lampedusa, visiting these places is a means of counterbalancing their lack of direct contact with migrants, as well as to justify and confirm their role and presence on the island. Thus, these are the activities undertaken by those wishing to understand the border. Due to the small size of the island, and the fact that many of the volunteers in Lampedusa are "repeaters", their experience can be described as rounded, both spatially and relationally. The volunteers engaged with various groups, not only other volunteers, but also with locals, and attempted to experience differing aspects of social life on Lampedusa. They experienced spaces transversally and were able to traverse spaces intended only for migrants and military forces (i.e. the military dock Favaloro), as well as spaces typically conceived for conventional tourism, along with those used by the local population (i.e. schools or the cemetery).

In Lesvos, I found that, due to the larger scale of the island, the volunteers tended to have a partial, sporadic and limited experience, in relation to both space and time. In considering the volunteers' trip destinations and spatial practices, Lesvos appears as a "halved island", with its main points of interest shrunk to those spaces and networks related to migration hot spots, while the rest remaining largely unexplored. This was also reflected in the conventional tourist sites visited by the volunteers, which tended to be where the two aspects of the volunteer and the tourist were compatible, resulting in what was defined as the "traditional volunteers' trip to the north".

A further aspect of volunteers' perceived spaces concerns the central role played on both islands by establishments such as bars, taverns and restaurants. These spaces of consumption have become spaces of encounter and confrontation, partially due to a lack of alternative locations, and partly as a consequence of the tourist nature of volunteers' experience on the islands. A number of these spaces in particular have assumed the role of tourist markers (MacCannel, 1999), due to their relational and identity significance to volunteer tourists. This is where the lived space tends to be enhanced. Volunteers build relationships that challenge, and have the potential to fundamentally change, the spaces in which they live, i.e. the activists and volunteers frequenting the restaurant Ciccio's in Lampedusa or Nan in Lesvos.

I found that the volunteers in Lampedusa emphasised specific spaces as being important, because they gather together various groups of people who may not work together, or share the same visions about migration, but have a common ground and compatible political positions. In Lesvos, some places are created through immaterial ties, to the point that the volunteers considered them as "theirs", and perceived them as being "safe" and "home". The meanings assigned to such spaces by volunteers stratify, adding more to the conceived space than its identity as a bar, restaurant, or library. Thus, these spaces are constructed and changed by those who volunteer within them, and contribute to the changing the character of the island.

I found that one of the main differences between the two islands was that it was easier in Lesvos to encounter migrants outside volunteer spaces. This leads to the creation of a place where locals, tourists, as well as volunteers and migrants, are in an environment of normality. In this sense, volunteer tourists, locals and migrants move into each other's spaces and transgress a prevailing "spatial pattern" (Bruner, 2001, pp. 895-896) «reaching together beyond the limit of the borderzone and moving relations from "performance time" to "real life"» (Simoni, 2019, p. 115).

In summary: In undertaking this study, I concluded that a relationship to the "normal" island space was developed through spatial dynamics and an evaluation of attractiveness. While volunteer tourists sometimes share these aspects with conventional tourists, they can, at times, develop spatial dynamics and an evaluation of attractiveness which are specific to the peculiar type of tourism they represent. The coexistence of these two sides of their experience is not always pacific, as there remains constant tension between what makes them VOLUNtourists and what makes their experience closer to volunTOURISM (Daldeniz and Hampton, 2011). However, I argue that these two aspects are not in contradiction, as they are simply the expressions of the specific type of tourism in which these individuals choose to engage. In this

sense, a particularly significant practice of volunteer tourists is visiting memory spaces linked to the arrival, passage and death at sea of migrants, due to this being both a form of interaction between tourism and migration, while simultaneously formulating a spatial expression of the borderscape.

In following this journey with volunteers on Lampedusa and Lesvos, I retraced their representations of the islands and their spatial practices, as well as the way they live, and both challenge and transform the islands' spaces. I feel the results shed light on potential ways of resisting the border regime of Fortress Europe through the experience of volunteer tourism in relation to these borderscapes. However, it is vital to first explore a preliminary question: considering the definition of kinetic elites (Sheller, 2018), is it possible to speak of forms of resistance within volunteer tourism? If, as noted by Lorde (1984, p. 110), «the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house», nonetheless, volunteer tourism may at least indicate where to begin hammering. Indeed, I maintain that volunteers may express some forms of resistance as alliances.

As argued by Butler (1990), in order to understand the potential of such practices, it is vital to examine places, while anchoring any questions to the materiality of their own "where". Thus, being subject to NGO governance, along with the European management of migrants' lives and reception systems, the work of volunteer tourists fails to offer any direct challenge to the status quo. In this study, however, I draw on De Certeau's (1984) conceptualisation that tactics forming mechanisms of resistance should not be undervalued, despite being neither revolutionary nor seeking to change an entire system. When I asked my participants if they considered their experience as a form of resistance, the volunteers working in both Lampedusa and Lesvos gave inhomogeneous answers.

I started by considering the resistance enacted by volunteers as one of the possible expressions of the lived space in Lefebvrian terms. Thus, I took into account those spaces in which the lived facet dominates, identifying a match with spaces where forms of resistance can occur. However, I found that resistance can also take place in a number of further spaces, as demonstrated by the ability of volunteers to access the military dock in Lampedusa, where the conceived space is dominant, to confirming that resistance can take place within expressions of power (Foucault, 1976).

I then moved from the analysis of volunteer tourists' spatialised and static lived experiences, to considering the tactics of resistance in relation to their mobility, for which two types of practices emerged. Firstly, those related directly to the migrants' mobility, i.e. the work done by ASGI, which eases up the friction and obstacles associated with migrants' mobilities (Sheller,

2018). Secondly, those related to the mobility of volunteer tourists, considering, in particular, resistance to disciplinary power and its aim to avoid self-surveillance and discipline. Thus, resisting infers overturning discourses, along with the creation of new subjectivities, in a form that does not offer any usefulness for power interests.

In Lampedusa, many of the volunteers mentioned the creation of networks as a form of resistance, alongside a feeling of being part of a community. The expansion of the responsibility and care from the individual to the group, as well as the sharing of actions knowledge and information, falls into the practices of solidarity, without which resistance would be impossible. A first step in combatting those disciplinary discourses imposing a norm can be to recognise a collectivity, despite such discourses being difficult to overcome, even when recognised as unjust. This form of resistance is related to mobility in the sense that it occurs in specific spaces involving volunteer tourists' presence and practices on the island, encompassing all the movement they engage in, including their journey, as well as their micro mobility once there, which permits them to spend time together and create relationships, i.e. visiting the cemetery or trekking around the island.

In Lesvos, I found a greater emphasis was placed on a humanitarian approach, as volunteers centralised the direct help to migrants, ensuring volunteering spaces are central to their idea of resistance, despite the contradictions such spaces express. Here, individuals were able to create encounters in the "normal" space of the island (i.e. Nan, Bobiras and Kafe P) that were also places where resistance could be considered "rooted". These are the spaces in which relationships and encounters allow the opening of the process of *conscientizacao*: «the action and reflection of men and women upon their world in order to transform it» (Freire, 1993, p. 79). Thus, I found the volunteers in Lesvos generally questioned the status quo (despite their actions or positions being rarely politically radical), through rejecting and reformulating their gaze on the "other", and understanding the European border system.

Nonetheless, the practices of resistance on Lesvos were also associated with the locations visited by the volunteers to find traces of the passage of migrants, i.e. the life jacket graveyard. Here, the volunteers' interpretation of resistance was strictly related to the creation of awareness, as well as the fundamental role of by the interplay between the territorialisation of the experience and the deterritorialization of its echoes, i.e. through the volunteers' diffusion of information, objects and pictures (Mitchell, 2016).

In this sense, it is not sufficient to consider island spaces as the product of relations-between (Massey, 2005), but also that of human mobility.

Moreover, resistance tactics are a product of the relationships created through these mobilities, as they are constantly reproduced by volunteers creating strong connections, not only with their fellow human beings, but also with the islands themselves. It is through these processes that I perceive the potential for the slow dismantling of volunteer tourism as a neoliberal "technology of the self", in order to dismiss the mechanism «through which subjects constitute themselves simultaneously as competitive, entrepreneurial, market-based, individualized actors and caring, responsible, active, global citizens» (Sin, Oakes and Mostafanezhad, 2015, p. 122).

This indicates that the presence and practices of volunteers on these islands has the ability transform and co-construct some spaces (not necessarily only those related to their volunteer work) that are deeply connoted by their presence. Indeed, the touristic nature of their experience makes them visit both conventional tourist destinations and sites "marked" by, and for, volunteer tourists. This reveals that Lampedusa and Lesvos are undergoing very similar processes, despite a number of other aspects representing clear differences. These tend to depend on the different "timing" of the borderscaping processes of the two islands (which commenced earlier in Lampedusa), as well as the varying flows of migrants, and the specific national and international policies put in place to control, manage and organise both migrants and humanitarian work, including volunteer tourism.

Keeping this in mind, I wish to draw some general points in relation to this comparison. In Lampedusa, the volunteer tourists tended to form a stronger relationship with the island, due to being more rooted in the local community. This is evidenced in the number of returnees, along with the more concrete and practical networks developed between the volunteers, which tend to be maintained even after they have returned home. The volunteers on Lesvos also created a relationship with the island, but with their emotions and reflections being primarily developed through visits to significant spaces, rather than relationships formed on the island. These visits prompted a sense of duty to raise awareness, leading to a recognition of being part of a transnational citizenship founded on a humanitarian basis. This does not necessarily lead to a concrete network, being closer to an imagined community (Anderson, 1983).

This study has shown that tourism, with its peculiar expression of volunteer tourism with its macro and micro mobilities, is part of the process of borderscaping of spaces such as Lesvos and Lampedusa. These spaces (which we should not forget are islands), take on and combine different "archetypes": the refugee island, the welcoming island, and the island of sea death; but also the idyllic Mediterranean island, and the island of memory.

In these terms, the processes of the borderscaping of Lampedusa and Lesvos can, in turn, become an element of tourist attraction for volunteer tourists, who – once on these islands – become part of the processes that give sense to the spaces they live, as well as to their own experience.

In conclusion, I consider that the spatial perspective I have adopted, alongside my analysis of the mobilities of volunteer tourists, has given me the opportunity to observe the transformative potential (both positive and negative) of the phenomenon of volunteer tourism. I have dissected the volunteer tourists' experiences and practices in order to understand, not only their personal experience and the impact of volunteer work, but also the co-production of social spaces on these two islands, through volunteers' macro and micro mobilities. Space is not a void, and its traversing bodies leave a concrete sign, both changing and producing space through relational processes, with people, a site, objects, emotions, or memories. It is from this foundation that I argue that the eventual transformative (it would be too ambitious to say revolutionary) possibilities of movement are not only unable to exist without power (Giubilaro, 2016), but also in the absence of the materiality of the physical presence and rooting into a "where", which is never static and fixed, but rather trans-scalar and mobile. These transformative possibilities concern not only the space itself, but, in a reciprocal exchange, also the people who traverse and live it.

This work has challenged the traditional analysis of volunteer tourism, which generally observes those spaces in which volunteers offer their work with little consideration of the mobile aspect of volunteer tourism, or what is outside of the volunteering spaces. Moreover, this book has considered volunteer tourism outside its bureaucratic and administrative spaces, as well as the established imaginary of humanitarianism and care linked to volunteering. To do so, I focused on the production of spaces beyond the geopolitics of the border and the institutional agenda, without neglecting them and in close relation with them, but escaping the trap of those boundaries. My aim was to create a sense of ambivalence, in-betweenness and liminality, capable of responding to the well-known issues of volunteer tourism, and go beyond the dichotomies of "good/bad", "useful/useless" and "moral/immoral". This work achieves this by offering a means of considering how volunteer tourists move around, and outside, the conforming programming of volunteering and humanitarianism, thus finding some possible spaces for contestation. In this sense, it goes in the direction of rethinking the mobilities and spaces of volunteer tourism. Instead, this process has opened up spaces of contestation and political possibilities capable of challenging the dead end of critical approaches to volunteer tourism.

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Migrant support volunteer tourism in border-islands

We are living in the age of mobility, with people, objects, data, increasingly more mobile than ever before. The system we know as "Fortress Europe" is founded upon this mobility. Conceived of in accordance with neoliberal economic principles, the Schengen areas supports freedom of internal movement within the European Union, with the aim of strengthening the external borders of the EU. However, the Dublin Convention placed the "burden" of dealing with people arriving from outside the EU on a small number of countries. The Mediterranean islands of Lampedusa and Lesvos are emblematic of the consequences of this system, having come to symbolise the European "migrant crisis". Their situation results from their strategic geographical positions, but also reflects more complex processes that have transformed them into borderscapes.

This book originated from the notion that tourism and human migration are among the greatest manifestations of contemporary human (im)mobility in a globalised world, and both have a direct relationship to matters of justice and power. Thus, the phenomenon of "migrant support volunteer tourism" is recognised herein as one of the previously underexplored possible intersections connecting the fields of tourism and migration studies. Within these pages, the traditional analysis of volunteer tourism, which generally interrogates those spaces in which volunteers work, is challenged, and the mobile aspect of volunteer tourism and what falls outside of the volunteering spaces considered.

The book aims to understand how and why the phenomenon of migrant support volunteer tourism has developed on these two islands, and how volunteer tourists co-construct the borderscaping of Lampedusa and Lesvos by examining their representations of the islands, and how their spatial practices and lived experiences, tactics and forms of resistance to Fortress Europe manifest.

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La passione per le conoscenze