clothes, I had moved everything, I never went back home.' They did not discuss nor plan it, 'it just happened.' She and Yassine are fully committed to each other even though they are not married: 'This is the love of our life and that's it.' She does not understand why marriage is 'such a big deal,' if she were living outside Tunisia she probably would not get married at all: 'I don't need to have a piece of paper to proof that I can spend the rest of my life with someone.'

As my interlocutors pointed out, cohabitation is not self-evident in Tunis, especially for women. The 'normal' or socially accepted thing to do is to live with your parents until marriage unless you move away from your hometown for educational or professional purposes. In this case, you have a valid excuse to live by yourself—in student dorms, in co-location, or in a studio or flat—until you get married and move in with your spouse. Before this time, you are not supposed to be involved in sexual relationships, let alone to live in cohabitation. In general, women are expected to finish their studies before getting married, but when graduated and, at least to some extent, economically independent, they should pledge their troth as soon as possible. Once wedded, having children, rather than travelling or making a career, is the logical next step in the eyes of society.

An often-heard argument is that the rising costs of marriage, and life in general, affect young adults' possibilities to take this step (Honwana 2012; Singerman 2007). Indeed, it is true that most of my interlocutors, at the time, did not have the financial resources to organize a wedding with all the trimmings and subsequently move into a newly furnished and fully equipped flat, nor did they possess the material stability to start a family and live a wedded life, conforming to the dominant social standards. This possibly affected their perspective on the advantages and disadvantages of matrimony. At the same time, the influence of economic factors on emerging subjectivities and desires that challenge hegemonic sexual and gender norms should also not be overstated (Hasso 2011).[3]

When my interlocutors started living in cohabitation, most of them were not at a stage in their life and/or in their relationship where they were considering marriage. Social expectations, generally determined by a person's life stage and marital status, clearly influenced my interlocutors' considerations. Rima, a student in her early twenties from the northeast of Tunisia, for instance, reacted

---

[3] Fortier et al. (2016) recently pointed out that, next to economic constraints, the available models of love and patterns of feelings in the Arab world are influenced by political regimes, cultural regimes, and kinship logics.

rather surprised to my question of whether she and her boyfriend considered marriage at the time:

> Of course not! I didn't even finish my studies, how are we going to live? How are we going to have a baby and raise it? I mean…I want to finish my studies, have a job, be independent, so that whenever I'm going to have a kid I will not leave it in the streets.

While discussing why they opted for cohabitation, my interlocutors often expressed their wish to get more from their (married) life than is, in their perspective, the Tunisian standard. They do not aspire to a life in which the husband goes out to make a living and the wife stays at home to take care of the household (an image some primarily based on personal experience in their respective families). On the contrary, they desire to be independent women with a full and exciting life and consider themselves very different from all those 'typical Tunisian women' who, according to them, only think about finding a man, getting married, buying a house, and raising children. In addition, they aspire to get more from their relationship than a wedding ring. In the words of Yesmine, a student in her early twenties from the south of Tunisia: 'In the Tunisian mentality being married just means you share a house, it doesn't mean you share your life.'

For Yesmine, and most others, to live with someone should be about 'sharing everything' with your partner in a practical, emotional, and physical sense. They believe it is only through being intimate and sharing everything that you can truly get to know yourself and your partner, which is the basis for a 'healthy relationship.' As Cyrine, a professional in her early thirties from the north of Tunisia, explains: 'You have to be a strong couple to make it work and organize yourself, it's not just for the sex, you have to share everything if you want to stay well together. And you must reflect on your future, your children, yourself.'

They see cohabitation as a vital step on the road to an equal and honest marriage in which you can realize your personal aspirations. Many highlighted that they would never marry a man without living together first, but only a few decided to cohabit as a pathway toward marriage. It was generally the need for a space to be (sexually) intimate that initially pulled them toward this lifestyle. Yesmine clarifies that it is difficult to find a place where you can share intimate moments as a couple: 'Where can you do this in Tunis, where?!' In her student dorm, this would surely be impossible. Even if she would find a flat to share with another girl, '[this girl] would never accept my boyfriend coming over, let alone sleep over.'

When discussing how they ended up in cohabitation, many described it as a gradual and natural progression of their relationship. Rima clarifies: 'When you love someone that much, it's spontaneous and it's normal and logic to have the desire to live together (…). I mean, you can't even imagine yourself without him for an hour, you got it?' Some simply grasped the opportunity when it presented itself and subsequently enjoyed the experience; others first weighted the pros and cons before moving in together. For the students, 'love' and the desire 'to spend as much time together as possible' was often the main motivation to cohabit. Some of the professionals more explicitly discussed the benefits of cohabitation before legally committing to each other through marriage. According to Lilia, a professional in her early thirties from the north of Tunisia, 'you can't understand personality from a distance and after living a strictly distanced relationship. It's for this reason that marriage, even out of love, can end in a divorce.'

My interlocutors did not primarily focus on getting married—'we didn't really have a long-term project, we didn't say "we'll get married," quite the contrary' (Rania)—as they were convinced that you *can* be romantically involved with someone outside of such an institutional context. They place more importance on the moral engagement with their partner than on the official engagement before the state. Thus, they do not need 'a piece of paper' to prove their love for each other. In the words of Jalila, a professional in her late twenties from the Tunis Governorate: 'When you get engaged with someone and you really want to be with him, it's not a piece of paper that will change anything, and if it's not working it's not a piece of paper that will change something.' Regardless of whether they wished or expected it to grow into something else, my interlocutors all consider cohabitation a pleasurable experience in itself through which you learn a lot about yourself, your partner, and your relationship. Attaching too much importance to weddings and marriage is, in their eyes, typical of 'the ordinary Tunisian mentality' from which they wish to distinguish themselves.

Reflecting on Personhood and Ethical Considerations

After living in Tunis for some time, Nour finds it hard to believe that she grew up in 'the more conservative South' of Tunisia. She is much more at ease in the capital where it is possible 'to be invisible,' even when you behave differently from others. Over the years, she got introduced to so many like-minded people, that she sometimes tricks herself into believing that Tunisia is a 'liberal country.' Still, she is very much aware that

outside her 'social bulb' of like-minded friends her lifestyle is unaccepted and stresses that her mind-set is not representative for 'the general Tunisian mentality.' It is difficult for her to trace back how she became to act and think the way she does. Many of the people in her 'social circle' have a similar 'mentality,' but she also has 'quite liberal' friends with a different mind-set. Some of her like-minded friends are Muslim, others are atheist, some come from progressive families, others' families are more conservative, and some are rich while others are poor, 'so it's not really the background that matters.' With a big laugh, she concludes that she really does not know what does matter: 'People probably become open-minded by coincidence and chance.'

My interlocutors see cohabitation as a positive development in their relationship and 'the normal thing to do.' At the same time, they underline that this lifestyle is not 'normal' to most of their fellow citizens. They therefore generally consider themselves part of a minority with an 'open-minded mentality' in a mostly 'conservative,' 'traditional,' and 'religious' society. 'Mentality' refers to a way of thinking, which relates to a certain way of seeing and being in the world. 'Open-minded,' or '*l'esprit ouvert*,' is used as a positive term to describe people who engage in the kinds of behavior, such as smoking, drinking, and going out, that the majority would criticize. Being involved in intimate relationships and embracing your sexuality are strong markers of such 'open-mindedness,' especially for women. Men, in turn, are considered 'truly open-minded' if they accept women with a 'sexual history.' They may also consider people who do not engage in this kind of behavior themselves as 'open-minded' as long as they are not judgmental.

As only a minority within the already limited circle of 'open-minded' people in Tunisia lives in cohabitation, according to my interlocutors, how did they become part of this 'minority within a minority'? Some of them stressed that close kin—parents in particular—played an important role in their personal trajectories. They consider their upbringing as the basis for their 'open-mindedness.' Others, in contrast, consider the moment that they moved away from their childhood home as a decisive point in their process of becoming the person they wanted to be. Some were inspired by professors or friends to critically rethink their morals and principles; others were mostly influenced by the books they read or the travels they made. Some believe they were born 'different,' while others stress the importance of experience on 'mentality.' Yesmine, for instance, is convinced that 'men, human beings, are nothing but the fruits of their experiences. Every experience will influence and impact you. You have nothing but those impacts that construct your personality.'

In their accounts of how they became 'open-minded,' my interlocutors also reflected on their stance toward Islam. All were born into Muslim families—some more religiously committed than others—and all but one were raised in a predominantly Muslim environment. The majority currently self-identifies as 'agnostic,' which generally means they no longer 'believe in religion' and are ambivalent about the existence of God. Others identified as 'Muslim,' even though none of them consider themselves as practicing Muslims. Regardless of their self-identification as 'agnostic' or 'Muslim,' most of my interlocutors still feel culturally attached to Islamic traditions, with some referring to themselves as 'cultural Muslims.' No matter their position, they all consider their (non) belief a personal affair rather than a public issue.

The meaning of being, or no longer being, Muslim differs to each of them and often shifted in the course of their life trajectories.4 Some never really questioned their relation to Islam; others went through a period of extensive soul-searching. Some consider their break with Islam as the road to 'liberation'; others never felt constrained by their religion. Many stress that they are not against Islam per se—'I do not wish to promote Islamophobia' (Nour)—but that they are against the way it is practiced in Tunisia. In their opinion, Tunisians tend to judge others according to Islamic principles that they profess but which they fail to live by themselves. My interlocutors are highly critical of this 'hypocrisy' that, in their eyes, is exemplary of Tunisian society.

Their elucidations about whether they ever felt guilty about living in cohabitation show that they are particularly critical of how religious principles are misused to inform unequal gendered (sex) norms, primarily regarding the valuation of male and female virginity. According to them, Tunisians are socially educated—by family, society at large, or both—to believe that sexual desires and intimate relationships outside marriage are *haram* (religiously prohibited), socially unacceptable, and unhealthy, especially for women. For this reason, either before or after their first sexual experience, they went through a period of critical ethical reflection about whether it is morally sound to be sexually active out of wedlock. After these reflections, they all but one came to the conclusion that, for them, there is no normative tension between their (religious) ethics and being sexually intimate outside the context of marriage. Apart from the sporadic 'my God would not judge me for loving someone,' none of them presented religious arguments to justify or legitimize living in cohabitation.

So, what lines of argumentation did they present? They consider sexual pleasure as a 'natural' and 'healthy' part of life, especially when you are in love,

---

4 In his article on the trajectories of 'nonbelievers' in Egypt, Schielke (2012: 305) notes: 'It is striking (…) that many of both sexes have lived with someone without being married, which is generally considered completely out of bounds in Egypt.'

and also outside of wedlock. Sexual intimacy is something personal that, when enjoyed discretely, does not hurt anybody. As such, sexual freedom is one of the social liberties that everybody should be able to enjoy if they so desire. Some stressed that getting to know their body, sexual desires, and physical needs was an essential aspect of becoming their 'true self.' It is of paramount importance to all of them to be honest about their sexuality and to take responsibility for the choices they make. Although it is not always easy to go against the dominant codes regarding intimate relationships, they are convinced of what they do and therefore always assume their behavior. They stress that this sets them apart from the hypocrite people who judge them for being immoral: they are in fact the morally sound ones in this society where everybody simply assumes that the right thing to do is what everybody does. According to Chaima, a professional in her mid-thirties from the central east of Tunisia: 'The key is to believe in yourself.'

They pride themselves for being critically-minded, morally sound, autonomous liberal women who, based on their *own* principles, are convinced of the (sexual) life they are living. Opting to live in cohabitation is, to them, an important aspect of their self-fashioning as 'open-minded' liberal women.5 This is further underlined by their stance toward *'urfi* marriages, which they strongly reject as part of a worldview that is against the civil state, undermines women's and children's rights, and is not motivated by religion, but makes instrumental use of religion. In fact, many consider *'urfi* marriages as *the* example of the religious hypocrisy that, according to them, permeates Tunisian society. In Nour's words: 'It's not a religious thing, it's not a progressive thing, it's just a cowardly thing to do.'

In short, my interlocutors pointed to different ways of being and becoming—through (social) education, experience, and self-fashioning—to elucidate how, to them, cohabitation became acceptable and even desirable. As Cyrine pointed out, all women who live in cohabitation have at least one thing in common: 'They dared to do so.'

Practical Considerations and Dilemmas

Nour spends most of her time in her boyfriend's flat in Downtown Tunis, but she still pays the rent for her own room to keep up appearances with her family. She is not certain whether cohabitation is officially illegal, but

---

5 Based on the narratives of second generation secular Maghrebi Muslim women in Belgium, Fadil (2011: 102) makes a similar argument about how the practice of unveiling 'can figure as a bodily practice that is intimately tied to the process of ethical self-fashioning.'

under the motto 'better safe than sorry,' they live their relationship discreetly. She is not scared of getting arrested or of getting kicked out of the apartment, but she is afraid of causing her parents emotional pain; she comes from 'a noble and conservative family' and it would hurt them a lot to find out that their daughter is living in cohabitation. Only her friends in Tunis—they have 'similar lives, similar thinking, similar mentalities'—can know about her living situation: 'Most of my entourage knows, they are either living with a boyfriend or are sexually active, so I wouldn't be afraid if they know, they won't judge me or threaten me.' Of course, having to be discreet can be stressful at times, but she also enjoys the adventure: 'It's a very fun way of living!'

My interlocutors generally expressed a disregard of what 'society' thinks of them and most did not consider it very likely that they would be arrested for cohabitation. Depending on the context, 'society' may refer to different categories: all Tunisians, all Tunisians who do not share their 'mentality,' the neighbors, fellow students, colleagues, their wider family, and their parents. It is out of love, concern, and consideration for the latter that despite their indifference toward society, they are careful not to cause a social scandal. Even if they consider their parents 'open-minded,' they still expect them to have different norms and expectations in the field of sexuality and marriage, and they do not want to hurt their feelings. Lilia clarifies: 'I don't want to hurt my family that loves me, adores me, respects me. For them it's a lack of respect. (…) I have to respect the mentality, they are the parents.'

Although some of my interlocutors would like to upset the dominant normative structures in their society, especially regarding sexuality and marriage, they do not want to do so at the cost of (the relationship with) their parents. They generally choose to leave their parents in the dark about living in cohabitation and other aspects of their lifestyle such as smoking, drinking, going out, and their (non)belief. They navigate their different social circles wisely to prevent them from finding out through the grapevine. Discretion, and being able to adjust your behavior according to the context you are in, is key when it comes to keeping your lifestyle hidden from close kin and broader society. As I was repeatedly told: 'Anything is possible in Tunisia as long as you do it in secret.' In other words, the emotional well-being of their loved ones is more important to them than being honest at all times. Still, being discreet never gets in the way of being honest to themselves and their partner, which is of paramount importance.

My interlocutors' considerations and deliberations in this respect, or how they make sense of contradictory normative demands (Schielke 2010),

is exemplary of 'the complex interplay of different moral registers around love, sexuality, and marriage' (Schielke 2009: 169). Recent research on love and marriage in the Arab world shows that one of the most contradictory demands youth face is to fulfil their individual desires without hurting their parents (Adely 2016; Fortier et al. 2016; Kreil 2016). Women in particular feel constrained in their (sexual) freedom by close kin, while their family is often also a key source of social and emotional support. They appreciate this support and recognize the importance of not upsetting their social environment completely, both for their parents' and their own sake (Al-Ali et al. 2016; Cheikh 2011).

How cautious people feel they need to be depends to a large extent on their location. In general, people experience less social control in big (capital) cities (Al-Ali et al. 2016). Across and around Tunis you can find (cultural) spaces such as cafes, bars, and theaters where 'the open-minded minority' can act without being judged.6 Yesmine described one of these cafes as 'another world, an open world, a world full of harmony, full of acceptance, full of coexistence.' Those who had moved to Tunis automatically had more space to maneuver than if they had remained in their hometown, and those who were raised in Tunis need to be more careful than someone who moved there.

A couple's living situation and the strategies that are available to them to live their relationship discreetly also depends on the moment in their life trajectory at which they decide to live in cohabitation and which resources— economic *and* cultural capital—they can draw on. Also, other aspects such as age, gender, and class play a role, as they shape my interlocutors' ability to navigate the different social worlds they are part of (Vigh 2009). Of course, economic capital can be an enabling factor—money makes it easier to adopt a nonconformist lifestyle—and/or a motivating factor—saving money by living together and/or not having enough money to get married. Your financial resources naturally also determine the kind of housing and the kind of neighborhood you can afford to live in.

The students among my interlocutors had little time to work and thus often depended on their parents for money. Some of them lived together in their apartment or studio in a middle-class neighborhood; others would spend most of their time in their boyfriend's shared flat in downtown Tunis. To keep up

---

6 My close friend Eya once asked me whether I meant '*L'Étoile du Nord* normal' or 'Tunisian normal.' *L'Étoile du Nord* is a well-known cultural space in Downtown Tunis that is (in)famous for being frequented by youth who stand out because of their appearance and/or behaviour; in *L'Étoile du Nord* everybody is free to be who they want to be.

appearances with their parents, they would also spend some time in their own student dorm or flat room. For students who are originally from Tunis, it is far more difficult to live in cohabitation 24/7 because they have to mark their presence enough not to raise any suspicion with their parents. Khouloud, a student in her early twenties, and her boyfriend even 'co-lived'7 with another couple in one room of a shared flat, because they were both officially still living with their parents in Tunis. Most students avoid entering or leaving the house together and they keep a low profile so as to not draw any negative attention from the house owner or the neighbors, as they are known to possibly report cohabitation to the police.

The professionals were economically independent, at least to a large extent. Most of them rented a flat in a middle-class neighborhood, where their partner would stay with them during the week and go home to their parents for the weekend. Others moved into a flat together in a more upscale neighborhood; they would just rearrange stuff when their parents were visiting, to pretend to be living by themselves. Mariam, a professional in her later twenties from the central east of Tunisia, cohabited with her boyfriend a few months at the time in his mother's house when she was away for travels. To hide the nature of their relationship, the professionals generally also kept a low profile in the neighborhood. Some would sneak their partner in and out of the house, but most decided to just 'act normal' as if they were a married couple. During the years that she lived together with her now husband, Jihane—a professional in her early thirties who was raised in western Europe—learned that 'if you do things that are not generally accepted you can better act as if it's normal because then people will accept it sooner, just act like you're married and it will be ok.'

Jihane's husband noted that cohabitation was easy for them because they belong to 'a certain class of people.' Interestingly, while most interlocutors recognized that economic resources enable people to live the way they please, none of them mentioned class or wealth as contributing to their 'open-mindedness.' However, when asked directly, many of them did consider cohabitation as a middle- or upper-class lifestyle, with 'class' referring both to economic and cultural capital (Bourdieu 1977). From their perspective, 'cultivated people' are more likely to take up, or to at least accept, such a nonconformist lifestyle. This is in line with Kreil's (2016) observation that romantic style can become part of class habitus and, as such, a factor in how people determine status.

---

7 Khouloud and her boyfriend used the room during the day and the other couple used it during the night. This way they could share both the benefits and the rent.

Reconsidering Marriage: Ambiguities and Ambivalences

> Despite her strong objections, chances are that Nour will end up married one day: 'Even if we had enough courage to have children outside marriage and you defied your family and you defied society, the child would always be called a bastard, so that would be terrible for the child.' Honestly, she would also not really mind getting married if the circumstances are right: 'I love Tunisian wedding traditions.' In fact, they would just continue their lives as they are used to: 'We wouldn't be the traditional family that makes money and raises children and that's it. My husband and I will see the world and maybe in four or five years we'll have children and we wouldn't raise them in the same manner we were raised.'

As mentioned previously, my interlocutors did not focus on getting married, as they were convinced that you *can* be romantically involved with someone outside of such an institutional context. Moreover, many stressed that you can have a serious relationship outside matrimony. Many profess to never have dreamt of a glamorous white dress and big fairy tale wedding like they believe most Tunisian girls do. Because of all the related social expectations, some believe matrimony could actually entail the end of the fairy tale they are currently living. Still, without exception, my interlocutors expected to eventually get married, as they consider the social status that comes with marriage as the sole solution to many of the practical issues they face or will face. Most importantly, it is the only way for mother and child to enjoy full legal protection. Whereas it is, in fact, not illegal to have children out of wedlock, it is socially strongly condemned and both mother and child are often stigmatized (Massy 2016; Voorhoeve 2018). As such, my interlocutors would not find it acceptable to start a family while living in cohabitation.

Yet, social status is not the sole reason for my interlocutors to be united in wedlock. Jalila elucidated that 'it's above all because you find a person with whom you share a number of things, with whom you feel like building something, and yes, after this, it's the social status.' Despite their gloomy image of wedded life in Tunisia and their discontent with being socially and practically obliged to get married, as long as you wed the right man under the right circumstances, my interlocutors do believe it could be 'a nice celebration of love' (Nour) and a way 'to be whole together' (Cyrine).

As it turns out, my interlocutors hold ambivalent perspectives on marriage. They are highly critical of how marriages are lived in Tunisia and opt for cohabitation. According to Nour, 'a progressive marriage is when a man and a woman are living their lives as if they are not married.' Yet their acceptance

of, in the end, entering into matrimony is not only based on practical considerations. They also argue that it is by having first shared the experience of living together and sharing everything, that they expect their married life to be different. Signing a marriage contract will not change the essence of one's relationship. If the relationship is already equal and honest, then making the official commitment of entering into wedlock will not be of negative consequence per se and might even have a positive effect, as among other things, it would further a sense of security.

Chaima was, for instance, never 'a big fan of marriage' and feared that her relationship would change for the worse after signing the contract. They only got married for administrative reasons, but 'luckily nothing changed.' She attributes this positive outcome to their long history of cohabitation:

> What we lived was real, we lived together, we knew each other, I mean, we lived everything. What I love about our relationship is that it was healthy, there were no masks, there were no little secrets, he was how he is, and me I was [how I am]. So, therefore, after marriage, for us, it was really just a paper, nothing changed, nothing at all.

She laughingly adds that the only real advantage of matrimony is that it saves you from booking two hotel rooms.8 Still, she also concedes that their new social status put them more at ease: 'We always did have this fear somewhere that the police would enter, even though it's unlikely.' While my interlocutors are highly critical of conventional Tunisian marriages, they do not reject marriage altogether. Rather, they consider cohabitation as a means to produce a better marriage.9

Conclusion

As the above material indicates, my interlocutors are not against state-registered marriage as an institution and they recognize the value of registration as part of the progressive family law, but they are nonconformist in the sense that they desire to live their marriage differently than what is, in their view, generally

---

8 This is another example of gender relations being regulated by informal norms, as there is no actual law against unmarried couples renting a hotel room (Voorhoeve 2014).

9 The idea that one should be able to express one's feelings and get emotional fulfilment within the institution of marriage is a typical aspect of what Kreil (2016: 129) calls 'love modernism, the linking of love marriage with imaginations of progress.'

the case in present-day Tunisia. To them, cohabitation is a means to, at least, transform the substance of matrimony at a personal level. Developing an equal and honest relationship in which they feel that they can be true to themselves and realize their personal aspirations is more important to them than staying within the dominant normative order regarding sexuality and marriage—that is, until they want to start a family. As such, non-marriage ('waithood') is not a negative choice but fits with their aspirations about the life they want to live. Whereas they reject the dominant normative order, they consider themselves as living in accordance with those norms and values that, in their eyes, underpin their liberal secular identity. For these women, cohabitation is not only a solution to waithood, it also helps them to shape and express themselves as autonomous subjects who are free to live their (sexual) life as they please.10

Acknowledgements

References

Adely, Fida (2016). A different kind of love: Compatibility (*insijam*) and marriage in Jordan. *Arab Studies Journal*, 24(2): 102–127.

Al-Ali, Nadje, Zahra Ali, and Isabel Marler (2016). Reflections on Authoring the Chapter on Young Women for the 2016 Arab Human Development Report. *Jadaliyya,* 9 December 2016 [online]. Available at: http://www.jadaliyya.com/Details/33813/Reflections-on-Authoring-the-Chapter-on-Young-Women-for-the-2016-Arab-Human-Development-Report. Last accessed on 3 December 2017.

Arabi, Oussama (2001). Studies in Modern Islamic Law and Jurisprudence. Leiden: Brill.

---

10   It is important to note that their desire for individual freedom, for autonomy and self-expression, places them in a different dominant discourse. In the words of Mahmood (2001: 207): 'Liberalism's unique contribution is to integrally link the notion of self-fulfilment with individual autonomy insofar as the process of realizing oneself comes to signify the ability to realize the desires of one's "true will."'

Asad, Talal (1986). *The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam*. Occasional Papers Series. Washington DC: Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University.

Assaad, Ragui, Samir Ghazouani, and Caroline Krafft (2017). *Marriage, Fertility, and Women's Agency in Tunisia*. Economic Research Forum, Working Paper No. 1157.

bbc (2017). *Tunisian women free to marry non-Muslims*, 15 September 2017 [online]. Available at: http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-41278610. Last accessed on 3 December 2017.

Bourdieu, Pierre (1977). *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Charrad, Mounira (2007). Tunisia at the Forefront of the Arab World: Two Waves of Gender Legislation. *Washington and Lee Law Review*, 64(4): 1513–1527.

Cheikh, Mériam (2011). Les filles qui sortent, les filles qui se font: attitudes transgressives pour conduites exemplaires. *Maghreb et Sciences Sociales,* Théme 1: 35–44.

Connolly, Jennifer (2009). Forbidden intimacies. Christian-Muslim intermarriage in East Kalimantan, Indonesia. *American Ethnologist*, 36(3): 492–506. doi: 10.1111/j.1548-1425.2009.01175.x.

El Fehki, Shereen (2015). The Arab Bed Spring? Sexual rights in troubled times across the Middle East and North Africa. *Reproductive Health Matters*, 23(46): 38–44. doi:10.1016/j.rhm.2015.11.010.

Fadil, Nadia (2011). Not-/ unveiling as an ethical practice. *Feminist Review*, 98: 83–109. doi:10.1057/fr.2011.12.

Fadil, Nadia and Mayanthi Fernando (2015). Rediscovering the "everyday" Muslim: Notes on an anthropological divide. *hau: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, 5(2): 59–88. doi:10.14318/hau5.2.005.

Fortier, Corinne, Aymon Kreil, and Irene Maffi (2016). The trouble of love in the Arab world: Romance, marriage, and the shaping of intimate lives. *Arab Studies Journal*, 24(2): 96–101.

Grami, Amel (2008). Gender Equality in Tunisia. *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 35(3): 349–361. doi:10.1080/13530190802525148.

Hasso, Frances (2011). Consuming Desires: Family Crisis and the State in the Middle East. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Hirschkind, Charles (2006). The Ethical Soundscape: Cassette Sermons and Islamic Counter Publics. New York: Columbia University Press.

Honwana, Alcinda (2012). The Time of Youth: Work, Social Change, and Politics in Africa. Boulder: Kumarian Press.

Kreil, Aymon (2016). The price of love: Valentine's day in Egypt and its enemies. *Arab Studies Journal*, 24(2): 128–146.

Mahmood, Saba (2001). Feminist Theory, Embodiment, and the Docile Agent: Some Reflections on the Egyptian Islamic Revival. *Cultural Anthropology*, 16(2): 202–236. doi:10.1525/can.2001.16.2.202.

Mahmood, Saba (2005). Politics of Piety. The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Marks, Monica (2013). Women's Rights before and after the Revolution. In Gana, Nouri (ed.), *The Making of the Tunisian Revolution*, pp. 224–251. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Massy, Perrine (2016). Tunisia's single mothers still struggle to overcome stigma. *Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East*, 2 February 2016 [online]. Available at: https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/home.html. Last accessed on 3 December 2017.

Mervin, Sabrina (2008). Normes religieuses et loi du silence: le marriage temporaire chez les chiites du Liban. In Drieskens, Barbara (ed.), *Les metamorphoses du marriage au Moyen-Orient*, pp. 97–118. Beyrouth: IFPO.

Moors, Annelies (1999). Debating Islamic Family Law: Legal Texts and Social Practices. In Meriwether, Marlee and Judith Tucker (eds.), *The Social History of Women and Gender in the Modern Middle East*, pp. 141–175. Boulder: Westview Press.

Moors, Annelies (2013). Unregistered Islamic marriages: Anxieties about sexuality and Islam in the Netherlands. In Berger, Maurits (ed.), *Applying Shari'a in the West: facts, fears, and the future of Islamic rules on family relations in the West*, pp. 141–164. Leiden: Leiden University Press.

Murphy, Emma (2003). Women in Tunisia: Between State Feminism and Economic Reform. In Doumato, Eleanor and Marsha Pususney (ed.), *Women and Globalization in the Arab Middle East: Gender, Economy, and Society*, pp. 169–194. Boulder: Lyanne Rienner.

Schielke, Samuli (2009). Ambivalent Commitments: Troubles of Morality, Religiosity and Aspiration among Young Egyptians. *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 39: 158–185. doi:10.1163/157006609x427814.

Schielke, Samuli (2010). Second thoughts about the anthropology of Islam, or how to make sense of grand schemes in everyday life. ZMO Working Paper. Berlin: Zentrum Moderner Orient.

Schielke, Samuli (2012). Being a nonbeliever in a time of Islamic revival: Trajectories of doubt and certainty in contemporary Egypt. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 44: 301–320. doi: 10.1017/s0020743812000062.

Schielke, Samuli (2015). Living with unresolved differences: A reply to Fadil and Fernando. *hau: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, 5(2): 89–92. doi: 10.14318/hau5.2.006.

Shahrani, Shahreena (2010). *The Social (Re) Construction of 'Urfi Marriage*. [ma thesis, The Ohio State University].

Singerman, Diane (2007). *The Economic Imperatives of Marriage: Emerging Practices and Identities among Youth in the Middle East*. Middle East Youth Initiative, Working Paper 6. Wolfensohn Center for Development and Dubai School of Government.

Tchaïcha, Jane and Khedija Arfaoui (2012). Tunisian women in the twenty-first century: past achievements and present uncertainties in the wake of the Jasmine Revolution.

The Journal of North African Studies, 17(2): 215–238. doi:10.1080/13629387.2011.630499.

Vigh, Henrik (2009). Motion squared: A second look at the concept of social navigation. *Anthropological Theory*, 9(4): 419–438. doi:10.1177/1463499609356044.

Voorhoeve, Maaike (2014). Informal Transactions with the police: The Case of Tunisian "Sex Crimes." *Middle East Law and Governance*, 6: 1–23. doi:10.1163/18763375-00602001.

Voorhoeve, Maaike (2015). Women's Rights in Tunisia and the Democratic Renegotiation of an Authoritarian Legacy. *The New Middle Eastern Studies*, 5: 1–16.

Voorhoeve, Maaike (2018). Law and Social Change in Tunisia: The Case of Unregistered Marriage. *Oxford Journal of Law and Religion*, 0: 1–19.

Welchman, Lynn (2007). Women and Muslim Family Laws in Arab States: A Comparative Overview of Textual Development and Advocacy. Amsterdam: ISIM / Amsterdam University Press.

Zeghal, Malika (2013). Competing Ways of Life: Islamism, Secularism, and Public Order in the Tunisian Transition. *Constellations*, 20(2): 254–274. doi:10.1111/cons.12038.

Zemni, Sami (2016). From Revolution to Tunisianité: Who is the Tunisian People? *Middle East Law and Governance*, 8: 131–150. doi:10.1163/18763375-00802002.