

## Mobility Economies in Europe's Borderlands

The arrival of unauthorized migrants at the shores of southern Europe has been sensationalized into a migration 'crisis' in recent years. Yet these depictions fail to grasp migrants' experiences and fall short of addressing a more complex phenomenon. In this original ethnography, Marthe Achtnich examines migrants' journeys and economic practices underpinning mobility to recast how we think of migration. Bringing the perspectives and voices of migrants to the fore, she traces sub-Saharan migrants' journeys along one of the world's most dangerous migration routes: through the Sahara Desert, Libya, and then by boat to Malta in Europe. Examining what she calls 'mobility economies', Achtnich demonstrates how these migrant journeys become sources of profit for various actors. By focusing on migrants' long and difficult journeys, the book prompts a necessary rethinking of mobile life and economic practices under contemporary capitalism, and the complex relationship between the two.

Marthe Achtnich is an anthropologist of mobility and migration. She has conducted ethnographic fieldwork on migrants' journeys in Libya and Malta, focusing on the lived experiences, governance and economies of migration. She was previously a Fellow by Examination in Anthropology (JRF) at Magdalen College, University of Oxford.

# Mobility Economies in Europe's Borderlands

*Migrants' Journeys through Libya and the  
Mediterranean*

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Marthe Achtnich



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To my parents and to all the migrants on this journey

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Maps



Maps 1 and 2 Maps depicting the countries relevant to the journeys of sub-Saharan migrants through the Sahara Desert, Libya and by boat to Malta, discussed in this book. Maps courtesy of MapChart/Martin Davis University of Oxford.