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Introduction: Europe and North Africa Beyond the “Boomerang Effect”

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In January 2017, the leaders of the major European parties on the far-right gathered to present their vision for the future of the continent in a “counter-summit”. In the lead-up to a series of highly sensitive elections that were to decide the future of the continent, Geert Wilders, Marine Le Pen, Frauke Petry and Matteo Salvini – among others – unveiled their political platforms. Two themes marked their speeches: Firstly, the speakers denounced the “bureaucratic” nature of the European Union (EU), which Salvini, the leader of the Italian Lega Nord, portrayed as nothing less than a “new Soviet Union”. Secondly, they vociferously opposed any immigration from Muslim majority countries, which they described as a risk for Europe’s domestic security, economic prosperity, and cultural identity.

These views have become a rallying cry for the far-right in Europe, whose varied political platforms nevertheless share a commitment to Euroscepticism and Islamophobia (Ford, Goodwin and Cutts 2011; Druxes and Simpson 2016). In this sense, the existing European political order appears threatened by a movement that proposes the rejection of immigration and a return to the nation-state. Yet it is perhaps misleading to see these goals as
novel phenomena. After all, the nation-state has not receded in recent years, and has also played a key role in the governance of the EU. Moreover, even if the weakening of the welfare state contributed to the rise of overtly racist attitudes (Wren 2001), racial categories have been foundational to the development of European states (Goldberg 2002). In looking at xenophobic attitudes in Europe over the past few decades, one could also point to the widespread opposition to the integration of Turkey to the EU (Saz 2011), the persisting prejudice of European officials against immigration from the South of the Mediterranean (Rhein 2006), and the so-called cultural insecurity of Europeans (Bouvet 2015).

Yet in trying to assess what is novel about this political moment, we do seem to be witnessing a fundamental shift in the conceptualization of what it means to be European; the fragile postwar consensus - that was based on imperial preferences, on the one hand, and the technocratic construction of a European Economic Community, on the other – seems less and less tenable. Rather than viewing immigration as a necessary component of postwar reconstruction, or an extension of postcolonial preferences, it is increasingly common to hear it framed in terms of a full-scale “invasion” (Krzyzanowski 2013). It is certainly not our intention to propose a nostalgic view of the decades following the Second World War; indeed, extensive and important work has been done on the way in which policing strategies, housing structures, and economic rights were unfairly stacked against North African immigrants. If postwar immigration led minority populations to demand cultural recognition and the “right to difference” in the 1970s and 1980s, our current moment is built on the wholesale rejection of that multicultural model, which had once been a key component of anti-racist struggles across Europe (Modood and Werbner 1991).

These are some of the questions underpin this edited volume, which studies the ways in which North Africa has contributed to the shaping of Europe in the postwar period. We are cognizant of the fact that while this volume is framed in terms of European identity, many of
the articles in fact study the European Union or its precursors. This orientation is due to our conviction that the understanding of Europe, and what it means to be “European” is necessarily embedded in historical circumstances. Since the end of the Second World War, the process of European integration self-consciously attempted to construct a European identity. Therefore, in looking at the evolution of European identity and governance through the prism of North Africa, we believe that the European institutions built in the wake of decolonization offer a fruitful starting point.

At the same time, analysing Europe’s current attempts to defend something called “European values” requires us to transcend the simplistic claim that the region is merely continuing centuries-old practices of colonization. Indeed, to understand the trajectory of Europe since the second half of the 20th century, one cannot lose sight of the other historical, social and political dynamics – alongside decolonization - that have informed the last sixty years. One major goal of this volume is thus to provincialize Europe (Chakrabarty 2000) through a study of the institutions and practices that have accompanied its most concrete form: the European Union. A focus on Europe’s Southern periphery thus sheds light on how a certain conception of what it meant to be European – in the domains of economic organization, diplomatic practices, population transfers, knowledge production and religious beliefs – was constituted through the region’s interactions with North Africa, one of its historical “others”. By bringing together scholars from a variety of disciplines, we also hope to show that North African spaces and actors have actively contributed to the shaping of postwar Europe.

Europe and North Africa in a Historical Perspective

While this volume begins in the aftermath of the Second World War, there is a longer durée history of North Africa’s relationship with Europe. Even in the late colonial period, older
repertoires of rule that included a “Latin North Africa” (Lorcin 2002) or that posited North Africa as the “Granary of Rome (Davis 2007) played a crucial role in colonial domination. Centuries of interactions had cast North Africans as a particularly intimate, and yet particularly dangerous, foreigner. After all, the etymology of the word Berber is claimed to be from the Greek word *baraboroi* (barbari in Latin), connoting those who spoke neither Greek nor Latin. The series of wars between the 8th and 15th centuries, and the eventual expulsion of Muslims and Jews from Spain in 1492, provided another historical experience that is relevant in thinking about the so-called “return” of Muslims to Europe (Cheesworth 2016).

If this early period saw North Africans as religious or linguistic outsiders, the naval wars with the so-called Barbary Coast (taken from the word Berber) viewed North Africans as examples of economic savages from the 16th to the 19th century. As Ann Thomson has shown, “European writers considered [the North African states] as nests of pirates who held European shipping to ransom and enslaved Europeans” (Thomson 1989: 109). Enlightenment notions of European civility were constructed against the spectre of Ottoman despotism (Grosrichard 1998), which served as an early foil for Europe’s self-conception as a liberal, democratic, region. In so far as Turkey continues to occupy a problematic borderland for Europe (Keyman and Icduygu 2005), early contests for political and material power in North Africa were formative.

Perhaps no moment of European hegemony in North Africa has received more scholarly attention than Napoleon’s expedition to Egypt (Cole 2008). Ostensibly to triumph over the Mamluks, and seeking to cut Britain’s ties with India, the Directory government in Paris sought to send the Corsican as far from Paris as possible. Arriving with a team of 167 scholars, scientists, engineers and artists, Napoleon’s expedition resulted in the *Description de l’Egypte*. This show of symbolic and physical power was a foundational experience for the tradition of Orientalism (Said 1978), and has been designated as the moment when North Africa
entered into the historical stage of modernity (Ze’evi 2004). Napoleon’s Egyptian years have studied as a formative period for the Concordat (Coller 2010) as well as an example of how liberal ideas were applied differently in non-European territories than they were on the continent itself (Abi-Mershed 2010, 5).

The French occupation of Algiers in 1830 marked a new phase of European power in the region. Though more an impulsive decision to help bolster Charles X’s waning legitimacy than a well-conceived plan for hegemony, it was an early precursor to the “scramble for Africa” and so-called new imperialism that began in the late nineteenth century (Sessions 2011). Financial weakness and economic concessions opened the door to French control over Morocco and Tunisia, and the British established a “veiled protectorate” in Egypt after 1882. Colonial rule was in no way a coherent or unified system, and European powers – including Spain and Italy, who entered the colonial game in North Africa in 1912 and 1911 respectively – actively compared notes and studied imperial lessons that had been learned elsewhere. Scholars have emphasized not only the mobility of these thoughts and practices, but also the fact that they were never a one-way street. In other words, the influence travelled in both directions across the Mediterranean. Nor were North Africans wearing blinders that uniformly turned their vision to Europe; Islamic networks connected them to the Middle East (McDougall 2006, Christelow 2012), Sufi traditions linked them to their North African neighbours (Clancy-Smith 1994), trade routes created corridors of mobility with Sub-Saharan Africa (Lydon 2009), and various international networks such as communism, anarchism and Judaism also cast their gaze farther afield (Gottreich 2007, Connelly 2003).

Germany also tried to get a foothold in Morocco, albeit unsuccessfully, in the lead up to the First World War. Indeed, the successive Moroccan crises of the early 20th century are some of factors that led W.E.B. Du Bois to claim that the roots of the First World War lay in in Africa (1915). The Great War would have undoubtedly looked very different had it not been
for the resources and manpower that the North African territories provided, especially in France (Fogarty 2009). These years also set in motion the process of North African immigration to Europe, and the consolidation of a white working class was formed as French workers found solidarity with historic “others” from Europe – such as Italians and Spaniards – that was premised on defining themselves collectively against their North African colleagues (Stovall 1998).

The aftermath of the Great War, which redrew the boundaries of the Middle East, was also a watershed in North Africa, although for different reasons. As European countries tried to lay the basis for future peace, they invoked the notion of Eurafrica that would allow Germany to participate in empire even though it had been stripped of its possessions by the Treaty of Versailles (Montarsolo 2010). The historian Fernand Braudel, whose work has irrevocably altered our understanding of the Mediterranean, spend the period from 1923 – 1932 in Algeria. He was thus embedded in interwar discussions on a Mediterranean humanism that revived North Africa’s Latin heritage, even if the place of Islamic civilization in this configuration was far from clear (Carlier 2003; Liauzu 1999; Foxlee 2006). The repeated frustrations of colonial reform during this period also fostered the nationalist sentiments that would lead to decolonization after WWII.

The destruction of WWII, the horrors of the Holocaust, and increasing demands for independence from colonized subjects, all shaped the relationship between North Africa and Europe from 1945 to 1962. As Europe tried to rebuild its economy through massive public investment, these states heavily recruited North African labour along the lines of the guest worker model. When these single men did not return to their home countries, or brought their families with them to Europe, receiving states were forced to conceive of more permanent housing and social welfare provisions (Lyons 2013). Moreover, European integration, which sought to pool economic interests in order to secure an enduring peace, would have to account
for colonial territories (Hansen and Jonsson, 2014). Even in the realm of intellectual history and philosophy, a pervasive disillusionment with the promises of linear progress and the tenants of humanism would lead to philosophical debates in which North Africa featured prominently (Le Sueur 2005; Young 2004). The violence of the Algerian War was often at the center of these discussions, and ended the experiment of a European “melting pot” where Spanish, Maltese, and Italians had been made French through colonization. Indeed, with the end of French Algeria, their repatriation to the metropole would play a significant role in the rise of right-wing politics, namely in the rise of the National Front (Choi 2016), and posed pressing questions about what it meant to be French (Shepard 2008).

On the other side of the Mediterranean, nationalist historians such as Abdallah Laroui and Mahfoud Kaddache sought to decolonize their own historiography since “the slave had been freed, but the master still held the slave’s pen” (Carlier 1997: 144). Nationalists attempted to craft a nation-state based on notions of authenticity, reviving a nation untainted by colonization. Yet this would prove to be an act of construction as much as recovery. North African leaders also struggled to establish new political alliances and create a south-to-south dialogue that was at the nexus of pan-Arabism and pan-Africanism; the Third Worldlist spirit of these years was given more definitive form at the Bandung conference in 1955, and was intensified by the Suez Crisis in 1956 (Byrne 2016).

For the newly independent countries in North Africa, their continued dependency on European markets resulted in persistent economic vulnerability. Despite their best attempts to diversity trading partners, the colonial pact continued to structure Europe’s relationship to North Africa in the 1960s. Rivalries among leaders – Houari Boumediene and Gamal Abdel Nasser’s mutual desire to be the leaders of Third Worldism, or Algerian and Moroccan disputes over the Western Sahara - reinforced the initial imbalance of power between the two shores of

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1 The law of June 26, 1889 offered French citizenship to the European settler population in Algeria.
the Mediterranean. At the same time, the political weakness and political divisions among North African countries meant that they were often treated as subcontractors, whose economic activity was oriented according to the needs of the EEC. For example, Moroccan officials denounced the consequences of the successive enlargements and the growth of European markets, which they feared would intensify their situation of dependence and lead to a predictable economic disaster (Oualalou 1982).

Indeed, economic development initiatives and cooperation policies brought together ruling elites from the North and the South “in an era of political nationalism and economic connectedness” (Cooper 1993: 90). Yet in the 1970s, the growing influence of a neoliberal ethos changed the contours of cooperation. With the first EU enlargement and the inclusion of the United Kingdom, the former Directorate-General for Development progressively abandoned the interpersonal practices inherited from colonisation. Instead, a focus on programming and public policy evaluations resulted in the Community’s increased control over the programs implemented in the South. This restructuring continued over the following decades, leading to a reform of European aid in the 2000s that followed the dictates of New Public Management (Dimier 2003). This bureaucratization of European foreign policy also impacted the future permanent delegations of the EU, notably with the introduction of a rotating diplomatic staff who were therefore less rooted in the country to which they were assigned (Dimier 2004).

After 1995, the cooperation between the two shores of the Mediterranean evolved in the framework of the Barcelona process. This new partnership formalized the interactions between the EU and its Mediterranean neighbours, and was later included in the European Neighbourhood Policy, a tool that was initially conceived of prior to the 2004 enlargement. The Barcelona process fixed a set of timely objectives. Firstly, it aimed at fighting socio-economic under-development in the region by reinforcing cooperation. Secondly, this new
arena was supposed to foster regional integration in the South, notably in North Africa, as a way to ensure equal participation of all parties involved in the partnership. Thirdly, the Barcelona process aimed to promote security and stability. In fact, this new phrase in the relationship between Europe and its southern partners illustrated the growing concern of European decision-makers and observers in regards to a region that was increasingly viewed as a locus of multiple potential dangers (Bland and Abis 2007). In response, the European Commission proposed its well-known strategy that was based on a mix of political, economic and institutional integration in order to encourage Southern partners to play a more active role in the partnership.

There was certainly a window of opportunity for this kind of undertaking in North Africa at the end of the 1990s. At this point, new leaders in Morocco and in Algeria sent signs that a reconciliation between the two countries might be possible. Both the new king Mohamed VI and the newly elected Abdelaziz Bouteflika signalled their commitment to economic and political reforms. A few years later, even the erratic Muammar Qaddafi showed signs of goodwill. At the same time, European aid became increasingly based on a conditional approach, which was perceived as the best way to incentivize North African partners.

After the Barcelona Declaration, the EU and its member states enjoyed newfound influence in the South of the Mediterranean. Yet, this did not translate into a desire to include the populations in the Maghreb or beyond in the Euro-Mediterranean partnership. Given the increase in xenophobic discourses and policies, neighbouring countries were pressured to change their laws regarding the rights of residence and asylum in order to adjust to community standards. With the creation of Frontex in 2004 and the externalization of migration policies, North African governments were increasingly subjected to a Europeanization of their border.

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control. This process accelerated after the Euro-African conference on immigration held in Rabat in 2006 (Wa Kabwe-Segatti 2009). Nevertheless, some North African countries also took advantage of the European obsession with border control in order to gain leverage. This was especially the case in Libya, as Qaddafi managed to appropriate the issue of undocumented migrations in order to develop a privileged partnership with Italy (Morone 2017).

Given its disorganized implementation (Darbot-Trupiano 2007), the Mediterranean partnership proved to be an ambitious yet ambiguous undertaking marked by contradictory goals and contentious relationships. For example, while the Agadir Agreement of 2004 set the basis for a Mediterranean free trade zone, technical and economic limitations, as well as various forms of political opposition in North Africa, extinguished any hope for the initiative. Algeria has been vocal about the many problems that could result from such a project, especially given the historical context and the regional imbalance in development. Thus, countries in North Africa have often reminded their European partners that the EU’s utopian liberal federalism will be forced to reckon with the postcolonial and economic realities that underpin their relationship.

The Arab uprisings of 2011 highlighted the ideological confusion and erratic strategies of European actors. The so-called Arab Spring underlined the failure of an approach to the ENP based on conditionality that did not address the concrete demands of peoples subjected to the ruthless hybridization between authoritarian rule and neoliberal restructuring. In fact, European officials had acknowledged the need to re-conceptualize their neighbourhood policy in the South of the Mediterranean as early as 2010. The Revolution in Tunisia began at the same time that the Commission started an active re-evaluation of the situation in North Africa, compiling reports by various member and partner states, Arab academics, NGOs and activists. At this point, events in the South made it clear that European diplomacy needed a complete makeover (Tocci 2011). Yet, despite a commitment to increasing financial aid in
order to fight economic inequalities, and a pledge to pay more attention to “civil society,” the revamped ENP sounded much like its predecessor. The conditional logic of “more for more” remained at the heart of cooperation, illustrating the persistent belief that aid should lead to democratization and economic liberalization. Meanwhile, the new free trade agreements were still based on unrealistic demands for standardization that were necessary for goods to comply with the common market. Ultimately, European actions in the South remained guided by the usual matrix of security concerns, fear of immigration and wishful thinking. As Jean-Pierre Cassarino rightly observes, the EU did not seek to seriously re-evaluate its policy tools in the region in the aftermath of the Arab uprisings; still, one can hope that events in the Arab world may cause the EU to question some of its foundational assumptions (2012: 12-13).

Outline of the Present Volume

The injunction to study colony and metropole in a single frame of reference has been taken seriously by scholars of Europe and resulted in a rich and diverse literature (Cooper and Stoler 1997). Yet the success of this colonial frame means that work has often focused on a bilateral relationship between colonizer and colonized, thereby losing sight of how North African and European identities were formed across these regions more broadly (Lorcin and Shepard 2016). Moreover, rather than studying Africa in a continental framework (Mbemebe 2001; Adebajo and Whiteman 2012), this volume maintains that there are historical and structural commonalities that make North Africa a useful unit of analysis, despite the differences between the Maghreb (the French colonies of Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia), and the other countries discussed in this book – namely, Egypt and Libya.

While much of the work that has come out of the colonial turn has looked at discourse

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3 In other words, increased financial aid would be offered in exchange for more reforms that worked towards democratization.
and representation, the field of diplomatic history and the history of European integration has been reticent to engage with the legacy of colonialism as anything other than a pawn in a larger game of global geopolitics. The first section of this volume, “Colonialism and Institutions,” thus reflects on how colonialism shaped practices that formed a repertoire for action at the European level. The opening chapter by Luc-André Brunet studies the French Committee of National Liberation (CFLN), one of the main bodies of the French Resistance, which spent the period between November 1942 and June 1944 in Algeria. Brunet’s article demonstrates how this North African context contributed to the CFLN’s vision of economic planning and postwar industrialization, which ultimately served as a blueprint for European integration. Indeed, while much has been written on European reconstruction after the war, a surprising few of the works on economic history take the role of North Africa seriously in their analysis. This lacuna is also taken up in Muriam Davis’s chapter on the impact of empire on the development of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Davis argues that empire was an important precedent for the organization of European agricultural markets, and shows how concerns regarding France’s historical relationship to North Africa influenced the trajectory of the CAP.

The next two articles in this section examine how colonial dynamics intersected with other institutional logics. Antoine Perdoncin analyses the recruitment of Moroccan workers in French and Belgian coal mines, showing how North African states and private companies sought to impose their own logics on the lives of these workers. Darcie Fontaine studies how events in North Africa, especially the Algerian war of Independence, transformed Catholic institutions, politics, and theology. What emerges most forcefully in these two essays is that colonialism was less of a set interests to be defended, and more a set of circumstances with which various actors engaged for their own maximum gain. By studying how diverse institutions crafted responses to events in North Africa, it becomes clear that the waning of empire brought certain continuities – but also important ruptures – in the postwar consolidation
of European identity.

The second part of this volume, which comes under the theme of “Europe Defined: Imaginaries and Practices,” explores this thorny question of European identity. While the concept of identity has been roundly criticized (Brubaker and Cooper 2000), all of the actors studied in this section were forced to make concrete decisions regarding policy in North Africa that were ultimately rooted in their understanding what it meant to be European. Similarly, the notion of “European values” has been a common referent for historical actors who made political decisions in a post-imperial context. Thus, by invoking the notion of a European identity, our goal is not to reproduce essentialist visions of the continent, but rather to critically analyse the historical development of its self-conception as a source of liberal and democratic ideas. While the EU often frames its interventions in the Maghreb in terms of electoral politics, economic development, or civil society, there are nevertheless echoes with late colonial attempts to understand North Africa as a foil for European civilization.

Timothy Johnson’s chapter studies the work and life of the historian and anthropologist Jacques Berque. Despite Berque’s support for decolonization in North Africa, his appropriation of third worldist themes reinforced France’s role as the motor of global history and re-inscribed the civilizing mission’s confidence that technology would ultimately lead to historical progress. While European actors often took technical prowess as a sign of civilizational advancement in the postwar period, the other chapters in this section focus on similar themes in the realm of politics and development. Aitana Guia’s essay studies the Spanish colonial cities of Melilla and Ceuta and investigates “nativist” attitudes alongside the actions of Muslim women who struggled to influence the democratic process. She argues that far from being marginal, the outposts of Melilla and Ceuta have much to teach Europe about gendered Islamophobia and the expansion of electoral politics. Questions of how European and Muslim residents define their identity in relationship to one another echoes the following article by Farida Souiah,
Monika Salzbrunn, and Simon Mastrangelo which analyses the cultural production of North Africans who attempt to cross the Mediterranean, known as harragas in Arabic. This article outlines their (often contradictory) visions of Europe. It also demonstrates that their dreams of migration are not only rooted in projections of what awaits them on the other shore of the Mediterranean, but also reflections of their experiences in North Africa. Yet as Simone Tholens shows, it is not only activists and artists who harbour anxieties about cultural norms; the actions of technocrats and politicians are also motivated by specific historical imaginaries. Tholens analyses how “imperial identity practices” shape the EU’s approach to North Africa in the two main policy areas of energy and trade.

In the domain of development more generally, the EU has demonstrated a persistent tendency to impose norms rooted in a European economic ethos that is inherently capitalist, consumerist and ordoliberal (White 2000; Serres 2016). Post-development approaches have underscored that attempts at economic development re-inscribe the power dynamic between the global North and South (Escobar 1995). Yet the articles in the second section show that it is impossible to explain the interventions of the EU in North Africa solely in terms of self-interest or coherent economic strategies. Indeed, the relationship between North and South – while always marked by an imbalance of power – is a good deal more complicated than any invocation of Machiavellian neo-imperialism would suggest.

The negotiation, appropriation and reconceptualization of discourses and practices show that North African actors participate actively in the creation of Europe. The third section of this volume, entitled “States of Crisis and Exception,” extends these insights to the political and security concerns that have emerged after the uprisings of 2011-2012. The expansion of the state of exception, characterized by measures that are legitimated by allegations of an extreme threat to security, historically emerged out of a constant dialogue between the colonial periphery and the metropolis (Khalili 2013). The postcolonial context of these policies
influences the strategies of both sides and feeds a pervasive mistrust; for example, interactions between North Africa and Europe opened the door for allegations of neo-colonialism and the recycling of colonial clichés. These tensions help explain the erratic strategies of member and partner states who respond to emergencies in a contradictory and fragmented fashion (Baghzouz 2013). This section also explores how a European external governance based on sectoral and normative interventions (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009) contributes to a globalized form of population management. This transnational management of security concerns draws on a complex network of actors whose relationships with each other are marked by both competition and cooperation.

As Thomas Serres argues, moments of political crisis in the south of the Mediterranean have resulted in a confrontation between competing understandings of so-called European “core values.” Drawing on the Algerian civil war as a case study, Serres shows how EU negotiations led to the redefinition of key notions such as democracy and human rights in the context of the nascent “war on terror”. The fact that moments of crisis are often the catalyst for new techniques of governance and strategies of control is a reoccurring theme in the history of North Africa and Europe; for example, scholars have looked at how decolonization and the presence of North African immigrants led to the introduction of new forms of policing in Europe (Blanchard 2011, House 2006, Rosenberg 2006). Scholarship has also shown how the policing and protests associated with 1968 were indebted to the wars of decolonization (Ross 2002). In the aftermath of the Arab Spring, security concerns and the international geopolitical environment are certainly specific, but we can still identify certain continuities with the Cold War: local regimes present these popular movements as forms of infantile anarchism (or as manipulations by foreign enemies, including radical jihadism), while the EU is increasingly limited by its techno-managerial rationality. In short, what looked like a series of revolutionary movements that could potentially bring hope to the entire Mediterranean space has become
increasingly assimilated to a set of pressing issues involving security and governance that calls for management and containment.

The most emblematic example of the risks to Europe posed by North Africa is the issue of migration – whether documented or illegal - that followed the collapse of authoritarian orders in North Africa. Seen from the EU, this issue was framed in terms of terrorism, the weakening of the welfare system, and threats to cultural homogeneity. Speaking to these issues, Irene Constantini’s contribution focuses on Libya after the fall of Qaddafi. She argues that the country’s geographical proximity led European actors to interpret the ongoing civil war as a security crisis. As the transformative narrative characteristic of the “war on terror” based on regime change and democratization was abandoned, the EU focused on the management of various sources of insecurity such as energy and immigration rather than seeking a comprehensive political settlement.

The existence of these political and security crises does not mean, however, that Europeans are deaf to the demands emanating from the southern shore of the Mediterranean. In fact, countries with a colonial history in the region, such as France or Italy, have been more likely to develop channels of discussion with local governments. This type of influence also exists at the Community level. Thus, despite the increased bureaucratization and the rise of a techno-managerial rationality at the level of the European Development Fund, African officials have wielded influence on its agenda (Dimier 2003: 439). Yet an analysis of transnational governance should also acknowledge the influence of non-state actors. Thus, the final chapter by Elise Ketelaars looks at transitional justice in Tunisia and investigates how the EU accounted for the social and economic demands that were at the heart of the Revolution. By looking at the attempts to craft European policies, the chapter demonstrates the tensions that emerge between a predominantly liberal ideological framework, on the one hand, and the priorities pushed forward by Tunisian actors, such as Islamist female activists, on the other.
When analysing Europe’s current challenges, namely immigration and terrorism, observers have spoken of a “boomerang effect.” This terminology is of course rooted in a longer tradition that dates back to Hannah Arendt, Aimé Césaire, and their invocation by Jean-Paul Sartre (1961). Yet if a boomerang goes between two places, bringing “home” an action carried out “over there,” this volume tries to show how the very coherence of Europe as a place, actor, or identity has emerged through interactions with its southern periphery. Rather than a boomerang, then, we might think of Europe’s interactions with North Africa using a musical analogy, as the production of certain chords. This operates both in the sense of a combination of notes that resonates outwards, and also indicates how a field of audition creates a geographical unit or borderland. The process is also iterative since North African responses often change the rules of composition. Etienne Balibar’s insights regarding France and Algeria, that they might not form two countries, but something like one and a half, can thus also be extended to the two shores of the Mediterranean (Balibar 1997).

If we seem to be witnessing a resurgence of nationalism that makes such regional units of analysis seem antiquated, it might be helpful to remind ourselves that there is no zero-sum game between the region and the nation-state. As comforting as the idea of a “return” to the nation-state may seem, this is a more of a nostalgic appeal, or even a “postcolonial melancholia”, than an actual policy proposal (Gilroy 2004). In British case, for example, decolonization saw the consolidation of a European identity that separated a “notion of imperialness from European-ness”, thereby giving rise to a Euroscepticism that was “impossible to separate form nostalgic neo-imperialism” (Grob-Fitzgibbon 2016: 7). Regardless of the future trajectory of the EU, the history of empire and understandings of “European-ness” are necessarily imbricated; after all, the “post” in post-colonial continues to be a source of contention (Spivak 1999). The history of empire has taught us that extreme nationalism – particularly when it takes the form of imperial expansion – exposes the
constitutive violence that resides in liberalism’s dark underbelly (Pitts 2006). As Lilith Mahmud’s Conclusion to this volume so poignantly argues, what we are witnessing is nothing less than the reconfiguration of European politics and the crisis of liberalism. Many of the chapter this volume draw to our attention both to the limits of liberalism as well as Europe’s tendency to selectively invoke its central tenants. Subsequently, Mahmud’s reflections on how to decolonize our scholarly approach to the study of Europe reflects on how academic conventions have contributed to writing colonialism out of the making of Europe. In the face of aggressive nationalisms across the continent (and around the world), we hope that a focus on North Africa may offer an alternative imaginary of what it means to be European in the world today.
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PART ONE

COLONIALISM AND INSTITUTIONS
The Role of North Africa in the Debates over Post-war Europe within the French Resistance

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Abstract

This chapter reveals how the French Resistance’s measures in North Africa during the Second World War decisively shaped subsequent post-war policies for France and Europe. In the spring of 1943, it was widely agreed within the Resistance that the offices established by Vichy in 1940 to organise industrial production should be abolished as soon as France was liberated. This policy of dissolving Vichy-era institutions was put into effect in North Africa following the Allied landings there in November 1942, yet encountered significant difficulties. Indeed, the experience of trying to abruptly dismantle Vichy’s institutions in North Africa prompted a reversal of policy amongst Resistance leaders, who henceforth advocated the maintenance of Vichy’s institutions. The offices set up by Vichy went on to form the institutional foundation of the Monnet Plan to modernise industry in post-war France and ultimately helped shape the first European institutions, notably the European Coal and Steel Community.

Keywords: North Africa, France, Europe, Vichy, Jean Monnet, Industry.

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Following the Allied landings in Algeria in November 1942, that country hosted the main organisations of the French external resistance, culminating in the creation of the French Committee of National Liberation (Comité français de Libération nationale, CFLN) in June 1943. Between November 1942 and the Allied landings in Normandy in June 1944, the question of what policies France should pursue in the post-war period were debated at length in North Africa. While the CFLN and Free France have been an enduringly popular topic among historians, studies of the CFLN’s policy debates rarely take into account the geographical context in which they took place (Michel 1963, Crémieux-Brilhac 1996). This chapter seeks to return Algeria to the narrative of these debates by demonstrating how the implementation of certain policies in Algeria provided valuable lessons for the CFLN as they developed comparable measures for metropolitan France and ultimately for Europe.

The first European institution, the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), was the result of a French initiative, namely the Schuman Plan proposed in May 1950. Moreover, this project was based on the reorganisation of two crucial industries, famously pooling the coal and steel industries of the member states. This chapter consequently focuses on how France reorganised its own heavy industry during and following the Second World War and how this impacted the creation of the ECSC. By focusing on the debates over industrial organisation within the CFLN while they were based in North Africa, this chapter argues that the CFLN’s experience in Algeria decisively shaped not only France’s post-war industrial organisation but also the first European institutions.

**Vichy’s New Industrial Order**

Following the Fall of France in June 1940, the newly established Vichy regime radically
reorganised the nation’s industry. The most significant legislation in this respect was the law of 16 August 1940, which created a new set of institutions called Organisation Committees. One Committee was established for each branch of industry and was given sweeping powers to coordinate production, compile a census for the industry, and allocate raw materials to factories across France. While the Committees were dominated by industrialists – each Committee typically consisted of three to five employers plus a representative from the Ministry for Industrial Production – they fit into a thoroughly statist and dirigiste framework.

With France cut off from its pre-war markets and its usual supply of raw materials, these new institutions played a crucial role in coordinating the use of scarce resources to maximise industrial output. They also had an important political function: they were explicitly modelled upon Nazi Germany’s analogous Wirtschaftsgruppen and were created with a view to realise economic collaboration with the Reich. In this goal the Committees were successful, and by 1943 85 per cent of production in the steel and automotive industries went directly to the German war economy (Imlay and Horn 2014, Brunet 2017).

This ‘New Industrial Order’ created by Vichy in 1940 was completed with the establishment of the Central Bureau for the Distribution of Industrial Products (Office central de répartition des produits industriels, OCRPI) in September. This Central Bureau, with Sections created for each industry corresponding to analogous Organisation Committees, was responsible for the allocation of raw materials to each industry; the Organisation Committee was then responsible for sub-allocating these materials to individual firms. Although this system of industrial organisation was set up hurriedly in the summer of 1940, it proved to be effective at keeping French factories running and facilitated the large-scale production of goods for the Reich throughout the war.

The new institutions created by Vichy to manage the French economy were successful in exerting control over industry not only in the non-occupied southern zone, but also in the
occupied zone which included some of the country’s most heavily industrialised areas. The Nord and Pas-de-Calais, with metropolitan France’s most important coal mines, were detached from the rest of France and were instead administered by the German Military Authorities in Brussels. Alsace and part of Lorraine, meanwhile, were annexed directly by Germany, and their industries were overseen by the Reich’s *Wirtschaftsgruppen* upon which the French Organisation Committees were based (Brunet 2017). In addition to these regions, three additional *départements* remained beyond the jurisdiction of Vichy’s Organisation Committees: Alger, Oran, and Constantine. Overall, Algeria remains strikingly absent from the literature on the French economy during this period. The only book-length study of the Organisation Committees (Joly 2004) fails to mention Algeria at all, while other major studies of the French economy during the Second World War similarly ignore North Africa (Kuisel 1981, Margairaz 1991, Beltran et al. 1994, Rochebrune and Hazera 1995, Dard et al. 2000). Works that focus on Algeria under Vichy, meanwhile, tend to treat questions of economic organisation as secondary, if they’re considered at all (Lévisse-Touzé 1998, Thomas 1998, Cantier 2002, Cantier and Jennings 2004).

While the first Organisation Committees in France were operational as early as September 1940, the possibility of creating such institutions in Algeria was not discussed in Vichy until the following year, once François Lehideux had replaced former trade unionist René Belin as Minister for Industrial Production, under whose ministry the Organisation Committees functioned. The situation in France had stabilised by the spring of 1941 and Vichy turned its attention to plans for the industrial development of Algeria. In July 1941, the French government approved a plan for the industrialisation of Algeria put forward by then Governor General of Algeria Maxime Weygand (Lefeuvre 1994). Under his successor, Yves-Charles Châtel, the first 15 Organisation Committees in Algeria were set up in December 1941. As in France, the first Committees created in Algeria focused on heavy industry, overseeing such
sectors as metallurgy, extractive industries, and agricultural machinery. In practice, they operated much in the same way as their French counterparts insofar as they were dominated by industrialists and excluded representation of organised labour. Their functions also replicated those of the French Committees, as the new Algerian institutions collected statistics on production, sub-allocated materials to individual firms, and coordinated production across each industry. One notable difference between the systems in Algeria and the metropole was where the Committees existed within the administration. While in France all Organisation Committees – which numbered well over 300 by 1944 – were under the Ministry for Industrial Production, the Algerian Committees were dispersed under the management of whichever service was most relevant, such as the Directorate for Public Works or for Mining (Cantier 2002: 170-172). As in France, the number of Organisation Committees soon exceeded the initial batch focused on heavy industry; by June 1942 Vichy’s then Minister for Industrial Production, Jean Bichelonne, ordered a Committee for Trade to be established in Algeria.² Similarly following the model developed in Vichy France, the Organisation Committees were complemented by a General Supply Service, analogous equivalent to the Central Bureau established in metropolitan France. This Service allocated raw materials to different industries, with the sub-allocation of these resources being the responsibility of the relevant Organisation Committee. By the autumn of 1942, the institutions responsible for the organisation of industry in Algeria closely resembled those that existed on the north shore of the Mediterranean.

The Policies of the French Resistance upon arrival in North Africa

² “Compte rendu de la séance du 18 juin 1942”, Office inter-professionnel de distribution, 68 AJ 1, Archives nationales (AN), Paris.
When the Allied forces landed in Algeria on 8 November 1942, they encountered a decidedly pro-Vichy administration that oversaw a thoroughly Vichyste economic system. Initially, the new Allied authorities adopted a cautious policy towards the existing administration. Admiral Darlan, head of the French military forces and former Prime Minister under Pétain in Vichy, was embraced by the Americans as a figure who could ensure an orderly transition of authority in North Africa from Vichy to the Allies. Darlan was undoubtedly a problematic figure, heavily associated with Vichy and its collaboration with Nazi Germany. Nevertheless, he assumed control of Algeria in the name of the ‘Maréchal empêché’ – a pretext vociferously denied by Pétain – and worked closely with the Allied forces until his assassination in December 1942. Following Darlan’s death, General Henri Giraud was appointed Civilian and Military Commander-in-Chief in North Africa, much to the consternation of his rival General Charles de Gaulle (Duroselle 1982, Crémieux-Brilhac 1996).

During these early months following the Allied landings in Algeria, the Allies adopted a policy of working closely with a number of former Vichy officials to establish a functional administration in North Africa. One telling example is that of Marcel Peyrouton, who as Vichy’s Minister for the Interior signed a series of racist laws including the infamous law of 3 October 1940 which removed Jews from a range of positions in the public sector. He was also responsible for repealing the Crémieux decree of 1870, which had granted French citizenship to Algerian Jews (Stora 2006). In the spring of 1941, after being shuffled out of his ministerial position, Peyrouton was named Vichy’s ambassador to Argentina. From there, however, he was brought to Algeria at the insistence of the Roosevelt Administration and was appointed Governor General of Algeria under General Giraud. He spent the first half of 1943 in this position, during which time he steadfastly refused to restore the Crémieux decree on the grounds that it would upset the local Muslim population – a position supported by Giraud (Peyrouton 1950). It was in this context that another former Minister for the Interior under
Vichy, Pierre Pucheu, corresponded with General Giraud about the possibility of joining the French Resistance in North Africa as well. Pucheu’s offer, made in the days following the Allied landings in November 1942, was accepted by Giraud in February 1943, and Pucheu made his way to North Africa via Spain.

Over the course of the first half of 1943, however, this tendency to collaborate with former Vichy ministers receded markedly. De Gaulle, whose famous radio address of 18 June 1940 predated the creation of the Vichy regime, unsurprisingly took a hard line against cooperating with Vichy figures. His increased influence within the French administration in liberated North Africa accounts in part for this change in policy. Having waged several battles against pro-Vichy colonial administrations as leader of the Free French (overwhelmingly supported by Allied troops and materiel), de Gaulle was loath to welcome individuals from Pétain’s inner circle within the Resistance (Thomas 1998). Moreover, in competing with the reactionary Giraud, de Gaulle opted to embrace republican values more explicitly, calling for a thorough purging (épuration) of those who had collaborated with the Vichy regime (Berstein 2001). While Giraud had initially been inclined to maintain much of Vichy’s Révolution nationale, from March 1943 he began adopting anti-Vichy rhetoric, notably in a speech largely written for him by his advisor, Jean Monnet (Monnet 1976: 271). By May 1943, when Pierre Pucheu finally arrived in North Africa, the position of the French authorities in Algeria had shifted so significantly that rather than being welcomed and given a plum job – as his predecessor as Minister of the Interior Peyrouton had been – he was instead placed under arrest for treason. The following month, the different branches of the Free French organisation, led by de Gaulle and Giraud, respectively, merged to create the French Committee of National Liberation, which acted as a functional government-in-waiting ahead of the liberation of metropolitan France and which was soon dominated by the politically savvy de Gaulle.

It was in this context in the spring of 1943 that the Free French authorities in Algeria
took their first measures regarding the New Industrial Order constructed by the Vichy regime. Although they remained rivals and disagreed on a wide range of issues, both de Gaulle and Giraud targeted the Organisation Committees in the spring of 1943. For De Gaulle’s *Comité national français*, the first goal that united all members of the Resistance was ‘the complete abolition of all Vichy legislation’, including the law of 16 August 1940 establishing the Organisation Committees.\(^3\) General Giraud was of a similar mind and as Civilian and Military Commander-in-Chief in North Africa, he was in a position to take action on the matter. On 15 May 1943, Giraud issued a decree putting into practice the then ubiquitously held goal of repealing Vichy legislation in North Africa. His decree explicitly abolished Vichy’s ‘laws and decrees concerning professional organisation’, notably the Organisation Committees and its concomitant General Supply Service which had been established in Algeria from December 1941.\(^4\) That same day he also decreed the ‘abolition of the law of 4 October 1941 concerning the social organisation of professions’, which repealed Vichy’s corporatist Labour Charter.\(^5\) Importantly, the decree allowed for a transitional period of three months before the institutions created by Vichy would be abolished; Giraud believed that this time would be sufficient ‘to set up a liberal system that takes account of the pressing necessities of the moment’. Giraud justified the decision by attacking the 1940 law that had established the Committees, arguing that the law had introduced ‘into French legislation a theory that is foreign to it: that of the *Führer* in charge, placed at the head of each organisation. We therefore had to abolish these laws’.\(^6\) This sat comfortably alongside de Gaulle’s rhetoric attacking Vichy’s decrees. During this transitional period from May to August 1943, the anti-Vichy stance regarding economic

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\(^3\) “Note du Comité National Français”, 22 April 1943, CFLN 297, Archives du ministère des Affaires étrangères (MAE), La Courneuve.


\(^5\) “Ordonnance du 15 mai 1943 portant abrogation de la loi du 4 octobre 1941 relative à l’organisation sociale des professions”, published in the *Journal officiel*, 16 May 1943, AME 34 6, FJME.

\(^6\) “La révision des lois de Vichy. Le général Giraud abroge les dispositions concernant l’organisation professionnelle”, in *La Dépêche Algérienne*, 19 May 1943, AME 34 6, FJME.
legislation reached its peak. In June 1943, André Diethelm, then Commissioner for Industrial Production, called for the unqualified dissolution of all Organisation Committees in France along with the Central Bureau, and a draft law he proposed to this effect was accepted by the CFLN on 6 July 1943 (Turpin 2004: 128-129). At the time, the CFLN’s policy was to abolish all vestiges of Vichy’s New Industrial Order in metropolitan France, just as they were doing in liberated North Africa.

In practice, however, the dismantling of Vichy’s institutions in North Africa did not go as smoothly as Giraud and de Gaulle might have hoped. The ‘liberal system that takes account of the pressing necessities of the moment’ did not spring forth as soon as the Committees’ abolition was declared. Many industrialists preferred the Committees to the previous system, since it gave them greater control over production across their industry and neutered any opposition posed by trade unions, and were consequently not especially eager to dismantle the offices. By August, days away from the expiry of the three-month transitional period inaugurated by the May decree, the CFLN ordered the re-establishment of trade union rights (liberté syndicale) in North Africa. This reflects some of the difficulties facing the resuscitation of a functional liberal system in North Africa; the Organisation Committees had replaced trade union confederations and employers’ associations, yet Giraud had failed to order their recreation when he called for the Committees’ abolition. Only belatedly, after it had become clear that the three-month deadline was not going to be met, did the CFLN allow for the reconstitution of organised labour groups. As the deadline passed in August, most of the Committees continued to exist, since their sudden disappearance would throw that industry’s production into chaos. The CFLN grudgingly kicked the dissolution of these Vichy institutions into the long grass. The lesson was not lost on CFLN officials as they looked ahead to replacing Vichy’s institutions in metropolitan France. Raymond Offroy, de Gaulle’s counsellor on

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7 “Note sur l’Organisation syndicale de la Régence”, 4 August 1943, CFLN 875, MAE.
economic affairs, later noted that ‘it was easy to abolish [the Committees], but experience in North Africa had shown that one needs to know what will take their place’ (Qtd in Kuisel 1981: 182).

By September 1943, some individuals who had observed the difficulties in destroying the Organisation Committees were beginning to agree that the policy of abolishing Vichy’s legislation immediately, as Giraud had attempted that spring, was the wrong approach. In a note prepared for Jean Monnet, an associate of his made the case for maintaining the Organisation Committees following the Liberation of France, drawing on the experience of North Africa: ‘However desirable the complete abolition of the current measures of economic control [in France] would be from a psychological, and consequently from a political point of view, it is clear that such a solution is certainly inapplicable.’ The note continues by outlining why the abolition of the Committees in the short-term would be catastrophic:

On the one hand, the shortage of raw materials will not disappear in a matter of weeks. It will therefore be necessary to let a large part of the mechanisms for rationing food and allocating industrial products subsist. On the other hand, it would be dangerous to want to simultaneously pursue organisational reforms and substitutions of personnel. It seems that the latter is more urgent than the former…

The note concludes that ‘we are therefore forced to allocate [raw materials to industry] using the bodies created three years ago: we must inevitably begin with the existing Organisation Committees’. Despite principled objection to the Vichy regime and its entire corpus of legislation, it would seem that pragmatism demanded the very opposite. As the experience of the CFLN in the summer of 1943 had shown, abolishing dirigiste institutions in the midst of

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8 “Note sur la simplification de l’organisation administrative de l’économie”, 3 September 1943, AME 33 2 8, FJME.
shortages of raw materials – and when careful coordination was needed in the context of a large-scale military campaign – and instead hoping that liberal institutions would spring forth to take their place was a policy that promised catastrophe.

While Jean Monnet and his collaborators were reaching this conclusion, another individual was making the same case to senior members of the CFLN. Before serving as Minister for the Interior in Vichy, Pierre Pucheu had handled the portfolio for Industrial Production, and as such oversaw the vast apparatus of industrial organisation constructed in the early months of the regime. During his incarceration in North Africa, Pucheu was visited regularly by CFLN officials such as Maurice Couve de Murville, René Mayer, and Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, who discussed various policy issues with him, taking advantage of his intimate knowledge of the state of affairs in France. He urged the members of the CFLN to keep Vichy’s economic institutions in place, assuring them that they were ‘in no way the expression of a doctrine deliberately created or adopted by the men in Vichy’, but rather a ‘response to the exigencies of war’. As such, there were no ideological grounds for dismembering the economic bodies created by Vichy. Pucheu described at length the advantages of maintaining Vichy’s institutions following the liberation of metropolitan France. He explained that the post-liberation government would ‘have access, in the ministries as well as in the Sections [of the Central Bureau] and the Committees, to an operating staff and to senior and middle management, trained through a long and difficult experience […] many of whom will have developed sound expertise which could be adapted immediately to the new situation’. He continued:

More importantly, rather than beginning from scratch when establishing priorities, operating procedures, and action plans, these new individuals responsible for running the economy will have at their disposal precious documentation. Thanks to the statistical archives of the Sections [of the Central Bureau] and the Committees, they
will know immediately, for all branches of industry and commerce, all aspects of pre-war economic activity and also how things have changed under the challenges of the Occupation. With full knowledge of the facts, they will be able to deal with immediate challenges and to seamlessly manage the implementation of their own economic management model in accordance with the doctrinal pillars they will have developed for the post-transitional period. (Pucheu 1948: 344)

Pucheu thus presented Vichy’s industrial organisation as both indispensably useful and devoid of any ideological underpinnings. The allegedly apolitical experts who had overseen the French economy for the previous three years could similarly be counted on to do so for the incoming regime, who would find the Organisation Committees as essential as the Vichy government had. Such an argument demonstrates the emerging ideas of technocracy and the depoliticisation of the economy that had been developing in Vichy and would reach their apogee in the 1950s and 1960s in France and North Africa alike (Dulong 1997, Dard 2000). Furthermore, Pucheu would have made these arguments at the very time when the CFLN was witnessing the difficulties of trying to abolish the Organisation Committees root and branch in North Africa. In this context, Pucheu’s assurances of the pragmatic utility of Vichy’s institutions – not to mention their supposed ideological neutrality – were given to members of the CFLN precisely as they groped towards an industrial policy for liberated France.

By September, Monnet himself had been fully converted to the cause of maintaining Vichy’s system. He asserted that ‘according to all reports from France’, including Pucheu’s, ‘a significant part of the [Vichy] administration has been courageous, competent, and, overall, managed extremely complex and difficult problems very well’. He added:

I think that we should therefore plan on using the existing administrative apparatus in its entirety. In this case, insofar as it is necessary, we should study how to adapt the
organisation of the Committees so that, following the liberation, any new managers can be neatly slotted into the existing administration. We should also consider which individuals currently in key positions should be maintained and which should be replaced and, if possible, by whom.

Monnet went on to justify maintaining Vichy’s institutions using a line of argument similarly employed by Pucheu: that Vichy’s system of industrial organisation was bereft of ideology. France had found itself faced with a shortage of raw materials, a situation that Monnet insisted had been shared by ‘all the countries in the war’. He insisted that in all the countries involved in the Second World War, ‘the solution had inevitably been the same: complete control by the State of the economy, of production, and of allocation [and] control of exports and imports’. Given how widespread this economic approach was, Monnet concluded that ‘it is not a question of opting for one economic system or another. We must make France flourish with resources inevitably inferior to her needs. No other solution is possible’ aside from maintaining Vichy’s institutions. While Monnet had insisted six months earlier that Giraud declare all Vichy legislation – including its laws on industrial organisation – null and void, by the end of the summer of 1943 he was demanding the maintenance of Vichy’s ‘existing administrative apparatus in its entirety’. It was a dramatic volte-face informed by the failed attempt to abolish the Organisation Committees in North Africa earlier that year.

Whether influenced by Pucheu, by Monnet and his collaborators, or by their own observations of the botched attempt to replace the Organisation Committees in North Africa, by the winter of 1943-44 the majority of the members of the CFLN had agreed that Vichy’s industrial institutions should be maintained. The strength of this consensus can be seen by the CFLN’s reaction to its strongest dissenter, André Diethelm. Having called for the dissolution

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9 “Note sur la première étape de la reconstruction en France”, 22 September 1943, AME 33 1, FJME.
of the Organisation Committees in the summer of 1943, Diethelm remained steadfast in his opposition to preserving Vichy’s institutions, even while his colleagues systematically reversed their position. In early February, Diethelm circulated a report making an impassioned case for the abolition of Vichy’s economic institutions: ‘The unpopularity of these approximately 300 bodies, their never-ending quarrels over allocation [of raw materials, and] the tyranny they exert over the small- and medium-sized enterprises in their industry leave no doubt as to the answer that the Assembly must give to the question of abolishing and liquidating the Committees’. The lack of support Diethelm found among his colleagues was striking. The next day, Louis Joxe, who ran the CFLN’s General Secretariat, prepared a lengthy critique of Diethelm’s position and sent it to de Gaulle. On 3 March, de Gaulle reshuffled a single individual in the CFLN’s Cabinet: Diethelm was removed from Industrial Production and demoted to a sub-ministerial position under de Gaulle’s own watch. From that point on, it was understood that the CFLN’s industrial policy would be based on keeping in place Vichy’s vast network of institutions for organising industrial production.

**Planning Europe**

The clumsy attempt to abolish the Organisation Committees in North Africa prompted a reconsideration of the policy of simply repealing all Vichy legislation. For Monnet, using Vichy’s institutions to restore France’s economy was not only an economic priority, but indeed a political one. He argued that ‘a national recovery, realised as quickly as possible, is the goal, so that France can play its role in the world, and first and foremost in Europe’. He warned that

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10 “Note du Commissaire au ravitaillement et à la production”, 9 February 1944, F 60 914, AN.
11 “Note pour le général de Gaulle”, 10 February 1944, F 60 914, AN.
‘in developing its foreign policy, the CFLN cannot disregard the immediate problems of raw materials of unprecedented scope which will arise with the liberation of metropolitan France’. Ensuring that French industry could run as smoothly as possible following the liberation was a necessary precondition for the restoration of France as an economic power – which was in turn a precondition for its ability to play a decisive role in international affairs, particularly in Europe.\(^{12}\)

The question of the post-war organisation of Europe was a frequent topic of discussion among the members of the CFLN in Algeria and by the summer of 1943 Jean Monnet was already setting out his ideas of a post-war European order. According to Monnet, ‘France is the only member of the Allies that is European’ – a position that reflects his evolving view of Great Britain’s place in the world as a result of the war – and that ‘it is therefore only from France that the conception of a new European order can come’. Looking at Nazi Germany’s inability to increase production significantly in 1943, Monnet concluded that ‘the nations of Europe are too small’ and thus ‘need much larger markets’. He criticised the national preoccupation with ‘so-called key industries’ such as coal and steel, suggesting that a European rather than a national organisation of these industries would be best\(^{13}\) – a theme to which Monnet would return throughout the 1940s and which would ultimately inform his plan to pool the French and German coal and steel industries in the form of the European Coal and Steel Community (Milward 1984, Hitchcock 1998).

Thus it was France’s role in organising a post-war European order that preoccupied Monnet and many members of the CFLN in Algiers in the autumn of 1943. In October, Monnet advocated some sort of economic union between France, Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands.\(^{14}\) At that time he also favoured dividing Germany into a number of smaller states

\(^{12}\) “Note de reflexion de Jean Monnet”, 8 October 1943. AME 33 1, FJME.

\(^{13}\) “Note de réflexion de Jean Monnet”, 5 August 1943, AME 33 1, FJME.

\(^{14}\) “Note de reflexion de Jean Monnet”, 8 October 1943, AME 33 1, FJME.
which could then be integrated into this European entity. In a discussion with members of the CFLN one Sunday afternoon in Algiers, de Gaulle voiced his scepticism of the prospect of ‘French and Germans being part of a single economic union’ after the experience of the war. He did, however, support the idea of an economic union of France and the Low Countries, and ‘maybe Italy, Spain, and Switzerland’, a suggestion with which René Mayer concurred. It was agreed that any decision on the future of Europe, however, could not be taken ‘without being better informed on the conditions and the consequences of such an economic organisation in Europe. Studies of this question could hardly be pursued in Algiers where [the CFLN] lack[ed] documentation and particularly statistics’ on French industry.\textsuperscript{15} This information would shortly be provided in the form of what Pucheu had called the ‘precious documentation’ compiled by Vichy’s Organisation Committees over the course of the war. When Jean Monnet developed his national plan for the modernisation of French industry in 1946, the Monnet Plan, he relied extensively on the documentation developed by the Organisation Committees since 1940.\textsuperscript{16}

For Monnet, it was vital that ‘European collaboration must not be limited to the establishment of a customs union’. He reasoned that

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the removal of customs barriers demands the cooperation of member states in a number of domains: finances, price, industrial production, agriculture… The main objective of this overall project would be the rational allocation of productive activities among the participating states, taking into account natural resources, geographic and demographic conditions… This European collaboration would demand the creation of international institutions responsible for implementing this concerted plan.\textsuperscript{17}
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\textsuperscript{15} “Conversation du dimanche 17 octobre 1943”, 17 October 1943, AME 33 1, FJME.
\textsuperscript{16} “Projet de résolution soumis au Conseil du Plan. Objectifs généraux pour l’activité française”, 13 March 1946, AMF 2 3, FJME.
\textsuperscript{17} “Note de réflexion de Jean Monnet, Quelques éléments pour l’élaboration d’une thèse française de la reconstruction européenne”, 3 August 1943, AME 33 2, FJME.
By August 1943, Monnet was thus describing European-wide institutions that would rationally coordinate industrial production, as well as other economic activity, precisely as Vichy’s Organisation Committees had.

It must be remembered that these discussions of the post-war organisation in Europe were highly subjective. As the participants themselves realised at the time, the implementation of such plans depended on a set of favourable economic and political circumstances in an unknowable future. Similar and usually woolly plans for some sort of European entity in an eventual post-war period were discussed in many quarters during the war, but few if any can be considered a veritable foundation for the post-war integration that occurred in Western Europe from the 1950s (Lipgens 1985, Bruneteau 2006, Heyde 2010). But what is important to note in these discussions within the CFLN in Algiers is the strategic thinking behind any kind of European cooperation. They agreed that any post-war initiative for closer integration among European states would need to come from France, and for this France would need to restore its credibility and influence as a world power. This political power, however, was dependent on France’s revival as an economic power, which could best be achieved by keeping Vichy’s vast administrative system in place rather than trying to dismantle it immediately on ideological grounds. The disappointing attempt to do so in Algeria in the summer of 1943 prompted the CFLN to embrace the policy it would maintain until well after the liberation: to keep Vichy’s industrial organisation in place as the most efficient way of reviving French economic and hence political power.

For the members of the CFLN, a similarly indispensable condition of France regaining its international position was the maintenance of its empire. The credibility and prestige of the Free French had been greatly enhanced by military victories – heavily supported by the Allies – in French colonies still administered by Vichy. In seeking to reassert its traditional position as a great power after the war, particularly against the emergence of the American and Soviet
superpowers, France would inevitably look to its empire. De Gaulle’s Brazzaville declaration in January 1944 and the creation of the French Union two years later reaffirmed the centrality of the empire in the goal of restoring French *grandeur*. Yet just as European cooperation was meant to shore up France’s international position, it was understood that this cooperation could also be extended to the African continent. According to this Eurafircan idea, developed during the interwar period, ‘European integration would come about only through the coordinated exploitation of Africa, and Africa could be efficiently exploited only if European states cooperated and combined their economic and political capacities’ (Hansen and Jonsson 2014).

Monnet’s observation in August 1943 that ‘the nations of Europe are too small’ and ‘need much larger markets’ implied not only cooperation between France and its immediate neighbours within Europe, but also the development of Africa, with Algeria being the lynchpin of this vision. This Eurafircan ambition was held not only by Monnet, but also by de Gaulle, René Mayer, Robert Schuman, and myriad other individuals who went on to play crucial roles in the development of post-war European integration (Montarsolo 2010). Following the Schuman Declaration in 1950, Monnet and Mayer (the latter being the deputy for Constantine at the time) suggested to Schuman that Africa could be offered ‘as a dowry to Europe […] to seduce the Germans’ (qtd in Hansen and Jonsson 2014: 123). Gérard Bossuat, meanwhile, has demonstrated the centrality of Eurafirc to the negotiations for the Treaty of Rome in 1957 (Bossuat 2003). Far from simply being the location where French decision-makers happened to discuss post-war plans for France and for Europe, North Africa informed their thinking and continued to do so well after the end of the war.

Following the liberation of France, the economic institutions created by Vichy in the summer of 1940 were indeed maintained and used precisely as Pucheu and Monnet had advocated in Algiers in 1943. Within a year of the establishment of the GPRF in Paris, however, criticism of these Vichy-era institutions began to grow. In an attempt to improve
their image, then Minister for Industrial Production (and later resident minister of Algeria) Robert Lacoste rechristened the Organisation Committees ‘Professional Offices’, but this ploy fooled nobody, not least because members of the new Offices continued to refer to the institutions as ‘Organisation Committees’.18 Within the French Government the usefulness of Vichy’s institutions was widely acknowledged, and Lacoste’s ministry confirmed that ‘regardless of political developments in the months ahead, it will always be necessary to maintain bodies equivalent to [the Organisation Committees] in order to execute their functions’.19

By 1946, however, the opprobrium of maintaining institutions that had been so explicitly associated with the Vichy regime and with economic collaboration threatened the existence of the Committees. In January 1946, Jean Monnet created so-called ‘Modernisation Commissions’, which he described as the ‘keystones’ of the new General Commissariat for the Plan that drew up and implemented the Monnet Plan. These new Commissions replicated the functions of Vichy’s Organisation Committees, and Monnet recruited many of the individuals who had run the wartime Committees to join his new Commissions; Eugène Roy, the President of the Modernisation Commission for Steel, for example, had served as Vice-President of that industry’s Organisation Committee for the duration of the war. Less than a week after the first Commissions had been created in 1946, Monnet started lobbying ministers and members of the National Assembly to abolish the Organisation Committees and to have their responsibilities ‘transfer[ed...] to bodies that are genuinely professional and democratic’, namely Monnet’s own Modernisation Commissions (‘Simplification de la réglementation économique’, 24 January 1946, AMF 1 6, FJME). This strategy proved successful; by April of that year the National Assembly approved the dissolution of the Committees, while their functions, much

18 “Note. Objet: réforme des CO”, 16 February 1945, Ministry for Industrial Production, F 12 10025, AN.
19 “Note pour M. le Secrétaire Général à la Production”, undated note, but between March and October 1945, F 12 10063, AN.
of their staff, and their ‘precious documentation’ remained with Monnet’s Commissions. Recalling Offroy’s observations that ‘it was easy to abolish [the Committees], but experience in North Africa had shown that one needs to know what will take their place’ (Qtd in Kuisel 1981: 182), it would seem that this lesson was not lost on Monnet. Crucially, he ensured that the Commissions meant to succeed the Organisation Committees were firmly in place before he began demanding the dissolution of the Vichy-era bodies he had defended since 1943 (Brunet 2017). While the abolition of the Organisation Committees in North Africa had been chaotic, the seamless transition from Committees to Commissions under Monnet’s watch suggest that he had learned from the North African experience.

While the institutional architecture of the Monnet Plan drew on Vichy’s Organisation Committees, it also provided the blueprint for another set of institutions proposed by Monnet: the ECSC. Robert Marjolin, Monnet’s deputy, recalled that ‘the functional model of the Monnet Plan was transposed to the European level’ with the creation of the ECSC (Marjolin 1986). Indeed, the initial architecture of the ECSC was proposed by Monnet and his colleagues, although this evolved significantly over the course of the negotiations. More specifically, shortly after Robert Schuman proposed the pooling of French and German coal and steel industries in May 1950, Monnet outlined plans for the creation of two Modernisation Commissions – for coal and steel, respectively – at the European level. These Commissions, based on the existing ones created in 1946 as part of the Monnet Part, would ‘undertake the necessary studies for the entirety of the industries for which the High Authority is responsible [and] liaise with the existing bodies for technical research in the participating countries’.20 Ultimately, the proposed Committees evolved into the Directorates for Coal and for Steel, important if decidedly low-profile components of the ECSC. Interestingly, these institutions traced their origins back not only to the Monnet Plan but to the Vichy-era Organisation

20 “Note sur les missions de la Haute Autorité”, 7 June 1950, 81 AJ 152, AN.
Committees which were maintained in post-war France as a result of the CFLN’s experience in North Africa.

Conclusion

Over the summer of 1943, the CFLN reversed its policy on the fate of Vichy’s economic institutions responsible for the coordination of economic production. While maintaining the rhetoric that all Vichy legislation was ‘null and void’, it was clear that this would not apply equally to all of Vichy’s laws. The turning point for the CFLN was the attempt to abolish the Organisation Committees in Algeria. In this case, declaring their abolition and the spontaneous restoration of a functional liberal system within three months proved to be utterly unrealistic. Ironically, at precisely the time when the CFLN became increasingly republican and publicly pledged to repeal the entirety of Vichy’s legislation, it became ever-more supportive of maintaining the entirety of Vichy’s industrial administration in place.

This paradoxical position can be explained by the CFLN’s preoccupation with France’s international position following the war. As discussions of France’s post-war role in Europe highlighted, it was imperative that French industrial output recover as quickly as possible following the liberation, a goal that was better served by statist, dirigeiste institutions to coordinate production and allocate raw materials than by a return to the liberal model that had existed under the Third Republic. By the spring of 1944, members of the CFLN understood that ‘France’s economy will remain managed (dirigée) for quite some time’, as even doctrinaire liberals within the Resistance ‘conceded regretfully that such economic management would be necessary’. 21 Given its economic and political priorities, the membership of the CFLN in

21 “Rôle de la Commission économique”, 7 April 1944, CFLN 686, MAE.
Algiers was convinced that even though the Organisation Committees were ‘anti-democratic
[and] the creations most characteristic of the Vichy administration’, it would be a grave error
to ‘destroy them on principle’.22 This reversal of policy can only be fully understood by
considering the experience of abolishing the Organisation Committees in North Africa in 1943.
The survival of Vichy’s Organisation Committees, their absorption into the Monnet Plan, and
their serving as a model for components of the ECSC presents a striking case of institutional
continuity across regime change and the launch of the European project.

22 “Rapport Leprince”, 26 January 1944, CFLN 686, MAE.
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North Africa and the Common Agricultural Policy:

From Colonial Pact to European Integration

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Abstract

This article studies one of the cornerstones of European Integration, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), by looking at the colonial context in which it evolved. It argues that the construction of a supranational market for agricultural goods in Europe was influenced by previous experiences with empire, especially in the French case. It also shows how the colonial concerns underpinned debates on the future trajectory of the CAP, notably by focusing on the 1958 Conference of Stresa. Lastly, it shows how decolonization influenced a shift from colonial development to the policy of Cooperation, which also coincided with the introduction of the CAP in 1962. This period also witnessed the deliberate rebranding of colonial policies in North Africa in the form of Europe’s “Mediterranean” policy.

Keywords: common agricultural policy; Algeria; European Integration; decolonization.

With the rise of far-right populism in Europe, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), has lost some of its postwar lustre. At the Salon of Agriculture in February of 2017, the French Presidential candidate of the National Front (FN), Marine Le Pen, called for the liquidation of
the CAP, reasserting her claim that it has been a “total failure.” This statement exemplifies the broader trend of rising Euroscepticism. Certainly, her assertion that decisions regarding agriculture should be made on the level of the nation-state rather than by the EU is poised to attract the vote of farmers in France. Recent polls have suggested that, for the first time in the history of the Fifth Republic, the right of the political spectrum might be outflanked by a representative of the extreme right among French citizens who work in agriculture. Yet historically, perhaps more than any other policy of the European Union, the CAP has been seen as a milestone achievement with singular symbolic, economic, and political significance. Rooted in postwar memories of food shortages and political instability, it occupied most of the energies of those working towards European integration in the years following the Treaty of Rome in 1957; in the period between 1958 and 1965, 90 percent of all Community legislation related to the CAP (Knudsen 2009: 3).

The CAP has also been at the core of expansionist narratives of the EU. These generally claim that the borders of this supranational organization have been necessarily pushing outwards since its inception. Yet our present political moment, and the official launching of the “Brexit”, offer significant reasons to re-evaluate this view. This is especially true given that a key component of this populist rise is a resurgence of xenophobia or racism, often (but not only) directed at those coming from North Africa. In other words, an economic protectionism driven by national economic priorities often dovetails with a reinforced notion of national identity. If the former is directed against the technocrats in Brussels, the latter is articulated in culturalist discourses claiming that Muslims must try harder to embrace so-called “European values.” As this article will show, the management of colonial populations and the rising

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tendency towards technocracy were intimately related in the postwar project known as European integration.

This article focuses on the founding years of the CAP, which were not defined by confident expansion, but rather by contested attempts to incorporate Europe’s colonial hinterlands in North Africa. The goals of the CAP sought to address the main problems of agriculture after the Second World War by improving food supply, raising consumption levels, protecting family farms, and addressing the issues of low income and overproduction. While the French fought for the incorporation of its colonial territories in the nascent CAP, the wave of decolonization in the early 1960s, combined with the reticence of other European countries, stalled the inclusion of North Africa in the agricultural markets that were designed for the “Europe of Six.” Moreover, the experience of empire provided a model of how territories with different degrees of economic development, varied forms of governance, and different social structures, could be integrated into a common set of market arrangements. Indeed, as the work of Frederick Cooper has shown, layered notions of federalism, sovereignty, and identity had been thought out in the colonies in the decades before these arrangements were negotiated for application on the European continent (2014).

This article argues that France’s colonial activities in the Maghreb are an important factor for understanding the trajectory of the CAP. It first provides an overview of why agriculture has been such an important social and economic battleground, analysing how paysan politics were influenced by France’s turn away from empire, and towards Europe, in the early years of the Fifth Republic. The second section examines how France’s imperial concerns – especially in North Africa– led to a body of expertise that underpinned the major milestones leading up to articulation of the CAP as a policy in June 1960. These include the introduction of the Coal and Steel Community (1951), the signing of the Treaty of Rome (1957), and the convening of the Conference of Stresa (1958). Thirdly, this article follows
negotiations with Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco in regards to their role in European agriculture after 1962 and shows how the policy of Cooperation and the framework of the Mediterranean became the main orientations for development that helped France distance itself from its colonial history in North Africa.

**Paysan Politics**

Marine Le Pen’s bold commentary at the Salon of Agriculture is hardly surprising. The event has served as a political soap-box for a long line of French politicians; indeed, it is an obligatory stop on the campaign trail for an aspiring president, which attests to the central symbolic and political importance of *la France profonde*. The mega-fair has been less kind to other politicians. Nicolas Sarkozy, the former President known for his Americanized, “bling” image, was visibly out of place during his visit to the Salon in 2008. These unflattering traits were exemplified by the polemic in which he told a salon-goer, “get out of here, jerk” (*casse-toi, pauvre con*), after the individual had insulted him. Clearly, no one has mastered the combination of statesmanship and folk charm, and the ability to pat a cow’s hide with gravitas like, Jacques Chirac.³ Casually tasting regional ciders, and posing for photos with various forms of livestock, he is widely known for calling the cows “works of art”.

Chirac, who was president from 1995 to 2007 started his career as the Minister of Agriculture from 1972 to 1975. During this time, he strengthened the hand of the FNSEA (*Fédération nationale des syndicats d’exploitants agricoles*) and consolidated the historically close connection between the state and farmers in France (Sheningate 2001). Established in 1947, the FNSEA played a key role in construction the CAP in the 1950s, as the association

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³ Chirac only missed the event only once between 1972 and 2011, due to a car accident.
was given access to policy circles in the 1950s and militated for the protection of farming interests. These organizations tended to see the construction of a European agriculture as both a threat and possible remedy for the malaise from which French agriculture suffered (Bivar 2010, 65). Yet while the demands of farmers are often studied in terms of economic self-interest, these associations also made decisions based on notions of the symbolism of paysan identity. For example, farmers traditionally shied away from direct income payments, as they preferred to uphold a self-image of being “individual entrepreneurs” (Cini and Borragán 2016, 311).

Looking at the symbolic resonance of French agriculture is key to understanding the trajectory of the CAP, as well as its link with colonial projects. The symbolic role of agriculture in the colonization of North Africa has received considerable scholarly attention (Sessions 2011; Davis 2007; Swearingen 1987). One agricultural expert writing in *Agriculture Algérienne*, the official publication of the Direction of Agriculture and Forests in Algeria that served as a liaison with the agricultural profession, worried about:

> …social discrimination at the expense of paysans, whose traditions, moral values seem to be condemned by history. Those whose interests are tied to the old state of affairs have an exaggerated tendency to proclaim the absolutely original character of agriculture in the economic life of the country. From there, they are dangerously close to stating an opposition between a rural civilization that carries all values and a destructive and devouring urban civilization.⁴

Echoing themes reaching back to the 19th century, agriculture was not only an economic but also a moral project, which was obligated to protect “peasant civilization” in the face of...

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increasing threats from urbanization and industrialization. The project of the Third Republic, of turning “peasants into Frenchmen” came with an attendant anxiety about a detachment from the values of “true” France (Weber 1976). Subsequently, an attachment to the soil had been a defining feature of conservative political movements from General Boulanger at the end of the 19th century, reaching a high point in the ideology of Vichy, and continuing in the figure of the populist politician Pierre Poujade in the last years of the Fourth Republic.

This sentiment was dramatically taken up by a terrorist faction of the settler population, the OAS (Organisation armée secrète), which understood the legitimacy of French Algeria to be literally rooted in the North African soil. The famed sociologist, Raymond Aron, postulated that the most radical elements of the peasantry in France shared the same enemy with the OAS: the liberal, parliamentary republic (Aron 2016 [1961]). In the aftermath of Algerian independence, the MAFA (Maison des agriculteurs et des Français d’Afrique du Nord) was created in 1963, creating a specific lobbying group in France for farmers who had repatriated from North Africa. Their efforts centred on “all the injustices that have not yet been rectified that our compatriots endured.”5 The sense of victimization and bitterness that was felt by the settler population regarding their repatriation to France also gave rise to specific channels that sought influence in the organization and politicization of French agriculture.

The Congress of Stresa, which set the guiding principles for the CAP in July of 1958, was initiated by the French government, which sought larger markets for the hexagon’s agricultural production. As the American journalist Walter Lippmann once stated, the European Economic Community was essentially a deal between French agriculture and German industry (Knudsen 2009, 7). At the same time, French officials in Algeria viewed the Constantine Plan, the name of the ambitious social and economic program introduced by

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5 See the MAFA website at: http://www.mafa-pn.fr/pages/la-mafa/historique-de-la-mafa.html. Consulted on 07 April 2017. I would like to thank Sung Choi for bringing this to my attention.
Charles de Gaulle in Algeria in 1958, as a way to ensure the realization of treaty of Rome. Frustrated metropolitan farmers also paid attention to colonial development, demanding that they too, receive a “Constantine Plan” (Tavernier and Mendras 1961: 668). Similarly, it was not uncommon to see the regional development plans for Brittany and Algeria as direct rivals (2016 [1961]). De Gaulle himself is reported to have stated, “From now on, after the Algerian issue, agriculture is our largest problem. And if we do not regulate it, we can have another Algerian issue on our own soil” (Knudsen 2009: 79). Thus, for both the French President and the farmers who regularly rose up in protest against him, the question of agricultural development and economic integration spanned both sides of the Mediterranean.

Mindful of their colonial interests, French observers at Stresa worried that their European counterparts, especially the Dutch, were more inclined to open-market solutions for agriculture. They underscored that the emphasis had been on evolution rather than conservation, pointing to the speech of the German President of the European Economic Community (EEC), Walter Hallstein on 3 July where he invoked the influence of the Common agricultural market on “those models [of farms] that are most lively.” This sentiment that was echoed by the Dutch Sicco Mansholt two days later when he invoked the likelihood that “an entire series of sub-marginal enterprises would disappear”. Another divergence between Dutch and French vision had to do with the colonies: in their internal reports, French planners exclaimed their displeasure that Mansholt’s 1959 report did not mention the overseas colonies. Yet regardless of which version would prevail, there was little doubt that the CAP’s elimination of trade barriers would threaten both metropolitan and colonial farmers. It was in this context of economic restructuring and integration that Raymond Cartier proposed his famous doctrine

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6 Archives Nationales d’Outre-Mer (ANOM), 81F/2260, Mémorandum sur l’application du Traité de Rome à l’Algérie, Délégation Générale du Gouvernement, Alger, no date.
8 Ibid, 20.
of Cartierism, according to which empire – especially Algeria - was viewed as a financial burden rather than economic boon (Marseille 1984).

Seen from North Africa, the elimination of state subsidies was especially dangerous given the high cost of transporting crops across the Mediterranean. As the economics and politics of empire became increasingly untenable, the years surrounding the Congress of Stresa saw a gradual turning away from an imperial France and the embrace of a European France. As the previous paragraph makes clear, there was an emerging tension between European technocracy and French terroir, and the need to balance economic and political concerns was at the heart of negotiations around the CAP. For French administrators, this was a phenomenon that France had already faced in the colonies, a precedent that was not lost on those at the Ministry of Agriculture as they repeatedly advocated for the inclusion of colonial possessions in any agreement. The Gaullist myth that a turn away from empire was dictated by the inevitable tide of history (Shepard 2006), was far from secure in these early years of European integration. Instead, in the 1950s, empire was both a model for, and integral component of, European integration.

Precursors to Stresa

The postwar years saw a gradual reorientation of French agriculture as administrators seemed less concerned with exporting products to the Franc Zone, and increasingly sought to secure a European outlet for French crops. Yet this period also saw a competing set of supranational units that were organized along political and economic lines. The Franc Zone and the French Union were part of France’s apparatus for ruling overseas France; the former outlining economic measures, and the latter changing the conditions of political incorporation. It has
largely been acknowledged that France’s imperial and European commitments were seen as competing interests, yet this was not immediately clear to French administrators who sought to build a nascent Europe in the late 1950s. The Franc Zone, for example, first created in 1939, was not seen as obsolete relic of empire, but rather as a valuable precursor to the CAP; in other words, the two were not seen as mutually exclusive projects. It should also be pointed out that while North Africa was indeed part of a larger imperial framework, the link between French business interests and colonialism in the Maghreb was particularly strong (Saul 2016; Guignard 2010).

In an article on the Franc Zone in published in 1956, René de Saint-Legier, a member of the DAEF (*Direction des Affaires Économiques et Financières*) at the Quai d’Orsay, who later become an advisor to the General Secretary of the Presidency (*conseiller au secrétariat général de la présidence*) from 1964 to 1969, wrote that there were obvious continuities between the French Union and the Franc Zone. While the former had been created by the constitution of the Fourth Republic and offered a more “nuanced” understanding of empire, the Franc Zone was more relevant in policy circles, which reflected the privileged place of economic preoccupations (Saint-Legier 1956: 260). According to Saint-Legier, the Franc Zone represented “a space of privileged relations organized around a dominant economy” (1956, 277). He went on to warn against the centrifugal tendencies that might come to dominate the monetary union, stating: “A delicate equilibrium should be realized, that allows one to offer legitimate political satisfactions to sovereign or autonomous members of the [Franc] Zone without putting its homogeneity at risk” (1956, 278). Clearly, he saw no need for France to choose between its colonial history rooted in the French Union and the European horizons that characterized its relationship with the European Economic Community (CEE) or the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OECE).

The policies regarding trade and customs taxes in the French Union were extremely
complicated. In Algeria, for example, wheat, wine, and olive oil were fully integrated with French markets after the Second World War, while the organization of the markets in figs and dates was specifically Algerian.\(^9\) In France’s overseas territories, a price support system was introduced, offering certain colonial products sold in France, such as bananas, coffee, and cotton prices that were above global prices, in the hopes of encouraging production (Adda and Smouts 1989, 124). Farmers were also protected from fluctuations in the global market by the FNRCPOM (Fonds national de régularisation des cours des produits d’outre-mer), which was created under the government of Pierre Mendès France in 1955. Yet these agreements were often conducted on a country-by-country and product-by-produce basis; the task of coordinating these various arrangements into one framework would provide a valuable experience for the CAP. In one memo on French agriculture and the Common Market an official remarked that the diversity of French agriculture might indicate that current prices in France could serve as a baseline for setting standard prices in Europe, before continuing:

> From a similar perspective, one can imagine that the solutions applied in France to organize agricultural markets will be useful examples for the institutions of the [European] Community, precisely because we have faced very diverse situations as a result of the variety of our products, the expansive geographical scope of [our] production, and the economic and social disparities that exist between the different departments of the Metropole and Algeria.\(^{10}\)

In thinking about how economic and social disparities could be integrated into one economic system, this memo explicitly named Algeria a model for Europe. Given the vagueness of the

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\(^{10}\) Archives Nationales Pierrefitte (AN-P), Ministry of Agriculture, “L’Agriculture Française et le Marché Commun”, 10 August 1958, 3.
provisions for agriculture found in Article 39.2 of the Treaty of Rome, European countries haggled over the precise character of the CAP. The challenge of finding a singular system to govern agriculture in light of the major differences that existed among various regions, a major source of concern, had a clear precedent in France’s organization of empire.

The importance of empire in the architecture of European integration was not lost on colonial subjects, especially European settlers. They pointed out that empire has allowed France to become a leader on the world stage, and that attempt to negotiate a settlement without taking into account imperial territories was fundamentally unjust. In terms of agriculture specifically, discussions on the integration of European markets dates to the interwar period when a series of pan-European conferences were dedicated to the subject. The first historical milestone in integrating European markets was the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951, which set up a single market in these two products among the Europe of Six. Also known as the Schuman Plan, its goals were as much political as they were economic. Yet Algeria, along with France’s “properly” colonial territories,\textsuperscript{11} were not included in this economic community (Lynch 1997, 175). This provoked a passionate outcry by an Algerian member of the French Senate in debates on the ratification on the treaty April of 1952. Abdennour Tamzali protested this “grave lacunae”, saying that:

Elected on a program that inscribed the legal and economic credo of the intangibility and indivisibility of our economic union with the metropole, a guarantee of Algeria’s economic stability, you will understand – Mister Minister - our astonishment in seeing Algeria separated from the new economic community in construction by this text.\textsuperscript{12}

\textsuperscript{11} Since Algeria was legally three French departments, it was not technically considered a colony but an integral part of metropolitan France.

\textsuperscript{12} Journal Officiel de la République Française (JORF), Conseil de la République, Débats Parlementaires, 2 April 1952, 793.
He claimed that the agreement for coal and steel relegated France’s relationship with Algeria to a form of “concubinage”. Additionally, he lamented that Italy, which did not have considerable quantities or either carbon or steel, was included in the agreement, while Algeria had been left out. Added fuel to the fire, he asserted that politicians had not merely “overlooked” the role of Algeria; its exclusion was nothing less than an “act of faith committed willfully”. Arguments for the inclusion of Algeria in a common economic zone could be made on a moral as well as economic basis; after all, if European integration was premised on ensuring the peace and prosperity of Europe, then it was surely hypocritical to exclude North Africa, which had not only provided France with food-supplies during WWI, but also housed the Free French in their struggle against the Vichy regime.

If the so-called “Black Pool” gave short thrift to France’s overseas possessions in North Africa, the “Green Pool”, which attempted to engineer a single market for selected agricultural products, would be careful not to repeat this mistake. Known as the “Schuman Plan for agriculture”, Pierre Pflimlin, the French Minister of Agriculture had proposed unifying European markets in wheat, sugar, wine and milk. While his proposition ultimately failed, Pierre Moussa, a director of Economic Affairs at the Ministry of Overseas France, is often held responsible for the inclusion of France’s colonies in the Common Market. High level politicians such as Gaston Defferre also argued that France should not enter into any European agreements without the inclusion of its colonial possessions (Hansen and Jonsson 2014, 149).

Thus it was unsurprising that during a discussion in the National Assembly in January 1957, less than a year before the conference of Stresa, most parliamentarians agreed on the need to include colonial markets in the emerging policy of the CAP. Jules Ninine, a socialist politician born in Guadeloupe who represented Cameroun concluded that France must ask its European neighbours to help with the development of the overseas territories, stating: “[T]he only defensible position (la seule position défendable)...is the integration of France and its
overseas territory in a Common Market”. Pierre-Henri Teitgen, a Christian Democrat who had worked closely with Robert Schuman in 1949-1950, and who subsequently became the Minister of Overseas Territories, advocated this inclusion in even starker terms: “We cannot accept … either subordination or isolation. To avoid the unacceptable dilemma [of choosing between Europe and our colonies] there is only one solution, which is Europe, and along with it, Eurafrica”. What this vision of Eurafrica would mean for agriculture, however, was anyone’s guess.

The Treaty of Rome had indicated a general orientation for a Common Agricultural Policy, but did not specify how this entity would be constructed. That task was delegated to the Conference of Stresa that was held in Italy in July 1958. Sicco Mansholt presided over the meeting and advocated the opening of internal markets to increase inter-European trade. Other issues that were raised included poor farm structure, low incomes, surplus production, and obstacles to exportation (Leboutte 2008, 516). Mansholt had worked on a tea plantation in the Dutch West Indies in his youth, and scholars have invoked this experience to explain his interest in agricultural modernization and concerns regarding inequality (Knudsen 2009, 91; Merriënboer 2009). They have also hailed Mansholt’s efforts at Stresa as an important psychological victory in the battle for European integration (Fennell 1997, 21). Yet the emotive valance of the Conference of Stresa was not only European in nature; the conference proceedings also included many discussions of the relationship between Europe and its colonial territories.

As the French Ministry of Agriculture prepared for the conference, they drafted a strategy that would actively highlight France’s colonial interests, especially in regards to

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13 National Assembly, Session of 17 January 1957, 120.
15 Articles 38 to 47 dealt with agriculture, with Article 38 stating: Article 38 of “Titre II” stated that “the operation and development of the common market for agricultural products must be accompanied by the establishment of a common agricultural policy among Member States
Algeria. For example, in one memo that recapped the order of events, one report made it clear that questions relating to overseas France could be introduced in regards to each point raised on the agenda.\textsuperscript{16} The French Minister of Agriculture, Robert Houdet, stressed the importance of these questions to his Dutch counterpart, Sicco Manhsolt, writing that “the study of each point of the agenda of the Conference will be incomplete if questions concerning the agriculture of the Overseas countries and territories associated with the Community are not raised in regards to each point.”\textsuperscript{17} Clearly the question of non-European territories was not to remain a footnote but be integrated into the deliberations at every stage of the conference. Moreover, France was not alone in thinking of Europe in broad geographical terms; in discussing Algeria and the increase in the level of consumption that had accompanied economic development, the Belgian delegation noted that this might also be the case for the Congo, though given the latter’s legal status, this was less relevant for the future trajectory of the EEC since it had an international statute subjected to an “open door” regime. Nevertheless, in the late 1950s, the Belgians were also attentive to how a European Common European Market would affect it’s African holdings (Vanheemsche 2012:136).

It was not only through rhetoric that French Algeria figured prominently in the vision laid out at Stresa. The importance of this territory was also reflected in the technical decisions and structure of representation that the French team envisioned for the conference in preparation. For example, they took the pains to include representatives who came from colonial territories. Among the nineteen official representatives in attendance, there were two prominent figures from Algeria: the Director of Agriculture and Forests in Algeria, Jacques Pelissier, and Jean Lamy the President of the General Confederation of Agriculture in Algeria. The Minister of Finances of Cameroon was included in this team. Three representatives who

\textsuperscript{16} HAEU, MAEF 647-8, “Conférence de Stresa, Instructions à la Délégation Française”, 28 June 1958, 2.
\textsuperscript{17} HAEU, MAEF 647-8, Conseil des Ministres de la Communauté Economique Européenne, 8ème session – 1er et 2 juillet 1958, “Point 6 de l’ordre du jour – Conférence Agricole en Stresa”, 2.
were related to Overseas France in other capacities were also in attendance.  

These individuals were not token additions but carried real influence. In May of 1958, just under a month before the conference, Jacques Pelissier noted that in the preliminary agricultural reports that he had seen, Algeria was considered as an overseas territory. This was misleading, he noted, since overseas territories were associated with the Common Market, while Algeria was considered as an integral part of the Community, according to article 227 of the Treaty of Rome. In order to avoid that Algeria be seen as a “foreign country” (pays étranger), he suggested that in the documentation there be a separate category for “Algerian Departments.” Moreover, French technocrats in Algeria worked actively to convince their metropolitan counterparts to specifically address the question of Algerian agriculture in their reports. Given that the goal of Stresa was mostly exploratory to establish the potential and obstacles to agriculture in each country, the question of how to present France’s overseas colonies in official reports was hardly incidental.

Once the conference was underway, Houdet did not hesitate to speak of the “commonality [of] interests between Europe and Africa” during his speech, suggesting that this union was what made the CAP a “unique mission in history”, invoking the speech of Walter Hallstein the day before. The Algerian press followed the events closely; only a few days later, one newspaper boasted of the “incontestable community of spirits and aspirations” that marked the conference, which sought to work towards “common values” and “fight for a civilization that holds them dear.” While the CAP has been told as a story that resolved the problem of French agriculture in a European framework, the question of France’s colonial

18 Participating in the capacity of experts was Thomas-Richard (the Director of the Algerian Union of the General Confederation of Agriculture in Algeria) and André de Cambiare (a professor in rural economy at the ENA in Algiers). HAEU, MAEF 647-8, “Conférence de Stresa, Délégation française.”
19 ANOM 81F/2255, Letter from Jacques Pelissier to the Minister of Agriculture, 30 May 1958.
commitments was also an important part of the solution. This struggle shows the ways in which agricultural markets not only help manage surplus production, consumption, and wages, but also form spaces of moral inclusion and exclusion (Raymond 2011). Scholars have highlighted the ways in which markets play a role in creating geographical units (Goswami 2004), and certainly the attempt by countries like Turkey, Greece and Israel to enter into association agreements with the EEC in regards to agriculture carried symbolic as well as economic benefits. Thus, the inclusion of colonial territories in the CAP signaled that they would be part of an inclusive space, which was not subject to the external tariff of countries outside the Community.

In fact, in the years after the Conference of Stresa, the French actively worried about how these countries that sought association agreements would impact trade with their three Algerian departments. Noting that Israel seemed to benefit from a favourable image, the Chamber of Agriculture in Algiers argued that the Israeli request for association could “only increase the worries of Mediterranean farmers in the CEE”. They went onto explain that the Italians were also hostile to the liberalization of agricultural trade with these countries. Subsequently, the Presidents of the Chambers of Agriculture tried to organize a meeting to discuss the common interests between the French and Italian members. In this meeting, unsurprisingly, Algeria – which they felt had been unjustly marginalized from the organizations of the CEE – was to be well represented. Israel, Greece, and Turkey represented a threat, not only for Algeria, but from the Overseas Territories more generally. Thus, while France’s hostility to a zone of free exchange is well documented in the literature, what is less well known is the ways in which its colonial possessions drove it to this stance.

24 Ibid, 8.
From Colonization to Cooperation

1962 was a watershed year, both in the history of North Africa, which witnessed the birth of an independent Algerian, as well as the CAP, which was finally put into practice. Both of these factors would motivate France’s turn away from its former colonies in North Africa, and towards its partners in Europe (Sloughi 1997, 178; Valay 1966, 208). Despite the political rupture that accompanied decolonization in Algeria, North African countries continued to seek to export their product on French, and by extension European, markets. The 1960s brought a fundamental shift in the relationship between Europe and North Africa; the former sought to distance itself from its member’s former colonial pasts, and the latter sought the development aid they felt was their due after decades of colonization. This relationship meant that the modernization of agriculture was less geared towards incorporating North Africa into Europe, and more concerned with maintaining the region in the West’s sphere of influence in light of the Cold War. Food security, and the spectre of “peasant wars” loomed large in the minds of observers who saw food shortages and land reform as prime factors in the “fall” of strategic countries to communism (Wolf 1969). This section thus explores the transition from colonialism to a policy of Cooperation, and the emergence of the Mediterranean as a new vocabulary for development.

The policy of Cooperation was rooted in the fact that following 1962, North African countries found the term “association” to be politically unpalatable, likely because of its role in French colonial ideology. The refashioning of colonialism during this period was an extraordinary feat; as Jean Robert Henry has written on the Gaullian myth: “As in a magic trick, he pulled out of the hat of colonization the dove of Cooperation” (Henry 2012, 12). One of the main devices used in this metamorphosis of the colonial system that was active in
agriculture was the SCET (Société Centrale pour l’Équipement du Territoire), an organization created in 1955 under the auspices of the Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations (CDC). The director of the CDC as well as the European Investment Bank, François Bloch-Lainé was instrumental in its creation, in addition to its cousin organization, the SEDES (Société d’Études pour le Développement Économique et Social). Bloch-Lainé had been in charge of studying the reorganization of the Franc Zone in 1957, and his economic vision was inextricably linked to France’s global geopolitical strategy; he saw the monetary union as an antidote to anti-colonial nationalism in the Middle East and Africa (Bloch-Lainé 1956). The SCET presented itself as a “repairman” (dépanneur) that was ready to assist newly independent countries in the framework of cooperation.\(^{25}\) Initially concentrated in North Africa, it quickly expanded its activities across French territories, growing from 90 employees in January of 1960 to more than 700 in 1969. It conducted 60 million Francs of business in 1970, 35% of which came from North Africa.\(^{26}\) In the early years of independence, the organization contributed to Tunisia’s hydraulic program, and helped implement irrigation schemes in Morocco. While it is difficult to know what percentage of its employees worked on agriculture, agricultural activities feature significantly in its promotional material. Moreover, brochures published for its tenth anniversary stated that the organization enabled many French experts who had been forced to leave the colonies after decolonization to continue to draw on their knowledge and local contacts once they repatriated to the metropole.\(^{27}\)

Most directly relevant for North Africa’s relationship to the CAP, the SCET worked with the group’s other branch, the SMINA (Société pour la Construction du Marché d’Intérêt National d’Alger) which was created in 1960 in order to construct a Market of National Interest (Marché d’Intérêt National) in Algiers.\(^{28}\) This project, which was first evoked in the late 1950s,


\(^{28}\) CDC, SCET COOP 202-28, AMINTER “La Caisse des Dépôts et ses Filiales Techniques en Algérie”, January
sought to build centralized market that would be akin to the *Halles Centrales* in Paris and serve to concentrate supply and demand in a more efficient manner. The Direction of Agriculture and Forests in Algeria had written that the project would be: “among the great accomplishments (*realisations*) that symbolize the union of the Algerian market with the European economic ensemble.”

Indeed, agricultural experts, such as Jacques Pelissier who we met earlier in this article in regards to the Conference of Stresa, also cited this project as key to Algeria’s inclusion in a common European market for agriculture.

Yet if the SCET saw itself as engaging in an act of solidarity, the local populations with whom it worked had a different view, especially after decolonization. The organization was renamed SCET-Coopération in 1959, and became SCET International in 1970. Its own explanation for this rebranding stated that the organization was not seen as natural on the ground. Instead, it was viewed as an unofficial channel to prolong French policy and protect French interests. The change in name thus helped it to distance itself from the French state, and it also reflected their stated “need to conquer new markets”. In short, the “new skin” donned by the organization can be explained by widely held suspicions of neo-colonialism. In terms of post-colonial agriculture, the SCET aided in the construction of the *Institut Agronomique Hasan II* in Rabat. It also conducted studies on agriculture in Tunisia focusing on the markets for the exportation of wine, olive oil, citrus fruit, and beef. Those working for SCET were a key link in the transition from colonial expertise to international development, as evidenced by their career trajectories (Dimier 2015; Hodge 2007).

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31 Ibid, 5.
The second major shift that accompanied decolonization in the field of agriculture was the emergence of the Mediterranean as a new frame for development. The precursors to this were already in place in the late years of colonization; for example, when the Algerian Chamber of Commerce discussed how best to protect North African production from the potential competition of associated countries like Israel and Greece. In the years before independence, they often spoke of the danger posed to their “Mediterranean products.” Similarly, in the late 1950s the FAO’s Mediterranean development project sought to apply a regional, integrated framework to the countries around the Mediterranean Sea. While French teams had not been involved in the first set of studies completed by the FAO, experts in the Ministry of Agriculture in Algeria wondered if France’s experience on the Southern Shore of the Mediterranean allow the country to present itself as a world leader at the FAO. Their argument was simple: France’s activities in Algeria “exceed and will exceed by far that which is being done or which should be done in the countries that are expressly soliciting the attention of the [FAO].”

Seen from French Algeria in the 1950s, when the country was engaged in a violent war of decolonization, the emergence of Mediterranean development as an shared vocation presented a unique opportunity to turn their colonial expertise into a form of international prestige. While it would not be until the presidency of Georges Pompidou that France would realize that “the Mediterranean was one of the few areas in which independent and concerted action by Europe” was possible. (Pickles, 1973: 326, quoted in Pedaliu: 739), these early years of negotiations were an important precursor to this shift. Indeed, as decolonization changed the initial agreements that had underpinned the CAP, the Mediterranean emerged as framework where formerly imperial links were reshaped into a different kind of European hinterland. In the eventual shift from colonial preferences to a European “Mediterranean” policy, the 1960s were a decade of transition in that the notion of development replaced older notions of

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solidarity or a “Latin” Mediterranean (Henry 2000: 52).

After 1962, members of the Community had to face political and economic factors that made a unified policy towards Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia in the domain of agriculture difficult. As a result, negotiations between the CEE and the Maghreb occurred on a largely provisional, and bilateral, basis. Despite the exceptional status of Algeria and the continued bilateral agreements regarding agriculture between France and each of the three Maghreb countries (most notably in the domains of wine, wheat, and olive oil), the European Community was increasingly aware of the need to transform France’s colonial preferences into a European-wide policy that could apply a single set of rules for Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria.\textsuperscript{35}

In 1963 a new round of negotiations between the CEE and each of the Maghreb countries began. France was hesitant to assert its colonial preferences too strongly, both because of the introduction of the CAP, as well as for reasons having to do with intra-European politics: in negotiations with Britain regarding its inclusion in the economic community, French technocrats had voiced their objection to Britain’s attempt to secure trade advantages the Commonwealth, and they worried that the British may invoke France’s preferential regimes in Morocco as a precedent. Moreover, French diplomats were willing to single out Algerian products, most notably wine, for inclusion in European agricultural markets by invoking their colonial history. In a 1964 meeting with the Commission of the Council of the EEC, the French delegation noted that fact that prior to 1960, more French exports went to Algeria than to any other country. Moreover, France had an obligation to proceed slowly with regards to stripping away the colonial pact in order to not add to the newly independent state’s already considerable difficulties.\textsuperscript{36} At the same time, they stressed that they had done their best to make sure that

\textsuperscript{35} The former two countries had become sovereign in 1956, one year before the signing of the Treaty of Rome. Following, a protocol annexed to the Treaty had permitted France to maintain privileged relationships these two countries.

\textsuperscript{36} Archives also display French reticence to specify a legal vision of their relationship with Algeria after independence, and even actively avoided any binding agreement. See the Archives de Secrétariat général du Comité interministériel pour les questions de coopération économique (SGCI), Fontainebleau 1988053/184-
France’s relationship with Algeria was inscribed in the framework of a multilateral relationship between Algeria and the European Common Market.37

In 1965, a new round of negotiations took place in which the Community outlined that any accords with Tunisia and Morocco should be designed in such a way that they would also be applicable to Algeria (Ben Hamouda 2010, 7). This is evident in reports by the Secretary General of the Interministerial Committee for Questions of European Economic Cooperation (SGCI). On 10 November 1966, the Community adopted a single market in olive oil, raising a series of problems for the Maghreb since it was unclear if North African olive oil would be recognized as a French product on the European market. It was imperative that France preserve a relationship with the Maghreb, but the Ministry of Agriculture was opposed the continuation of a privileged regime, which it claimed would threaten the logic of a single market. Instead, it suggested that the Maghreb be considered a “third country” (pays tiers) which was not part of the EEC but whose imports were allowed according to a “porous” system of protection (Bureau and Thoyer 2014, 98) The SGCI reflected on France’s historical ties to the region:

Only an association with the EEC can allow for the consolidation of these links. It is thus necessary to not empty the content of the annexed protocol for the Treaty regarding Morocco and Tunisia so that this text can be spelled out and extended to Algeria.38

The SGCI thus acknowledged that France’s formerly colonial links would necessarily be routed

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through the CEE. Moreover, it seemed important to find a way to offer the three countries a common statute (Zartman 1968: 6). Countries like Italy – which was most directly threatened by the competition coming from North African olive oil and wine – also sought to protect itself from France’s bilateral trade preferences. The Italian representative at the CEE, for example, preferred to discuss issues of trade with North Africa in the larger context of the Mediterranean (Ben Hamouda 2010: 92).

North African countries were attentive to these dynamics and hoped to use them strategically. In a meeting between France and Morocco in December 1963, during a discussion of the calendar and minimum pricing for certain fruits and vegetables, the Moroccan delegation was “particularly worried to know if Morocco was being discriminated against in relationship to the other North African countries.” The report continued that, “It was possible to reassure them by telling them that this regime would also apply to Algeria and Tunisia.”

As North African countries tried to guard their own privileges vis-à-vis the CAP, they did so with an eye towards their neighbours, specifically Algeria, in the hopes of matching the latter’s privileged position. Lastly, the countries of the Maghreb took another lesson from their interactions with the CEE: the need to form their own economic block. A consultative committee met in 1964 that sought to harmonize the commercialization of agricultural products in the Maghreb such as olive oil, wine and citrus. Similarly, a body to organize the production of alfalfa was established in 1965, known as COMALFA (comptoir maghrébin d’alfa), though its activities were short lived as it stopped meeting in 1967 (Santucci 1971: 144). Though these initiatives never came to fruition, largely due to political tensions (Byrne 2016), their attempts to create a common market in agriculture mirrored the initiatives of the CAP in many ways.

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Conclusion

While much of the work on European agriculture is focused on the institutions and high-level negotiations that marked the founding years of the EU, North Africa’s relationship to the CAP cannot be understood solely by looking at the “Europe of Six”. This article has tried to indicate the ways in which an older story that was actively being rebranded in terms of decolonization and Cooperation was still present in the strategies of the CAP in the 1960s. Indeed, questions of economic profitability were linked to notions of national identity and expressions of political obligations. While scholars have argued that not all French terroir was seen as equally “French” under colonialism (Guy 2010), France’s overseas territories in North Africa struggled, albeit in a different context, to be part of European agriculture after 1962. The terms of the debate have shifted, but as we saw, agriculture continues to be an important vector of national identity. Thus we should not forget that these struggles were defined against the backdrop of colonization. In studying the CAP, the indications of inclusion were presented in terms of pricing mechanisms and the functioning of the market, but these discussions nevertheless hinged on a longer story of decolonization that redefined the boundaries of belonging to the nation state and, by extension, to Europe.
Bibliography


(Post-)Colonial migrations between states and companies: Moroccan workers in Europe

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Abstract
The introduction of North African immigrants in the European division of labour resulted from a series of economic and social factors on both shores of the Mediterranean Sea, most notably economic growth, the transformations of professional structures in Europe, and colonisation. Migrations from North Africa to Europe were also closely monitored and controlled by European and North African states, and European private and public companies. This chapter investigates the ways in which workers migrations coming from (post-)colonial territories, participated in the transformations of European working classes. It focuses on the role of colonial practices and ideologies on the channelling of these migrants – notably Moroccan workers French and Belgian coal mines – toward specific professions and economic sectors. The general objective is to understand the complex and conflicting relationships between and within colonised and colonising societies, in which migrations of colonised or formerly colonised populations played a major role.

Keywords: migrant workers, colonisation, racialisation, France, Morocco
As scholarly work has shown, North African migrants contributed to the production, reproduction, and eventually deconstruction, of European working classes in the twentieth century.¹ Their introduction in the European division of labour resulted from a series of economic and social factors on both shores of the Mediterranean Sea, most notably economic growth, the transformations of professional structures in Europe, and colonisation. Migrations from North Africa to Europe were also closely monitored and controlled by European and North African states, and European private and public companies, by the setting of recruitment schemes, bilateral agreements and practical arrangements. This chapter investigates the ways in which the migration of workers coming from colonial and post-colonial territories participated in the transformations of European working classes. It focuses on the role of colonial practices and ideologies on the channelling of these migrants toward specific professions and economic sectors.

Even if migrations of North African workers had a profound effect on the making of European working classes, this chapter will focus primarily on Moroccan migrations in state-owned coal mines in Northern France², and secondarily on Moroccan migrations in Belgian private owned coal mines in Wallonia. Indeed, the French case appears to be very specific: Morocco was a French colony (Protectorate) from 1912 to 1956, and remained closely linked with post-colonial France, notably through the existence of intense and renewed migrations between the two countries. The question remains, however to evaluate the effects of colonial domination on the selection, channelling and treatment of Moroccan workers in French industries. From this perspective, studying the French and Belgian cases will enable us to compare the modalities of selection of Moroccan workers. Historical material relative to the Belgian case are second-hand, whereas sources on the French case are original.

¹ I would like to thank my colleague Blaise Wilfert-Portal for his comments on an early version of this text.
² French coal mines were nationalised in 1947 and autonomous state-owned companies operating in the different coal mining regions were regrouped in a general consortium, Charbonnages de France (CDF). In Northern France, the company in charge of coal exploitation, HBNPC, employed more than 200,000 workers in 1946.
In recent years, a debate has emerged in the social sciences regarding the colonial origin of racial discriminations against populations coming from former French colonies, or descending from colonial immigrants. Some authors have analysed what they see as the contemporary racialisation of social relations, which they view as resulting from the specific form of racism invented in the colonies. Colonial racism invoked physiological differences in order to legitimate practices of exclusion (or even extermination) of racialised populations (Bancel et al. 2011). According to these authors, one of the channels through which it was imported to the metropole was the migration of populations coming from colonised territories: North African migrations participated in the making of what they call a “colonial fracture,” that is to say the transformation of colonial racism into systematic racist discriminations in Europe against specific populations, mostly originating from the former French colonial empire (Thomas, Bancel, and Blanchard 2015; Bancel, Blanchard, and Thomas 2017).

Such an argument, however, which sees a good deal of continuity between the colonial past and the present, might be insufficient to understand the historically specific ways in which colonial heritage weighted on past and current domination relationships between colonisers and colonised (Saada 2006, 2017), and between workers and employers. Ruptures and continuities between the colonial mode of racialisation and discriminations in metropole need to be studied in a historical perspective, and to take into account other factors that might also explain how and why workers coming from colonised or formerly colonised territories were treated. Colonial forms of racism and racialisation do not necessarily produce effects on the treatment of populations in metropole: discrimination is not necessarily the result of to post-colonial racism. Instead, conditions of living and employment, and position in the division of

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3 This article defines racism as a set of beliefs claiming the existence of essential differences between individuals or groups of individuals on the basis of biological and/or cultural and/or ethnic and/or religious differences. Since races are socially constructed, social sciences aim at explaining the racialisation of populations, defined as “a dialectical process by which meaning is attributed to [biological or] socio-cultural signifiers of human beings, as a result of which individuals may be assigned to a general category of persons which reproduce itself biologically, culturally and economically.” (Miles and Brown 2003a: 99)
labour, define social coordinates that can be interpreted in racial terms. If one wants to understand the effects of the colonisation of North Africa on European countries by studying migrations across the Mediterranean Sea, one needs to be attentive to three phenomenon, each of which will be studied in this article in turn: first, the position of these migrant workers in the production process, second the interactions between practices of control implemented in Europe and in Morocco, and third how and why practices of migrant control that were developed in the colonies travelled from North Africa to Europe. The goal of this paper is thus to help our understanding of how “Europe was made by its imperial project” (Stoler and Cooper 1997: 1). The “colonial situation” was constituted by complex and conflicting relationships between and within colonised and colonising societies (Balandier, 2001), and the migrations of colonised (or formerly colonised) populations played a major role in this process.

**Colonial and economic factors of Moroccan migrations**

The role of European and non-European migrations on the making of European working classes is now well established (Castles and Kosack 1973; Cross 1983; Noiriel 1988). Moroccan migrant workers—along with other migrants coming from various European countries, as well as from Tunisia, Algeria or Turkey—contributed to this process in the twentieth century. They occupied the lowest paid and least desirable jobs, in labour intensive economic sectors, and “filled in the gaps” left vacant by an intense economic growth that was accompanied by a growing need for unqualified or semi-qualified workers. From a purely functional point of view, Moroccan workers played a part that seemed very similar to that of other migrants in industrial societies.
The specific colonial component of Moroccan immigration to Europe should however be highlighted. The origins of Moroccan immigration to Europe date back to the early colonial era in Morocco. French colonisation of North Africa shaped Moroccan immigration to Europe. During First and Second World Wars, tens of thousands of Moroccan workers and soldiers were recruited in response to serious manpower shortages in French factories, and to serve in the army. Even if the racialisation of social relations in France date from the nineteenth century, the importation of colonial and European workers during the two World Wars, as well as the exclusion of colonial workers after the First World War, drew a colour line between workers, that contributed to the integration of white foreign workers, and to the general emergence of a sense of whiteness as a sign of the working class. (Stovall 2003: 60–61) As a result, apart from times of war, French governments sought to restrain migration flows from North Africa until the late 1950s. Instead, most French companies prioritised the recruitment of Spaniards, Italians and Poles (Ageron 1985: 60).

The influence of French colonisation on Moroccan migrations continued after the Second World War: from the mid 1950’s onwards, the recruitment of Moroccan workers in Metropolitan France was bolstered by the effects of the Algerian war of independence, when French employers slowed down their recruitment of Algerian workers, looking to replace them with Moroccans, who were viewed as less dangerous politically. The 1950s therefore witnessed a major transformation due to the effects of the Algerian war in metropolitan France: what was once an essentially Algerian migration became a genuinely North African migration, as immigrants came to France from Tunisia and Morocco (Ageron 1985: 66). After the

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4 Louis Chevalier (1958) analysed for instance, how workers were seen as a distinct race excluded for the bourgeois civilisation. For a more recent discussion of the position of French historiography on the question of race and the making of working classes, see Noiriel (2006).
5 Similar to other colonial workers, most of them were forced to repatriate in 1918-1919 (Dornel 2013; Horne 1985).
6 On Moroccan migrations in Europe during the twentieth century, see de Haas (2005, 2014) and Berriane, de Haas, and Natter (2015).
independence of Algeria in 1962, when the Algerian government tried to slow down emigration, Morocco appeared as a much more convenient reservoir of workers.

The colonial component of Moroccan migrations should not, however, overshadow the influence of major economic transformations that took place in industrial sectors where Moroccans workers were highly concentrated. Indeed, a striking feature of Moroccan migrations in France and in Belgium is that Moroccan workers were often specifically chosen to work in coal mines. State-owned coal mines in Northern France initiated a massive recruitment of Moroccan workers in 1954, six years after a first attempt to recruit a few thousand of them. In 1957, their private-owned counterparts on the other side of the Belgian border recruited 300 workers in Morocco for the first time, following a request from Moroccan authorities to send Moroccan workers to Belgian mines on an experimental basis. In both cases, the peak of recruitment was reached in 1962–1963, at the very moment when Belgian and French governments made the decision to reduce coal production by closing less productive or profitable pits.⁷

The French recruitment scheme started before it’s Belgian counterpart; it also lasted much longer (until the late 1970s) and had a more profound effect on the general composition of Moroccan migrations to France in the 1950s and 1960s (table 1): in the 1950s and early 1960s, the HBNPC (Houillères du Bassin du Nord-Pas-de-Calais) Moroccans accounted for nearly a quarter of the entire Moroccan population settled in France. This share then diminished, due to the combined effect of the decrease in the number of Moroccans employed in coal mining, and the general increase in the number of Moroccans living in France.

This recruitment scheme lasted until August 1977—three years after the official closure of French national borders for labour migration in July 1974—and was part of a long term

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⁷ The last Walloon pit (Le Roton, in Farciennes near Charleroi) was closed down in September 1984 (Frennet-de Kayser 2003: 6–7). The last French pit (n°10 Oignies, in Dourges near Lens) was closed down in December 1991 (Escudier 2009).
social and economic planning attempt to manage the coal recession. Reproducing the dichotomies introduced during the First World War between white and colonial workers, Moroccan, on the one hand, and French and European miners, on the other hand, were not equally treated. Moroccan miners were recruited on a short-term basis (twelve or eighteen months). Their contracts could be renewed after a compulsory four month period spent back in Morocco, whereas French and most European workers benefited from the Statut du mineur, a protective status created when coal mines were nationalised, that provided workers with free housing, free coal, and a specific social security system. As the last pits were gradually closed over the course of the 1970s and 1980s statutory miners could benefit from early retirement and retraining plans, and were replaced by younger Moroccan contract workers, who were expected not to settle in France. Moroccan workers were recruited in France in order to close down the mines, without having to lay-off statutory miners. This objective was met through the assignation of Moroccan workers to specific positions and precarious statuses. Such a segmentation of workforce between (ex-)colonial and French or European workers was conceptualised and implemented by public authorities as a way to manage economic mutations of state-owned coal mines in the 1950s and 1960s. Differentiated treatments of immigrant workers did not rely primarily on already existing forms of colonial racism, but were embedded in the working conditions of specific economic sectors.

Moroccan (and more generally North African) immigration should therefore not be reduced to its colonial component. Moroccans migrated not only to France and Spain, but also to a variety of other European countries. Conversely, independence did not result, in the short

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8 Things did not go as planned: a number of Moroccans did settle, notably after 1974 and the official closure of borders, and went on strike twice in 1981 and 1987 to demand equal treatment with their French comrades (Gay and Perdoncin 2016).

9 Most if not all Moroccan workers were employed as hewers (unqualified or semi-qualified workers who dug coal) at the coal face, *i.e.* where coal was cut from the coal seam, most of the time manually with pneumatic drills. Some of them could also serve as rippers (semi-qualified workers who removed the rock from above the coal seam) or drawers (unqualified workers who pushed tubs of coal from the coal face to the pit eye).

10 Migrations to Spain remained very limited until quite recently.
run, in any major change in migration trends to Europe since Moroccan migration saw a marked increase only ten years after independence. Moreover, collective recruitment continued by private and state-owned companies, and an important non-channelled migration developed (but mainly in the 1980s and 1990s). Of course, decolonisation had an effect on the legal frameworks of North African migrations, and led to the signing of bilateral agreements. But as we may see in the next section, formal rules were often less influential than practical arrangements: how were these workers recruited by the Belgian and Moroccan coal mining companies? How were the companies assisted and supported by both French and Moroccan states, and to which extent were these relationships rooted in the colonial practices of population control in Morocco?

**Between cooperation and conflict: controlling migrant workers across borders**

A static and artificial division is often posited between sending North African countries and receiving European countries. A more fruitful approach would be for the disciplines of sociology and the history of immigration to analyse emigration and immigration together (Sayad 1977). This would entail studying sending and receiving countries as interacting entities, whose activities were constrained by national borders but not limited to the boundaries of national territories. In other words, French and Moroccan ruling elites tried to defend their interests—even in foreign territories—through negotiations, bilateral agreements and diverse institutions (consulates, embassies, associations, etc.). Those actions defined a set of relationships that were characterised by a tension between cooperation—to establish means of control—and competition—around the definition of social and political rights.

In this section, we will focus on practices that made the implementation of recruitment
schemes of Moroccan coal miners possible. In the second half of the twentieth century, Moroccan migrations were partially channelled and organised by state institutions and companies (state-owned or private). In France, migration policy was formalised in 1945, with the creation of the *Office national d’immigration* (ONI), an institution that had a monopoly on recruiting, transporting, and distributing the foreign workforce in France. Therefore, the recruitment of migrant workers coming from foreign countries or from French colonies (except Algeria) was not in the hands of diplomatic authorities or private and state-owned economic actors, at least theoretically. However a number of bilateral agreements defined a series of exceptions (de Lary 2004). In Belgium, discussions between the Belgian government, coal mining private companies, and the Moroccan government resumed in 1962 (the 1957 experience was not renewed in the forthcoming years). The *Fédération charbonnière de Belgique* (Fédéchar), the official syndicate of Belgian coal mining companies, opened a recruitment office in Casablanca in April 1963, ten months before the governmental agreement was signed. In Morocco, independence in 1956 resulted in the signing of a series of workforce agreements that set the conditions and modalities for the mass recruitment of Moroccan workers in West Germany and France in 1963, Belgium in 1964 and the Netherlands in 1969. Both in France and in Belgium, coal mining companies were supported by the state: formal procedures were either adjusted to existing practices, or circumvented by big companies. But the question remains: how were these schemes implemented? How did they define the specific relationships between the French, Belgian and Moroccan states, and coal mining companies, in order to control the human flows of migrant workers?

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11 Specificities were negotiated at a bilateral diplomatic level and concerned mainly visas and welfare issues. The first example of such a bilateral agreement was signed by Italy and France in 1927 (Viet 1998: 237). In Belgium, bilateral agreements came into use after the Second World War. An agreement was signed in June 1946 between Italian and Belgian governments in order to channel Italian workers to coal mines.

12 Apart from the HBNPC, other big companies such as the car-maker Peugeot and the French national railways (SNCF) also recruited in Morocco.
Organising recruitment in Morocco

The first component that is important for understanding these relationships concerned the organisation of recruitment in Morocco. Cooperation was indeed needed in order to secure recruitment processes. For instance, the 1964 Belgium-Morocco agreement legalised existing practices of cooperation between the Belgian Consulate, Fédéchar, and the Moroccan Ministry of Labour (Frennet-De Keyser 2003: 10). The signing of the France-Morocco agreement in 1963 also signalled the legalisation of existing practices of cooperation between the HBNPC and Moroccan authorities. It consisted mainly in a dense network of relationships with local, provincial and national politicians, with whom the French recruiter, Félix Mora negotiated directly. Recruitment in Soussi villages was organised with the collaboration of local caïds, who announced Mora’s arrival and took part in the selection by certifying the names, patronymics and family names of recruits. Medical examinations were usually carried out in Agadir’s public hospital with the collaboration of local physicians. Passports were issued by the Ministry of Labour and sent directly to Mora, who kept them until work contracts had expired. Local officials were part of this process as the company sometimes ensured the cooperation of Moroccan authorities through favours and gifts. For example, in 1961, Mora asked his superior to find “nice ox horns” for the [Agadir] Governor’s “favourite craftsman” and to send a “box of candies” to the Province General Secretary’s son, who was studying medicine in Bordeaux. His superior replied two days later asking “how many” ox horns should be found, “or at least an order of magnitude.” Ensuring a steady stream of Moroccan workers for employment in big companies thus did not lie solely on programs, politics, and agreements, but also on the establishment of concrete interpersonal relationships that involved a variety of

13 Mora was employed by the HBNPC in order to conduct recruitment operations in Morocco, and to organise the settlement of Moroccan recruits in France. See infra.
14 The Souss is a Moroccan region, located in the south of the country. The main Soussi city is Agadir. The region is mainly rural and mountainous, and the dominant language is the Berber.
15 Coal Mining Historical Center of Lewarde, OP28 C2 100, Letters to Pelan.
actors, including Moroccan politicians and administrators\textsuperscript{16}.

But the organisation of recruitment could also reveal inherent tensions and competition regarding who had the authority to hire workers. Who should be in position to select and use the fittest and youngest, of the available labourers? Should they be from the HBNPC or from local entrepreneurs and politicians? In February 1964, the French consul in Agadir, René Cader, met with the Governor of the Agadir Province, who complained that Mora’s activities were “prejudicial to the Province’s economy” because “the harbour, National Promotion\textsuperscript{17}, local industries, and plantations could not be provided with a sufficient workforce.”\textsuperscript{18} Mora was accused of recruiting “only young men, in perfect health condition who, a year after, return ill with tuberculosis, with no indemnity and no social welfare of any sort.”\textsuperscript{19} As a result, the Governor of Agadir forbade Mora from recruiting in his Province and from using the Agadir hospital. René Cader defended Mora and the HBNPC scheme, and did not seem to give any credence to the Governor’s accusations. He nevertheless took these allegations seriously enough as to ask the ambassador if he should “approach [the Governor] in order to secure Mora’s freedom of movement”\textsuperscript{20}, \textit{i.e} to make sure he could continue to travel freely in the Agadir Province.

The organisation of recruitment schemes was therefore made possible by active

\textsuperscript{16} Other examples of cooperation can be found in archives. For instance, in November 1965, the head of the HBNPC workforce service, M. Bayle, travelled in Morocco in order to inspect the recruitment scheme and to “meet with Moroccan authorities (Ministry of Labour, Governors, diverse provincial administrations, French consulates)” (Letter sent to Félix Mora in December 1965, Mora’s personal file).

\textsuperscript{17} National Promotion was implemented in 1961 as a general economic policy that aimed at reducing unemployment and developing basic infrastructures (such as roads or irrigation) in rural areas. In 1964 a national committee was in charge of both economic planning and National Promotion. Regional coordination was ensured by provincial committees, chaired by the Province governor. (Blaque 1963)

\textsuperscript{18} Like other rural areas in Morocco, the Soussi population was concentrated in remote villages, and subsisted by cultivating manually the land. The National Promotion Board invested in order to develop irrigation and some industrial and harbour activities in Agadir. (Blaque 1963) These investments served to increase internal migrations from rural to urban areas and to provide the nascent industry with workforce. Therefore, Mora’s recruitment was perceived as a threat as it was also tapping workforce in these rural areas.

\textsuperscript{19} Diplomatic Archives, Rabat Embassy, letter from René Cader, French consul in Agadir, to the French ambassador in Rabat, 20 February 1964.

\textsuperscript{20} Mora was at risk of being impeded from recruiting workers, a situation that could have become rapidly detrimental to the company.
relationships between three interacting entities: “sending” states and their representatives in Morocco, Moroccan state and ruling elites at different levels, coal mining companies and their representatives in Morocco. Their interactions aimed at addressing two main issues: securing the recruitment schemes established by coal mining companies and outlining the manner in which the workforce would be exploited.

Controlling population movements and settlements

But once workers had been selected and assigned a workplace, another issue regarding the control of immigrant communities in Europe emerged. From the Moroccan state’s point of view, maintaining political control over their nationals living in European countries represented a challenge. In this respect, Moroccan authorities did not differ from other “sending” countries during the twentieth century (Green and Weil 2007). But this essential objective was shared by Moroccan local and national leaders, HBNPC’s managers, and French government representatives; it was paramount to control population movements between Morocco and recruiting countries, as well as between European countries, once Moroccans had arrived in Europe. However, there were conflicting views of how to meet this objective, as well as it’s importance vis-à-vis other political objectives. For instance, in Belgium, a question was raised in 1964 about “bogus” Moroccan tourists who entered the territory with a tourist visa and were employed illegally in Belgium. In so doing, they circumvented controls and procedures established in the 1964 agreement. Most of them also managed to get a residence permit once they had found a job. While this illegal procedure was accepted by the Belgian Ministries of the Interior and of Foreign Affairs, it was denounced by the Moroccan Embassy in Brussels, and by the Belgian Consulate in Rabat (Frennet-De Keyser 2003: 25–26). The Belgian minister of Labour considered this “illegal” procedure as a way to discreetly provide the industry with a cheap workforce, whereas Moroccan authorities and the Belgian Embassy considered
“illegal” migrations as a threat because it ruined their efforts to monitor and channel emigration from specific regions in Morocco to particular destinations and professional positions in Europe.

Regarding the limitation of movements of Moroccans between countries, both Moroccan and receiving states wanted to make sure that workers stayed in the occupation for which they had been hired. Nevertheless, workers tended to be mobile, while the practice of poaching migrant workers in neighbouring countries developed in the 1960s. For example, Belgian mines poached Moroccan workers recruited by Félix Mora in Northern France. Similarly, Dutch and German companies poached North African workers in Belgium (Frennet-De Keyser 2003: 26). The directors of French coal mines officially complained several times, and bilateral negotiations were set up between receiving countries in order to put an end to these practices. It seemed however that this was not enough, and Moroccan authorities finally had to intervene in order to craft a solution.

In France and Belgium the solution was identical: the validity of passports issued within the framework of the these agreements was limited to the receiving country and to the period of the contract. In the mind of French and Belgian ministerial representatives, such measures would restrict the ability of workers to move in Europe, and to change jobs or relocate from one region or country to another, at least on paper. In what they viewed as a more efficient solution, HBNPC’s officials decided to simply retain Moroccan passports. Mora had received the documents directly from the Moroccan authorities, and he did not intend to give them back to his recruits until their contracts came to an end. This issue of passport detention was of prime importance in light of the threat of Belgian poaching, and because it helped reduce the turnover

21 Historical Coal Mining Center, OP28 C2 100, Letter from P. Verrier, Delegate Director of Hénin-Liétard Group, to the Republic Procurator in Béthune, 25 July 1963 ; and Letter from Pierre Dumont, General Director of the North Prefecture, to M. Mangez, HBNPC General Director Delegate, 20 May 1964.
22 The implementation of the French–Moroccan Agreement was followed by the creation of joint committees : National Archives, 1993 0317/23, folders 129, 130, 132.
of Moroccan workforce.

Yet this practice also generated tensions between the company and the Moroccan Consulate in Lille on the other hand. In a letter sent to the Delegate Director of the HBNPC, Maurice Mangez in February 1964, the Moroccan consul echoed the complaints of Moroccan workers, and demanded that the company gave them back their passports. He promised nevertheless not to hand them over to the workers without the prior approval of the company.\footnote{Historical Coal Mining Center, OP28 C2 100, “Lettre de Belgacem Laghzaouni, Consul du Maroc à Lille, au directeur général des HBNPC”, 5 February 1964.} This exchange demonstrates that neither the HBNPC nor the Moroccan consulate wanted workers to escape their control, but for different reasons. While the company wanted to limit turnover, Moroccan authorities claimed their right to exert sovereignty over Moroccan nationals settled abroad. The use of passports as an administrative tool to organise the recruitment and control population movements did not resolve the disputed question of which authority could legitimately restrict and control the capacities of movement of workers across borders.

*Monitoring the Moroccan community in France*

This conflicting legitimacy of population control shows that national borders exerted a constraint on the scope of action of sending countries that wished to extend sovereign control to their nationals abroad. However, this issue cannot be reduced to its legal or formal components: the problem was not that Moroccan rulers had a right to claim sovereignty, but rather that they had to accommodate the economic interests of a French company for whom Moroccan nationals constituted, above all, a reservoir of workforce. The Moroccan consulate therefore sought to control Moroccan coal miners in a more autonomous way, though they wished to do so without harming the company's interests.

This passport issue also illustrates the broader desire to politically and socially control
the Moroccan population in France. Indeed, Moroccan authorities were highly anxious about migrants being contaminated by seditious ideas and politics. For instance, during the meeting between the French Consul and the Governor of Agadir mentioned supra, the later expressed his concern about the physical (alcoholism), moral (prostitution), and political corruption of Moroccan workers in France. Moreover, he worried that this issue might serve to garner increased support for Ben Barka’s opposition\textsuperscript{24} to the King in the Souss.\textsuperscript{25}

Moroccan authorities therefore tried to commit more intensively to the organisation and surveillance of Moroccan workers’ conditions of living in France. This again proved controversial. For example, in 1962 a diplomat from the French Embassy in Rabat (attaché social) reported that the Moroccan government had transmitted a request to create branches of the Red Crescent in France. The demand was firmly rejected by French officials, on the grounds that a foreign community should not be able to organise separately from the rest of society, and that foreign services should not interfere with the functioning of social institutions and economic organisations in France. But in practice, on a local level, interactions between Moroccan authorities and the company were more nuanced. The Moroccan Consulate in Lille solicited the HBNPC in August 1962\textsuperscript{26} to discuss a number of issues including: the housing conditions of Moroccan workers, the selection of trustworthy officials (hommes de confiance)

\textsuperscript{24} Mehdi Ben Barka (1920–1965) was one of the main leftist figure of Moroccan decolonisation. After independence, he became a political opponent to King Hassan II. His party, the Union nationale des forces populaires (UNFP) founded in 1959, was very active amongst Moroccan workers and students in France in the early 1960s. In 1960, the UNFP created in Paris the Association des Marocains de France, that claimed to represent the interests of Moroccan immigrant workers in France.

\textsuperscript{25} Diplomatic Archives, Rabat Embassy, letter from René Cader, French consul in Agadir, to the French ambassador in Rabat, 20 February 1964. The concerns expressed by the Governor of Agadir of politically corrupted migrants coming back to Morocco in order to propagate sedition against the King, illustrates a feature that is common to most sending countries’ political rulers: the ambivalent representation of emigration as an opportunity to lift some social problems, and a threat to the stability of the local order. These representations were deeply rooted into the colonial manner of controlling populations: Tyler Stoval (1993) notes that local entrepreneurs and colonial administrators frequently feared, in the 1920s and 1930s, that the sending of indigenous workers to the metropole would hamper rural areas development by creating labour shortages, and would also introduce seditious politics and morals through the contact migrant workers could have with socialist and unionist movements and French women.

\textsuperscript{26} Historical Coal Mining Center, OP28 C2 100, Note of the HBNPC General Direction to Delegate Direction of Exploitation Groups, 9 August 1962.
in housing centres, the opening of leisure centres and infirmaries, the welcoming of new recruits, the training and evaluation of workers, the possession of passports, the celebration of holy days, and the amount of travel indemnities.\textsuperscript{27} Regarding the first two demands, the directors of the HBNPC reported that the consul of Morocco had noticed the “poor condition of some of the barracks” and asked the company to undertake repairs.\textsuperscript{28} They also recommended that local managers rely on trustworthy Moroccans in order to monitor the general condition of housing and to “make sure that Moroccans respect the cleanliness of their lodging.” Yet at the same time, they specified that these individuals should be chosen, “with the assistance of the [Moroccan] consul in Lille”. Moroccan authorities thus endorsed a more protective attitude towards Moroccan coal miners, similar to the position of other emigration countries during the twentieth century, which also sought to ensure remote protection of their nationals in the domain of labour rights and welfare (Rosental 2006). Such a protective attitude nevertheless regressed, becoming more repressive when the preservation of social order was at stake. In 1980 and 1987, Moroccan workers went on strike to demand equal treatment with French and other foreign miners. The Moroccan Consulate in Lille and the Moroccan government intervened during the 1987 strike in order to force Moroccan workers to resume work as soon as possible.\textsuperscript{29} Siding with the HBNPC, Moroccan authorities chose to maintain the social status quo and abandoned their protective attitude regarding working conditions, housings and welfare.

These forms of cooperation and conflict do not seem to be essentially shaped by colonisation. It is of course important to note that the HBNPC recruitment scheme remained

\textsuperscript{27} Moroccan workers coming back from Morocco after the compulsory four-month period between two contracts had to pay for their travel expenses. However, if they stayed at least three month after being rehired, they could receive an allowance of 150 francs.

\textsuperscript{28} Most of the Moroccan workers lived in “barracks”. These were collective housing structures, made of three or four rooms (sometimes shared by two workers), around a shared kitchen. Most of these barracks had been built just after the Second World War in order to accommodate German prisoners of war who were massively employed in coal mines.

\textsuperscript{29} On this mobilisation that paralysed French coal production for two months, see Gay and Perdoncin (2016).
remarkably stable before and after decolonisation; indeed, some of the practices that were invented under colonial rule were continued. But compared with the Belgium case, many of the issues regarding administrative organisation, the recruitment process, and the legitimacy of attempts to control migration, do not appear to be specifically marked by their colonial origin. Instead, the manner in which recruitment schemes were implemented points to the cooperation between states and companies in the economic exploitation and political domination of workers.

**Colonial practices and racialist ideologies repatriated**

The question remains, however: how should we analyse the ways in which practices of population control and the categorisation of colonial populations were repatriated to the metropole? Discriminations against colonised or formerly colonised populations did not derive directly from colonial racism and colonial practices. But, as we have seen, the fact that coal miners were recruited in Morocco, a former French colony, cannot be simply ignored. Indeed, the colonial situation influenced general patterns of Moroccan migrations to France and rendered the recruitment of Moroccan coal miners both possible and desirable. The French colonisation of Morocco was not, therefore, incidental to the recruitment of coal miners by the HBNPC. The colonial situation, as we will see in this section, also shaped the way Moroccan populations were divided and represented in racial terms. In addition, it played a role in how these workers were selected in Morocco and then controlled in the metropole.\(^{30}\) If the effects of colonisation and decolonisation are not reflected either in the tempo or in the structures of

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\(^{30}\) For a discussion of the continued effects of the colonial situation on legal doctrines and administrative practices of population control, see Saada (2017).
migrations to Europe (cf. section I), they can indeed be located in the practices, and racial
categories that were used to structure migration and to assign Moroccan workers to specific
professional positions.  

The enduring services of Mr. Mora

The importation of colonial practices relating to population control did not happen out of the
blue: they were propagated by civil servants who specialised in the management of colonial
populations in France. As early as the First World War, the French state used military agents
and civil administrators coming from the colonies to keep a close watch on colonial workers
and organise their everyday life in camps and factories (Stovall 1993: 46). After the Second
World War, ex-soldiers were hired to manage Algerian workers, notably in collective housings
in which the system of control that was implemented was inspired by the regiment system
(Hmed 2006).

In the HBNPC, ex-colonial soldiers and officers were hired in order to select Moroccan
recruits and to organise their conditions of living in France. The main HBNPC recruiter in
Morocco, Félix Mora (1926–1995), was hired by the HBNPC in 1948, in Morocco, where he
was a non-commissioned officer (sergeant), responsible for the recruitment and training of
native supplemental troops for the French Army (Moroccan Tabors). His military posting was
in the 19th Moroccan Goum in Agadir, in the Sousse, the very region where he recruited
Moroccan workers for the HBNPC. Mora operated the first recruitment of Moroccan coal
miners on the behalf of the French General Residence in 1948-1949, and he was officially hired
by the HBNPC October 1950. At this time, he was assigned to the Moroccan Social Service, a
sub-section of the Work and Social Relations Service, in charge of managing specifically

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31 Social histories of immigration and the state have looked at the repatriation of colonial practices and
imaginaries mainly—if not only—through an analysis of Algeria (Politix 2006). We propose to challenge this
bias by examining the Moroccan case.
Moroccan populations. This Moroccan Social Service was directed by Major (*Commandant*) d’Achon, an officer who had also served in the colonies during the Second World War (First Algerian Regiment of Spahis). Mora rapidly progressed through the ranks of the company: he entered as foreman and retired as an executive, in charge of the whole Service of Migrant Workforce. His entire career was spent managing Moroccan coal miners and he was responsible for their recruitment, travel, housings, working conditions, money transfers, etc. In other words, Mora oversaw most aspects of their life as coal miners.\(^{32}\)

As Mora himself recounted, “those who were recruited were so ignorant (*ignares*) that my role had an essential social component.”\(^{33}\) Mora therefore justified the paternalist mode of management of Moroccan workers by pointing to the alleged ignorance of his recruits. Such a justification was rooted in the repertoire of representations used by the French to characterise colonised populations as essentially inferior and ill-educated.

*Berbers vs. Arabs: the making of an exploitable workforce*

The repatriation of colonial practices can be seen in Félix Mora’s treatment and control of Moroccan workers. It is also evident in attempts to legitimate the company’s professional and social order, which relied on representations that were structured by colonial experiences. Amongst these representations, racial distinction between Berbers and Arabs, and national division between Algerians and Moroccans, were predominant.

The categories of the “Arab” and the “Berber” were in part constructed during the Protectorate regime in an effort to homogenise, essentialize, and therefore render more controllable and understandable, the fluid and complex social and political relationships that existed prior to colonisation. More precisely, such a division aimed at dividing the colonised...
population into two groups that were subjected to different modes of domination (Ageron 1971: 51). In short, it aimed at isolating Berbers from Arabs, by drawing the former closer to the “French civilisation”, in order to undermine the influence of Islam and of Arab nationalism.

French colonial politics in Morocco were founded on Berberophile principles that relied on a specific conception of both the origins and the future of the “Berber race”, celebrated by Berberophile ethnologists and by colonial administrators as being “obedient, courageous, non fanatic and proud” (El Qadéry 1998: 428). Colonial ethnologists also praised Berbers for their “ancestral aptitude to work”, the fact that they enjoyed “freedom”, and their “indifference to political agitation” (Ageron 1971: 51)34. Most notably, Berbers, and especially those from the south of Morocco, were considered as members of the “white race”, and were assimilated, in the colonial literature, to “our ancestors the Gauls”, or even to the Auvergnat people. Racialisation was, therefore, a consequence of colonial domination and was inscribed in the practices used to control colonial populations.

But even if the Protectorate’s Berber policies came to an end in 1934, with the end of the “pacification” of Morocco, racialised dichotomies subsisted and structured the perception of recruiters and managers of the HBNPC. Mora, for instance, recruited Soussi Berbers not only because he had previous knowledge of the region’s political and social organisation, but also because of the high esteem in which he held them. Consistent with colonial doxa, he considered Arabs as unruly, unreliable, corrupted by city-dwelling, and dangerous, as opposed as Berbers, who Mora considered as obedient, rough and unsophisticated land workers, hard-working and submissive. Moreover, Mora thought that Soussi Berbers would naturally adjust to coal work, since they originated in the rocky and dry mountains of the Souss (Kourchid 2000). Racial dichotomies between Arabs and Berbers should not be mistakenly analysed as a motivation for targeting Soussi Berbers. Indeed, Mora repeatedly refused to recruit Riffian

34 This “Berber myth” parallels the “Kabyle myth” that served to legitimise the French colonial domination and exploitation of Algeria (Ageron 1971: 52–53).
Berbers, or workers coming from Casablanca and Rabat, not because of any racist preconception, but simply because the company wanted non-qualified, uneducated, and therefore less politicised workers. Psychological and physical qualities attached to Soussi Berbers should instead be seen as a practical means of guiding recruitment procedures.

Racial categories were also used as a means to educate HBNPC foremen and executives so that they could adjust their behaviour to the “specificities” of the Moroccan populations, and to contribute to the good management of immigrant workers in Europe. As early as 1952, a document written by a physician employed by the HBNPC outlined a series of recommended practices for handling the “North African” workforce to low-ranking managers. Ten years later, a series of conferences were given to local managers and executives regarding the “problems” caused by the growing number of Moroccans in 1962. The goal was to “draw the [manager’s] attention to the individual psychology of these foreign, inexperienced and, in the beginning, un-adapted workers.” As Emmanuelle Saada wrote, “the colonial usage of the notion of race results from a reflection on the good government of the natives.” (Saada 2006: 65) The recourse to customs as a means to govern colonised populations resulted from the fact that colonial administrators and HBNPC managers in France had difficulties imposing to (ex-)colonised populations the formal rules forged to govern and structure the social relations in the metropole. The 1952 document is particularly telling. After an inventory of the cultural specificities of North Africans (names, fatherland, language, religion, gender roles), and of moral and physical qualities (strength, resistance, agility, good will, desire to learn), the booklet invokes some of the most blatant colonial clichés. For example, colonised populations were deemed immature, intellectually inferior but “proud of

35 Historical Coal Mining Centre, OP28 137 D5, Dr. Claude Amoudru, “Conseils à la maîtrise : le comportement envers les ouvriers nord-africains”: “North African workforce poses specific problems that we are not always aware of. […] This text should help you in your relationships with this workforce.”

36 Historical Coal Mining Center, OP28 C2 100, “Compte-rendu de la réunion des agents des services de sélection et d’orientation”. Unfortunately, we do not know who wrote and delivered the presentations.
their race”. It displayed a patronising attitude toward colonial workers, though the author claimed that managers had to be “fair, benevolent, comprehensive but firm” in order to integrate these individuals into modern and industrial societies. In acting this way, and especially by ensuring the “equal treatment” of Moroccan workers, managers would participate in the “civilising mission” of French colonisation in North Africa, and help “transform an un-adapted individual into a good miner.”

Race was therefore intimately linked—in the discourse of HBNPC managers as well as in colonial ideology—with “civilisation”. When he used the notion of “civilising mission”, the HBNPC physician manifested both a belief in the superiority of French institutions (here French economic industrial organisation), and a will to tame individuals through progressive infusion in a French industrial milieu. The “civilising mission” was indeed “designed to make colonised populations into disciplined agriculturalists or workers and obedient subjects of a bureaucratic state” (Stoler and Cooper 1997: 7). Legitimised by allegedly natural differences, it was one of the forms taken by colonial domination, and was both constitutive of and reinforced by a hierarchical relationship between Moroccan/North African workers and other workers.

### Conclusion

In the case of Moroccan miners, racial categories were grounded in and constitutive of the process of labour exploitation as they were used to channel these workers into specific positions in the process of coal production. Racialist ideologies, in the colonies and in the HBNPC, were

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37 Historical Coal Mining Center, OP28 C2 100, Notice from M. Mangez, HBNPC General Director, to managers, 1962.
an essential aspect of worker’s management. They served to legitimate exclusionary practices and differentiated treatments by structuring the inequality between racially differentiated social groups (Miles and Brown 2003). Moreover, they served to assign colonial workers to subaltern professional positions and to maintain cultural boundaries that subjected Moroccan and French workers to different rules and principles. Being labelled as a Berber, or as a Moroccan thus channelled workers to unstable contracts, restricted professional perspectives, specific housings, and dedicated services of workforce management.  

At the same time, the whole recruitment process was wrought with conflict. What is particularly interesting in the Moroccan case is not only the practical implications of the channelling of migration flows, but also its negotiation among a variety of actors that did not necessarily agree on the practices underpinning the recruitment of Moroccan workers. In order to ensure recruitment, coal companies could not rely solely on a coercive colonial state, or even on coercive so-called “post-colonial” states, for that matter. They had to make alliances with local authorities, as well as with national French and Moroccan authorities.

Moreover, the organisation and control of Moroccan migrations was not bounded either by national borders or by official chronologies that separate colonial and post-colonial periods. Racial categories built during the colonisation in order to manage colonial populations were used in Morocco and in France during and after the recruitment process to legitimise a differential treatment of Moroccan workers. Such a treatment was, however, not primarily motivated by colonial or even post-colonial racism: Moroccan workers were racialized accordingly to colonial racialist ideologies, which enabled their (real or supposed) cultural or physiological characteristics to correspond to the qualities attached to the position of unqualified workers in social relations of production.

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38 When the organisation of labour was at stake, the division between Berbers and Arabs was no longer mobilized and the national category of “Moroccans” sufficed to convey racial preconceptions.
Questions of colonial racism, the racialisation of colonial populations, and
discrimination against immigrants and their descendants are important in current political
debates, notably in France. The effect of colonisation on contemporary social relations should
therefore continue to be investigated by historians and sociologists. This chapter intended to
show that all situations of domination involving colonised or formerly colonised populations
should not to be simply analysed in terms of “post-colonial racism”. Certainly, the colonisation
of Morocco produced effects on the modalities of recruitment and on the racialisation of
Moroccan workers. But it does not suffice to explain why and how a public company such as
the HBNPC massively recruited Moroccan workers from 1955 until the late 1970s. Another
line of questioning might be to study how and why non-colonising European countries
(Belgium, the Netherlands or Germany) selected and utilised migrant workers coming from
formerly colonised territories. Historical work is still in progress.
Bibliography


North African Decolonization and the Shifting Nexus of Christian Power and Social Thought in Europe and North Africa

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Abstract

Using the example of radical Left Catholicism in France and North Africa between 1940 and the mid-1960s, this chapter examines the role that Christians in North Africa and Europe played in the decolonization of Algeria, and the influence that decolonization had on Christianity in the immediate decades after decolonization. The dominant narratives of the history of Christianity in postwar Europe depict the achievement of a conservative vision of the individual over the collective and the seemingly inevitable merging of Christianity (particularly Catholicism) and party politics through the birth of postwar Christian Democracy in Western Europe until the abrupt decline of European Christianity in the mid-1960s. Yet I argue that if we bring North Africa into the picture, we notice that rather than dwindling into obscurity, the condemned French intellectuals, theologians, clergy, and laymen and women known as chrétiens progressistes had an undeniably significant impact on both Europe and North Africa.

Keywords: Christianity, Algeria, France, decolonization, Catholic

Until recent years, much of the scholarship on Christianity in post-World War II Europe traced a visible decline in religious belief and in the role of organized religion in European society –
especially since the 1960s – that has come to be known broadly as the “secularization thesis” (Taylor 2007; Bruce 2011). One contemporary thread of this scholarship, which focuses on political Catholicism and the Christian influence on the emergence of human rights discourses in the 1940s, depicts the achievement of a conservative vision of the individual over the collective and the seemingly inevitable merging of Catholicism and party politics through the birth of post-war Christian Democracy in Western Europe until the abrupt decline of European Christianity in the mid-1960s (Chappel, forthcoming; Moyn 2015; Conway 2003: 43-67). Scholars who highlight the secularization of European societies in the 1960s have noted several key historical developments, including the moral crises of World War II, the promotion of the role of laymen and women (or as some saw it, the attack on hierarchy) through the theological reforms of the Second Vatican Council (also known as Vatican II, 1962-65), and the social upheavals of 1968, that seem to have accelerated Europeans’ shift away from traditional Christian church structures and beliefs (McLeod and Ustorf 2003; McLeod 2007). Although recent scholarship has added significantly more nuance to the secularization narrative, particularly by attempting to demonstrate that the diversification of religious practices and beliefs across European societies was not necessarily evidence of a full rejection of Christian values in the name of secularization, many of these historical developments were, in fact, dramatically transformative for Christian institutions, theology, practices, and individual believers, particularly within Catholicism (Davie 2015; Fontaine 2016). In the case of France, one other development must be added to the list, which is the decolonization of France’s North African colonies, and particularly that of Algeria through its violent eight-year Algerian War of Independence (1954-1962).

For Catholics in both France and North Africa, decolonization was experienced as a dramatic rupture in their normal patterns of engagement with Catholic institutions and theology. Indeed, it led to a rethinking of the relationship between religion and the political
sphere that scholars have only begun to analyse (Pelletier and Schlegel 2012). Yet this rupture was not a singular experience. For some Catholics, the political and moral dilemmas that decolonization—and particularly the Algerian War—uncovered, including the deeply entangled relationship between Catholicism and colonialism, enabled them to enact what they saw as much-needed reforms of Catholicism’s institutional and theological systems. For others, though, even the suggestion of reform was seen as a radical and revolutionary betrayal of their traditional faith and belief systems. Indeed, the process of decolonization in North Africa and France exposed fissures within Catholicism that had been growing throughout the twentieth century, and which reshaped the institutions and practices of Christianity on both sides of the Mediterranean in its wake.

Yet despite the dramatic impact that the Algerian War had on Christianity on Christianity in France and North Africa, the decolonization of Algeria also transformed Christian theology and institutions on a global level, as it challenged the relationship between Christianity and state power, as well as the relationship between missionaries and colonialism. From the interwar period, Christian leaders had preached of the danger Christianity faced from materialist ideologies such as communism and the rising threat of Islam and non-Christian religions across European empires; decolonization clearly endangered the place of Christianity across the world, particularly because European colonial regimes had long supported the maintenance and expansion of the missionary project (Daughton 2006; Foster 2013; White and Daughton 2012). Decolonization forced Christians across Europe and institutions all the way up to the Protestant World Council of Churches (the umbrella organization for all Protestant denominations globally) and the Vatican would to contend with a new playing field for global Christianity as well as internal challenges to the power structures of Christianity within Europe. The revolutionary impact of these transformations is evident in the debates and ensuing encyclicals of Vatican II and also in the emergence of Latin American Liberation theology in
the late 1960s, which drew theological inspiration from the same radical Leftist Catholic theologies from Europe that dramatically shaped the Christian experience of the Algerian War. Additionally, as scholars such as Dagmar Herzog have shown, although countries such as West Germany may not have experienced exactly the same traumas of decolonization as countries such as France, the Netherlands, or Great Britain, their Christian communities and institutions experienced similar challenges from the ideological attraction of communism and non-Christian religions as well as a comparable frustration with religious hierarchies and senior Christian leaders after World War II that many Christians in France and North Africa experienced in the wake of decolonization (Herzog 2006: 431-466).

Thus, in contrast to the standard narrative of secularization of European societies in the wake of World War II, I propose a rethinking of post-war Christianity in Europe that looks beyond high politics, traditional periodizations, and even the metropole to see how competing visions of the relationship between religion and politics transformed European religious practices and society in the post-war period. These shifts were most clearly articulated through radical Left Catholicism (known in French as *progressisme*), which dramatically challenged the conservatism of Catholic institutions and power structures in France and North Africa between 1940 and the mid-1960s. Yet these important changes have not always been evident to scholars. Historians such as Martin Conway, for instance, have described Left Catholicism in particular as insignificant, or “dwindling into obscurity” because it both failed to engage voters in the arena of high politics in the same way that the Christian Democracies were able to do, and, in the case of French progressisme, because it offered a competing vision of political Catholicism that was violently suppressed by the Catholic hierarchy in the first half of the 1950s (Conway 2001). However, rather than dismissing the radical Catholic Left in Europe and North Africa as inconsequential, I suggest that an examination of its vision of political engagement in the era of decolonization enables us to see that it was not just the Vatican or
even Western European Social Democratic political parties that determined the path of Christian theology, practice, and secular activism in the wake of World War II. Using the example of radical Left Catholicism in France and North Africa, I demonstrate that if we bring North Africa into the picture, we notice that rather than dwindling into obscurity, a group of French intellectuals, theologians, clergy, and laymen and women who came to be called chrétiens progressistes, or progressivist Christians, and were widely condemned by the Catholic hierarchy, the European settler population, the French military, and many French politicians for their views, had an undeniably significant impact on the religious, political, and in some cases, legal conduct of the Algerian War and its aftermath. This chapter argues that in France and North Africa, decolonization forced a shift in the power structures of Christianity, as voices from below began to make themselves heard through a broadening engagement in a wider range of political endeavours and associational life. These shifts challenged hierarchies in a variety of ways, and restructured religious and political alliances that were not necessarily defined by party politics or following trends that articulated notions of the human person. In this period, Christians in North Africa and France faced a constant barrage of moral and legal dilemmas on issues such as the legitimacy of the use of torture, civil disobedience, the relationship between church and state, and their relationship to Christian institutions and hierarchies. Although human rights would come to be the frame through which questions such as these would be examined in France and across the world in later decades, it was the spectre of communism that served as the lens through which Catholics across the political and theological spectrum in France and North Africa framed their engagement with the political sphere during the 1950s and early 1960s.

**Radical Left Catholicism and the French Crisis of Progressivism**
French Catholic philosopher Jacques Maritain has now become a symbol of European Catholicism’s turn toward human rights and Christian democracy, yet he shares theological roots with the radical Catholic left, particularly the neo-Thomist tradition in French theology. The Dominican neo-Thomist movement, notably those who studied and worked at the Dominican theological and philosophical university of Saulchoir outside of Paris, was particularly influential in the radical internal missionary movement of the 1940s (Alberigo and Chenu 1985). The “historical” methodology of Dominicans such as Marie-Dominique Chenu and Yves Congar sought to examine Scholastic theology as it was rooted in its historical moment, as opposed to an “ageless theology” (Duquesne and Chenu 1975: 123-124). The larger guiding principle was that theology had a particular relevance both to its original? historical moment, and to the current moment as well. As Chenu noted, “the dialectic of the past and of the present is the principle of intelligibility” (Duquesne and Chenu 1975: 51).

Although it drew on earlier Catholic experiments in lay mission outreach to the working classes, the heart of this new missionary project was a greater focus on the transformation of the entire church into a missionary enterprise. Its core was a seminary in Lisieux, France that opened in 1941 called the Mission de France (or MDF). This seminary, which was created under the auspices of the French Assembly of Cardinals and Archbishops (or the ACA), was the realization of a long-term project of the French Catholic Church to attract more young men to the priesthood and combat the massive drop in church attendance. It was designed to be the French Catholic Church’s new great weapon in the battle against the dechristianization of the working classes in France (Cavalin and Viet-Depaule 2007: 48; Pelletier 2005: 26). In transforming the church into a “state of mission,” the MDF saw itself on the front lines of a battle to modernize and revolutionize the practices of Catholicism and its place in modern society. In its July 1947 bulletin, the MDF noted that it was witnessing “a kind of diminution
of the previously dominant clerical elements, so that the construction of human society will be placed entirely into the hands of lay Christians.”1 It was the role of priests to be the avant-garde and to educate Christians on how best to engage directly with the secular, modern world, through theological study and through practical experience. The furthest extension of this missionary movement was the worker-priest project, in which priests went to work full time in factories as individuals, in civilian clothing, and were hired as unskilled labourers with the express intention of entering into contact with the working classes (Poulat 1965: 395).

The neo-Thomist concept of “incarnation” was central to the theology behind the new missionary and worker-priest movement (Arnal 1986: 115-124). The July 1947 session of the Mission de France described “redemptive incarnation” in these terms: “at the centre of this mystery is the verb ‘incarnate’ and Redeemer, Christ on the cross, come to live in our world, live our condition of human sinners, to vanquish, by his death, our sins, and drive humanity to God…”2 The model for the missionary, and the worker-priest in particular, was Jesus who had in his human incarnation lived the Gospel and saved humanity from eternal damnation. Similarly, in becoming “workers among workers,” and stepping into an environment full of temptation and sin, they were following in the footsteps of Christ and needed to themselves “incarnate” his same values (Suaud and Viet-Depaule 2004: 8-10). For the worker-priests, historian Oscar Arnal argues, the commitment to incarnation meant that their vision of the mission shifted from a mentality of “conquest” that had dominated the vision of the earlier Jeunesse ouvrière chrétienne (JOC) and the Catholic Action movements to one of “presence” (Arnal 1986: 115). Instead of spending their energy working to convert the proletariat, they perceived their mission as one of making a place for Christianity in the lives of the working classes; in sharing their daily turmoil and hardships, they were testifying to the possibilities of

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1 “Session de juillet 1947,” Unis pour... July 1947. Archives de la Mission de France (MDF), Le Perreux, France.
2 Unis pour... July 1947, 8. Archives of the MDF.
Christian solidarity with the working classes and breaking down the wall between the proletariat and the bourgeois Church.

Each of the worker-priests went individually to seek a job as a labourer, and in most cases, went into their jobs without telling anyone that they were priests. The hardships that they shared with the proletariat allowed the priests to begin to feel a sense of community with the working classes (which also included North African labourers in many cases), and a sense of solidarity in their daily struggles. To take the ultimate step in demonstrating solidarity, the worker-priests realized that they had to engage in the political battles of the working classes, so for most worker-priests, the decision to join labour unions was not even in question. Most joined the Confédération générale du travail (CGT), although it was aligned with communists, since the majority of workers belonged to this union and it was the most militant. While the ACA and the majority of the French Catholic leadership had never been entirely supportive of the project of the worker-priests, it was their adhesion to the CGT and direct political engagement with communism that put the entire project into jeopardy, and even called the Mission de France seminary into question.

In early 1949, several members of the French hierarchy, including Cardinal Liénart, the prelate of the Mission de France, and Cardinal Suhard, archbishop of Paris, issued statements warning Catholics against collaboration with communists. Later that year, a decree from the Vatican declared that Catholics could not become members of the Communist Party, nor publish any document that supported the doctrine or action of communists. Furthermore, it stated, the church should not give the Sacraments to any Catholic who violated these rules, and it was within the power of the church to excommunicate “the faithful who profess the materialist and antichristian doctrine of the communists and especially those who defend or propagate [it]” (Tranvouez 2000: 18). The accusations of collaboration were mainly directed at Catholics who were engaged in the missionary movement – the worker-priests in particular.
– and Catholic priests, journalists, and intellectuals who participated in movements like the Union of Progressivist Christians (Union des chrétiens progressistes), Economie et Humanisme, or wrote for journals like La Quinzaine, Jeunesse de l’Eglise, and in some cases the more moderate Esprit. In France, the engagement of the worker-priests in the CGT and in working-class political movements, including the peace movement, which advocated diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union in the face of growing Cold War rearmament, coincided with a tendency among radical leftist Catholic intellectuals toward a dialogue with Marxism.

The interlacing of the missionary movement and the Catholic dialogue with communism in the late 1940s and early 1950s was something that only occurred in France, and resulted in a movement that has been pejoratively called “progressisme chrétien,” or Christian progressivism. While Belgium also had a strong internal missionary movement, and worker-priests in factories, engagement with communism was quite marginal to their project. The so-called “crisis of progressivism” of the early 1950s in France saw the attempt from both the Vatican and the French episcopate to depoliticize the Catholic left and to take back control of both clergy and laity who were seen to be too enthusiastic in their critiques of the church hierarchy. From the initial censuring of the worker-priest project in 1952 to its complete dismantling by 1954, one by one, any theological movement or publication that supported the worker-priest project, the Catholic dialogue with Marxism, or the devolution of power to the laity, was given the order to desist or shut down. In essence, this was the crux of the crisis: the church hierarchy wanted a return to a world where order reigned through tradition and obedience, while the “progressivists” argued that such a thing was not possible, that the world had completely changed and unless the church adapted to it, the consequences would be devastating.

By 1955, the radical Catholic left in France had been harshly punished for stepping over
the line set by the hierarchy in numerous ways, yet “progressivism” had an enduring influence within French Catholicism, and would radically transform the landscape of Christianity in North Africa as well. It had introduced a highly-politicized Catholicism, but one that existed on the margins of organized political parties. Rather, it was a politics of solidarity. Progressivists argued that Catholics needed to understand and engage in the political and social struggles of the secular world in which they sought to find an expanding role for the Catholic Church in the modern world, rather than simply shutting themselves up in a self-contained, bourgeois sensibility. For some, this was a welcome and refreshing perspective that would eventually see its full potential in Vatican II and Liberation theology. For others, though, “progressisme” was the synonym for disobedience, and even treason.

**Politicized Catholicism in 1950s Algeria**

In French Algeria, Catholicism was inherently political, as the Catholic Church and the colonial regime had been deeply intertwined from the moment of conquest. French military and political leaders characterized the invasion of Algiers in 1830 as a modern crusade against the belligerent Ottomans and Barbary pirates, whose practice of enslaving “Christians” (i.e. white Europeans) became a *cause célèbre* in France during the early nineteenth century (Weiss 2011). Furthermore, the French believed a military victory in Algeria would come with an additional religious triumph through the liberation of Annaba, the former Roman homeland of Saint Augustine from Muslim occupation (Lorcin 1995). By the late nineteenth century, “Christianity” had become a mark of European identity, and the French defined the “indigenous” Arab and Berber populations by their attachment to Islam (Shepard 2006: Chapter 1). In the mid-twentieth century, approximately 800,000 of the slightly more than one
million European settlers described themselves as Catholic, and Catholicism in particular had become a cornerstone of European settler identity, as most settlers came from Catholic countries—not only France but also Spain, Italy, and Malta (Saâdia 2009: 174; Baussant 2002: 199-200). Despite growing anticlericalism after World War I, the Catholic community in Algeria from the interwar period to Algerian independence is generally described as conservative, fervently nationalist, and in the area around Oran with a large population of Spanish origin, given to “grandiose and emotional religious manifestations” (Nozière 1979: 103).

French law in Algeria further solidified ties between the Catholic Church and the colonial regime. Despite being legally part of France, and thus subject to the 1905 law of separation of church and state, the general government in Algeria continued to pay allowances of French Christian clergy, along with those of Jewish and Muslim religious leaders as long as they continued to serve the “national and public interest” (Saâdia 2005: 107-112; McDougall 2010). Additionally, one’s legal status in Algeria was defined by one’s religion: as Todd Shepard and others have noted, despite the territory’s legal incorporation into the metropole between 1848 and 1962, the indigenous “Muslims” of Algeria, as the French defined them, were excluded from the full benefits of French citizenship until 1958.3

To say that individual rights and “the dignity of the human person” were low on the list of discussion topics among Catholics of Algeria is a dramatic understatement. Thus it is hardly surprising that Jacques Maritain is not the Catholic intellectual who dominates discourse among either clergy or lay Catholics in Algeria between 1930 and 1962 (nor even the most

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3 While the French “civilizing mission” and project of assimilation put in place by 1865 offered the possibility that some “indigenous” men could achieve French citizenship through the renunciation of their “local civil status,” very few Algerians took up this option. After 1865, Algerian “Muslims” had French nationality, but not citizenship—a key distinction, as it left them with few political rights. Todd Shepard has argued that the French primarily used the term “Muslim” to delineate legal differences between the European and Algerian Arab populations and that it did not exist as a racial distinction until the postcolonial period (as opposed to simply defining religious affiliations). However, the language itself played heavily into Christian discourses about Algeria throughout the French colonial period as well (Shepard, 2006, chapter 1).
important Catholic intellectual whose last name begins with “M”). Rather, one is more likely to find references to Charles Maurras, Louis Massignon, or André Mandouze, all of whom had a significant political as well as intellectual influence on Catholicism in Algeria. While the Action française (which had been largely discredited in the metropole after its condemnation by the Vatican in 1926 and the collapse of the Vichy regime in 1944) and strains of far-right intégriste Catholicism continued to hold sway among a number of clergy and lay Catholics in Algeria well into the post-war period, even to the point of providing the moral and political framework for the OAS, it was arguably progressisme that had the more profound impact on Algeria in the 1950s.

While the vast majority of the European settler community barely acknowledged the existence of the indigenous Algerian population, the gradual awakening that developed within a small segment of the European Christian community to the injustices of the colonial system can be traced back to the burgeoning of Social Christianity in Algeria in the mid- to late-1930s, including the Catholic Action and JOC movements. Progressivist intellectual André Mandouze arrived in Algiers in 1946 to teach Latin at the University of Algiers and had a significant impact on youth movements, including the AJAAS (Association de la jeunesse algérienne pour l’action sociale), which brought together Christian, Muslim, and Jewish scout movements to work together through dialogue and social services to help solve many of the grave problems at the root of Algerian discontent. Its bulletin Consciences maghrébines, which Mandouze helped launch in 1954, quickly gained notoriety for its editorials in favour of radical economic reform and even Algerian independence. Both the AJAAS and Consciences maghrébines are now well known for having among their leadership key members of the future FLN (Front de libération nationale) and Catholics who were later arrested and tortured by the French military for their support of the Algerian nationalist movement (Fontaine 2012).

Even more challenging to the conservative Catholic establishment was the arrival in
1949 of the first community of the Mission de France, which was organized under the leadership of pied-noir priest Jean Scotto in the working-class neighbourhood of Hussein-Dey on the outskirts of Algiers. Jean Scotto and his team made several changes in the parish, many of which were quite radical for Algeria. With the motto “new wine in new vessels,” they reversed the altar so that the priests faced the congregation, and pronounced the Latin liturgy in French (Scotto and Ehlinger 1991: 80).  

Scotto also removed many of the statues and windows from the church, arguing that the goal was the “unification of the classes in simplicity” and asked Eric de Saussure, one of the members of the ecumenical Taizé order, to paint murals on the walls of the church (Scotto and Ehlinger 1991: 72-74). These changes, many of which would a decade later be among the most controversial revolutions in Catholic practice proposed by Vatican II, were an attempt to more directly engage with the working class population of the neighbourhood, many of whom had felt alienated by the formality and performance of the Latin mass. The MDF priests in Algiers, and a second team that was established in the eastern town of Souk-Ahras in 1950, sought to engage directly with the Muslim population of Algeria, a practice that later got the Souk-Ahras team expelled from the Constantinois for their alleged “nationalist connections.”  

In the Algerian context, the “progressivist” political solidarity with the communism of the working classes had transformed into support for the nationalist aspirations of the Algerian Muslims. Even in France, the MDF became widely notorious for being among the first groups to openly support Algerian independence, in its March 1958 bulletin Lettre aux communautés.  

Unsurprisingly, though, this open engagement with the Algerian population did not have widespread support among the Catholic population of Algeria, and it was particularly...

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4 Honoré Sarda, “Histoire de la MDF à Hussein-Dey,” Centre des archives du monde du travail (CAMT), Roubaix, France; fonds de la Mission de France (MDF), 1997015 0172.
5 “Rapport chronologique et explicatif concernant l’expulsion des prêtres de Souk-Ahras,” CAMT/MDF/1999013 0159/“Expulsion des prêtres de Souk-Ahras.”
6 Lettre aux communautés, Mars 1958. Archives of the MDF.
upsetting to the French military in charge of suppressing the “rebellion.” On 17 July 1957, in the midst of the series of events commonly known as the battle of Algiers, a headline in *L’Echo d’Alger* announced the trial of the “progressivist Christians” in the military tribunal of Algiers. Eleven Catholics and one Protestant had been arrested and charged with “undermining the security of the French state” for their alleged support of various Algerian nationalists and communists, including the “blonde woman” the French military initially believed was the bomber of the Milk-Bar in central Algiers. Among the detainees was a priest from the Mission de France, several Catholic social workers from Hussein-Dey who worked with Jean Scotto, and others closely associated with the AJAAS. I have argued elsewhere that this was a show trial, as all but one of the accused were found not guilty, despite several of them having been tortured and imprisoned for months, even after evidence had been found of their innocence. The point of the trial was for General Massu, the general in charge of the 10th Paratroop Division attempting to dismantle the FLN network in Algiers, to publicly discredit *progressisme* (Fontaine 2012: 746). For Massu, and several other top military leaders who had arrived in Algeria fresh off the battlefields of Indochina, *progressisme* was not just a dangerous theological perspective, it was evidence of political treason, as French military leaders increasingly saw Algeria as the newest battlefield in a “revolutionary war” against global communism (Thénault 2004; Branche 2001).

It was this element of revolutionary war that Massu and many others (who also saw themselves as good Catholics above all) claimed justified the French military’s use of torture and other violent acts against Algerians and Europeans who opposed French tactics in Algeria. Massu in particular had been engaged in a debate about the morality of the use of torture with Mgr Duval, the archbishop of Algiers. From the moment of his installation as archbishop in March 1954, Duval had gained a reputation for publicly condemning the excesses of the French military in the weekly Catholic bulletin of Algiers, the *Semaine religieuse d’Alger* while
privately urging his clergy to stay out of political affairs in parish circulars. In the 20 January 1955 Semaine religieuse, for example, Mgr Duval quoted sections of Pope Pius XII’s address to the IVth International Congress of Penal Law of 3 October 1953 that dealt with punishment, notably this phrase: “The judicial investigation must exclude physical and mental torture…” (Duval and Gonzalez 1982: 26). He also described military abuses as a violation of “natural law” and “human dignity,” pulling language directly from Papal discourses (Duval and Gonzalez 1982: 87-92). The problem, though, was that Duval seemed to be one of the only Catholic leaders in Algeria who saw Muslim Algerians as entitled to any rights, much less the rights of natural law or human dignity, and Massu certainly did not see Algerians or progressivists as entitled to the right of human dignity.

In what has become known as his riposte to Duval, who he later claimed constituted the greatest threat to the French military’s work in Algeria, Massu asked the R.P. Coignet, military chaplain of the 10th Paratroop Division, to write the “Reflections of a priest on urban terrorism,” which appears to have been distributed widely among French troops in Algeria. In his cover letter to the tract, Massu wrote that he invited “all worried or disoriented souls to listen” and that he hoped:

that these reflections of a priest would help to enlighten all those souls who had not been formed in the hard school of the ‘dirty war’ of Indochina and have not yet been able to comprehend that we cannot fight against the ‘revolutionary and subversive war’ conducted by International Communism and its intermediaries with the conventional methods of combat, but equally through clandestine and counter-revolutionary methods. The sine qua non condition of our work in Algeria is that these methods are admitted, in our souls and our consciences, as
Coignet’s analysis of why torture was “necessary and morally valid,” drew on the same Papal discourse as Mgr Duval’s rejection of torture as a legitimate tool of policing, but as Duval noted in his critique of the document, was selective and biased in its use of quotes. For instance, Coignet quoted individual lines such as “there are individuals who violate the law. Society must protect itself against them” while omitting any discussion of torture or types of permitted punishment. The document also cited the Pope’s 1956 Christmas radio message, which harshly condemned the Soviet invasion of Hungary as evidence of the need to eradicate all forms of communist infiltration from Algeria. It placed Catholic progressistes on the same level as Algerians who were, in the analysis of Coignet, all potential criminals, subversive elements, and “primitive peoples” in need of more primitive forms of punishment, which he justified with biblical citations about stoning.

Although accusations of disobedience to the Catholic hierarchy had long been launched against the progressistes, in this instance, it was Massu and defenders of French Algeria who saw the Catholic hierarchy as out of step with the political forces of modern life. After the conclusion of the trial of the chrétiens progressistes in Algiers, during which the definition of “Christian charity” had been a subject of debate in the military tribunal, Duval wrote a public editorial in which he rejected the highly propagandized label of progressisme. Afterwards, he received hundreds of letters from Catholics in Algeria who accused him of siding with Muslims and communists over his own parishioners. He gained the nickname “Mohamed Duval” and became a particular target of hatred for the staunchest defenders of French Algeria. His presbytery and that of Jean Scotto were targets of OAS bombs, while other well-known chrétiens progressistes were assassinated for their perceived support of Algerian

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independence; the “defence against progressisme” was one of the main OAS propaganda threads to recruit Catholics to their cause, especially as it became clear that it was not just the French state but also the vast majority of the Catholic hierarchy that had abandoned the cause of French Algeria, as evidenced by the ACA’s March 1962 statement in support of the cease-fire and Vatican pleas to end the violence (Fontaine 2016: 139, 166-169).

The Moral and Political Consequences of the Algerian War

Yet the political and moral divisions around progressivism, torture, and obedience to the hierarchy were not just an Algerian problem. In a memo that circulated through the Ministry of Algerian Affairs in late 1955, the French government demonstrated a deep concern about positions that the French Catholic and French Reformed churches were adopting against the repression and military solutions in North Africa. The writer of this memo noted, “With such directives, the clergy is particularly at ease to explain its doctrine concerning Franco-Muslim relationships, and we know that this doctrine has often taken a stance of a true defence in favour of the independence of Muslim communities.” This fear is particularly interesting because throughout the Algerian conflict, statements from the Assembly of Cardinals and Archbishops (ACA) tended to be quite vague on the topic of Algerian independence, issuing only a handful of public declarations on the war, all of which ordered support for “legitimate authorities” and none of which openly condemned torture or military tactics.

Throughout the war, the ACA continued to affirm that it was maintaining a respectful

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distance from political positions, and consistently reminded French Catholics of their duty to obey governmental authorities. As the crisis over conscientious objection and civil disobedience reached its peak in the early 1960s, the ACA condemned both positions, but expressed its concern for the “anguish of the young” who faced these questions (Mayeur 1988: 41). This position was unacceptable to many young Catholic draftees who sought consent from the Catholic hierarchy for their refusal to participate in torture, military service in Algeria, or even to desert the military in extreme situations. It also unsettled the French Catholic population in general, who looked to the French episcopate for guidance in an increasingly tense political atmosphere.

The question of civil disobedience, or insoumission, re-emerged with news that priests from the Mission de France were arrested for housing FLN militants, and for participation in the Jeanson network, whose 1960 trial became a public forum for debates about the question of civil disobedience (Chapeu 2004; Charby 2004). Although Cardinal Liénart openly supported his priests, Catholics and conservatives across France saw in their arrests further evidence of communism’s infiltration into the Catholic Church. Yet, one of the important texts that emerged from the controversy surrounding the Jeanson trial was the Manifeste des 121 on the right of civil disobedience in September 1960. And the defence of civil disobedience had also motivated the formation of the Comité de résistance spirituelle (Committee of Spiritual Resistance), a diverse group of influential Christians that included such prominent Protestants as André Philip and Paul Ricœur as well as Catholics like as François Mauriac, Jean-Marie Domenach, Louis Massignon, several priests of the Mission de France and former leaders of the Scouts de France (Comité de résistance spirituelle 1957). Although the Committee’s original goal was to inform the public of the grave injustices that were being committed in Algeria, it also served as a launching point for many Christians who became more active in movements for Algerian independence. These movements and ties were not limited solely to
France, however. As Mathilde von Bulow has shown, Germans were also directly implicated in the Algerian War, as the Federal Republic of Germany became the main sanctuary for Algerian militants of the French Federation of the FLN (von Bulow 2016: 84). Despite the government’s formal support for France, both the French Federation of the FLN and groups like the “progressivist Christians” in Algeria built solidarity networks in Germany that included Christian groups, West German trade unions as well as student movements who saw the Algerian War as a serious moral and political cause within a larger anti-colonial struggle that came to characterize West German Third Worldism of the 1960s (von Bulow 2016: 400-401).

**Conclusion**

By the end of the Algerian War in 1962, a radicalized Catholic Left, a population of youth and young veterans frustrated by the moral ineffectualness of French Catholic leaders, and the arrival in France of more than 800,000 European settlers from Algeria between 1961 and 1963, along with the more intégriste clergy had left wide swathes of the Catholic population in France alienated from the French episcopate. This had the consequences of a noticeable drop in church attendance and in new vocations for the priesthood, as French historian of Catholicism Etienne Fouilloux has observed. However, French Catholics were also more politicized than ever, if in new configurations a wider diffusion of Catholic political and religious activism in the aftermath of decolonization that also coincided with the launch of the Second Vatican Council in 1962.10 The French radical left of the 1950s, particularly the internal missionary movement and the worker-priests, had developed a vision of political engagement that demanded a full

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immersion in the secular world and solidarity in the political struggles of the working classes and Algerian nationalists (and other anticolonial movements) that were largely vindicated by the reforms and encyclicals of Vatican II, including Gaudium Et Spes (On the Church in the Modern World) and Ad Gentes (Decree on Mission Activity of the Church). Although the encyclicals and reforms of Vatican II did not explicitly condemn colonialism or the Catholic Church’s longstanding ties to colonial regimes, there was a marked shift within the discourses of the Vatican and within leftist Catholicism more generally toward Third Worldism and a focus on the church’s responsibility toward economic development and solidarity with the global south. Pope Paul IV went even further than John XXIII, for example, in his encyclical Populorum Progressio (1967) in suggesting the necessity for global economic redistribution, despite maintaining the dominant Catholic rejection of dialogue with Marxist ideologies (O’Malley 2010: 204-209).

In its Algerian context, the Catholics who came to be known as the chrétiens progressistes saw their form of solidarity (and in some cases direct political engagement in the FLN) as necessary to disentangle the Church from colonial state power in the eyes of Algerians. However, for those like General Massu who saw progressisme as a symbol of global communism, any radical political engagement was illegitimate and potentially treasonous. Conservative Catholics who justified their own political and moral positions with both Catholic theology and nationalist rhetoric, found it reprehensible that leftist Catholics would justify support for “Algerian terrorists” with a claim of “Christian solidarity.” When a Catholic French president—General de Gaulle—turned his back on their cause, the Catholic settler community was thrown into disarray, feeling betrayed by the Catholic hierarchy and the French state; an astonishing number threw their support behind the far-right paramilitary OAS, until they packed up their suitcases and joined the exodus to France (Thénault 2005: 216-218).

Once in France, many of the Catholic pieds-noirs settled in enclaves and organized
themselves into associations that promoted their status as exiles and victims of both the state and “progressivist” Catholicism (Boisson-Pradier 1968; Eldridge 2016). Mgr Bertrand Lacaste, the conservative former bishop of Oran, who had led one of the most fervently devoted populations of Catholics in French Algeria (a great many of Spanish origin), particularly in its performance of rituals toward the Virgin Mary of Santa Cruz in Oran, settled in Nîmes after independence and led a congregation of pied-noir Catholics who developed a replication of the pilgrimage of the Virgin of Santa Cruz throughout southern France. This pilgrimage, as anthropologist Susan Slyomovics has noted, strengthened Catholic pied-noir networks since the late 1960s and has attempted to unify exiled pied-noir Catholics around a sense of shared memory and loss (Slyomovics 1995; Baussant 2002). This performance of pilgrimage and nostalgic memory is in many ways less about religion than about the performance of exile, and it is unsurprising that it was led by a Catholic bishop who fought aggressively against progressisme in Algeria and the influence of leftist Catholic theologies and practices on the church in Algeria before independence.

This form of religious performance, however, was not a new feature of exile, but was in many ways a replication of Catholic practice in French Algeria. What was new, however, was the form of associational life that emerged with the growth of pied-noir memory and activist associations in France after 1962. What is interesting is that this form of associational life is co-terminus with the more active role of lay populations within French Catholicism in general in a wide range of associations, from the older missionary movements of the Catholic Action and the JOC, JEC, and the Scouts, to newer projects organized around the shifting political landscape of the aftermath of the Algerian War. But the promotion of the laïcat was a key reform of Vatican II, so this was not a particularly revolutionary innovation.

What is often described as the great “decline” of Christendom in the 1960s may be, rather, a diffusion of Catholic practices and power, and in some cases a refraction of
engagement on a more global level, as Dagmar Herzog has shown in the case of West Germany and Liberation theology, and which also is illustrated in examples from France and Belgium (Cholvy and Hillaire 2002: 160-166; Herzog 2006; Dols and Ziemann 2015). For the Catholic left in both France and Algeria, political Catholicism as defined by the politics of solidarity and engagement in the secular, modern world was renewed through the reforms of Vatican II, many of which were led by those very French theologians who had been censured for their progressisme only a decade before (O’Malley 2010: 119-120). As some historians have noted, the crises of 1968 were unsettling for the French Catholic Church as well, as the left wing of clergy (including those very same progressistes Chenu, Congar, and the Mission de France) and the laïcat seized the spirit of critique to further demand modernizations, such as the abolition of clerical celibacy; at the same moment, the Catholic right began to coalesce around the defence of tradition and support of the Pope (Cholvy and Hillaire 2002: 160-173). Although the French Radical Catholic Left exists on the periphery of formal party politics, it reshaped the meaning of political engagement and the political landscape of France in the era of decolonization.
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PART TWO
EUROPE DEFINED: IMAGINARIES AND PRACTICES
Europe and North Africa in Jacques Berque’s Historical Sociology

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Abstract

The life and career of sociologist Jacques Berque (1910-1995) straddled both imperial and post-imperial French North Africa. Berque worked as a colonial functionary in French Morocco beginning in the 1930s. By the 1950s he left his government post in Morocco to focus on sociological studies of the Arab world while championing third worldist causes such as Algerian independence. While the third worldism is often portrayed as a challenge to the Eurocentric assumptions inherent in the French civilizing mission, this examination of Berque’s trajectory from the 1930s to the 1960s illustrates the way third worldist social analysis and political commitments could emerge from within an adherence to the French civilizing mission, not as an exterior challenge to it.

Keywords: Civilizing mission, Orientalism, decolonization, third worldism, technology

The civilizing mission was inextricably linked to notions of progress and historical development. So, too, were the discourses surrounding French decolonization. Arguments justifying decolonization were often bolstered with claims about the natural progress of history
and the future of world affairs (Shepard 2006; Connelly 2002; Young [1990] 2004). This structural similarity is more than incidental. Assumptions about the future progress of the world and its development had also supported the process of imperial expansion. The metropole was ahead of the colony, both in historical and technological development, a position that bolstered arguments about how best to administer the colony’s future. Likewise, shifts in the way academic specialists and policy makers conceived of world history underpinned processes of imperial transformation and decolonization. While in some ways decolonization was a radical break from the history of imperialism, arguments in favour of decolonization did not necessarily provide a wholesale rejection of earlier historical narratives supporting imperial expansion. In some cases, arguments in favour of decolonization were based on the same assumptions about history and development that supported empire.

As a counter to the capitalist West and soviet East versions of modernity, the third world emerged as an alternative ‘project’ for building the future (Byrne 2016; Prashad 2007). Christof Kalter has recently noted an apparent divide between the social scientists who spoke of third worldism in developmental terms and political actors who created third worldism as a political ideology (Kalter 2016). Third world development discourse signified the modern world’s relationships with non-modern and non-Western spaces. These links were often articulated in terms of the expanding reach of global markets, approaches to the problem of poverty, and changing demographic patterns. Third worldist politics, on the other hand, involved anti-imperialism and spheres of political engagement that opposed Cold War choices between the capitalist West and communist East. In practice, however, both the social scientific and political discourses were often entangled. The back-and-forth between these two third worldisms meant that the third world was a category that was never stable or self-evident. It was always the result of what actors expected of it and how those actors’ experiences in turn shaped their expectations.
The work of the historian and sociologist Jacques Berque (1910-1995) traversed these shifting historical horizons and illustrates the unexpected ways in which the civilizing mission’s narrative of historical progress could be re-invented as a form of third worldism. The third world, according to Berque, was both a category of analysis and a political-revolutionary subject. Berque was the son of the influential colonial administrator and ethnographer, Augustin Berque. He began his career as a colonial functionary in Morocco before devoting himself to studying Arab history and sociology, working for UNESCO, and achieving a position at the Collège de France in Paris. His scholarship on the development of North African society in particular, and on the historical development of Arab societies more generally, highlights the ways in which the French civilizing mission’s views of history could be mobilized in favour of decolonization.

His early views of North African development focused on the technological guardianship (*tutelle*) involved in the civilizing mission. Moreover, he saw the development of Western Europe during the Agricultural and Industrial Revolutions as the main point of reference for evaluating and implementing technical development in French North Africa. As the French administration increasingly stifled his efforts at implementing development programs in Morocco throughout the 1930s and 40s, and as the reality of nationalist sentiment took hold in the 1950s, Berque theorized a model of North African historical development with political independence and technological modernization as its telos. This reformulation of North African history was part of a larger trend in the human sciences that began with the historical work of Charles-André Julien and continued through the postwar French social sciences’ broader construction of the ‘third world’ within modernization theory in France (Kalter 2016: 35-46; Balandier et al 1959; Sauvy 1952; Julien 1931). Third worldism was thus both a form of sociological analysis and a political position; for Berque, both senses of third worldism merged in a politically driven historical sociology.
Since Berque’s early thought was grounded in the civilizing mission in North Africa, the future of the two shores of the Mediterranean was inextricably linked. As he envisioned a North African future independent of French guardianship, the course of the French-Algerian War (1954-1962) also forced him to rethink Europe’s historical future. It even led him to question Western Europe’s privileged place as the instigator of historical and technological development. In this regard, he was part of a larger conversation provoked by the French-Algerian War about how best to theorize the categories of difference and otherness in terms of France’s relationship with Algeria (Le Sueur [2005] 2001). In addition, the larger dynamics that governed historical progress, and the role of human action, preoccupied many of Berque’s anticolonial contemporaries such as Jean-Paul Sartre ([1960] 2004) and Frantz Fanon ([1961] 2004). This problem furthermore preoccupied a wide array of other Marxist-Hegelian thinkers looking to make room for cultural, political, and social difference within a totalizing vision of progressive history (Young [1990] 2004; Jay 1984). On this score, Berque had no patience for the embrace of cultural difference through cultural relativism (on either methodological or cultural grounds) found in the work of Claude Lévi-Strauss, most notably his critique of Eurocentric conceptions of time. Any accusation of Eurocentrism would necessarily question the claims to progressive historical development on which the colonial project was premised (Lévi-Strauss [1952] 1987).

Tracing the development of Jacques Berque’s thought on historical development from the 1930s through the 1960s highlights a number of continuities between French colonialism and strains of third worldism. Firstly, it becomes apparent that even though Berque offered an early critique of classic Orientalist views, his position grew out of the ideological standpoint of the French civilizing mission rather than as a blanket rejection of empire. Secondly, even after he abandoned the position of the French guardianship in North Africa, he retained a series of fundamentally teleological beliefs: that technology was the main driving force in historical
development, that this development generally tended in one progressive direction, and that Europe had been the vehicle through which the modern world’s technological advancement emanated. Lastly, Berque’s interventions highlight the utopian power of third worldist narratives of decolonization in thinking about the political future of both the first and third worlds. After the end of the French-Algerian War, Berque was hopeful regarding the prospects of newly decolonized nations, as well as of the future of Western Europe.

In order to trace the genesis and transformation of Berque’s views of Europe and North Africa, this chapter will first examine the views of the civilizing mission and historical change that Berque articulated while working as a colonial administrator in Morocco in the 1930s and 40s. Next, it will focus on the period from the 1950s through the early 1960s, in which he became convinced of the need and legitimacy of Algerian independence; he also supported third the doctrine of worldism more broadly. Finally, it will turn to his analyses of Europe and North Africa in his studies on decolonization. Throughout, it will primarily focus on Berque’s studies of Morocco and Algeria, paying particular attention to his description of the relationship between Western Europe and North Africa, especially in the domain of technology.

**Modernization in Morocco**

Berque’s early life and work were in many ways direct products of the French empire and embodied a *pied noir* identity that saw itself as trans-Mediterranean, equally North African as metropolitan French. His father, Augustin Berque, was a second-generation *colon* in Algeria, a specialist in Islamic law, and a local government official who maintained a good reputation with both the settler population and Algerian nationalists. Berque’s mother descended from nineteenth-century Spanish settlers. From an early age, Augustin Berque insisted that his son
study both classical written Arabic as well as local Arabic dialects. This provided an uncommon yet advantageous basis for an education in a colonial society that generally viewed Arab and Berber languages and customs as backwards. After first studying at the University of Algiers, Jacques then studied for a year and a half at the Sorbonne. His formal studies were cut short, however, when he was offered a position as an Officer of Indigenous Affairs in Morocco in 1934. Over the next twenty years, Berque’s interactions with Berber and Arab communities in Morocco would serve as the launch pad for an ad hoc course in social ethnography. In the 1930s, Berque published studies on local legal codes, which were his first forays into the examination of North African social structures. Though unaffiliated with any university, he established contact with Fernand Braudel and regularly incorporated work published in the journals *Année sociologique* and *Annales* into his studies of North African legal contracts (Berque 1936a, 1936b, 2001a; Whidden 2010: 25).

When the war broke out in 1939, Berque served in the military in North Africa until the French surrendered in June 1940. Afterwards, Berque resumed colonial administrative duties in Morocco under Vichy control through the end of 1942. Following the liberation of Morocco from Vichy forces, Berque worked in the public affairs office in Casablanca and then moved to Rabat, where he worked on plans for reforming property rights and agriculture in the Moroccan Protectorate. These plans received considerable resistance from local colonists since they would have guaranteed the property rights of local Moroccans, thereby giving the local population a say in economic reform. As a result, from 1947 to 1953 his superiors exiled him to a civil controller (contrôleur civile) post in the High Atlas Mountains with express instructions not to return to Rabat (Sacriste 2011: 127; Berque 1980: 53, 78).

In this early period, Berque’s work for the colonial administration furthered the civilizing mission, even while his own views of historical development nuanced aspects of the ideology. In broad terms, the French civilizing mission justified imperial expansion with
arguments about France’s privileged place in modern historical development. The French colonization of North Africa that began in 1830 with the conquest of Algiers had both military and civilizational goals. Conquering the peoples and landscape of the Maghreb implied both domination and transformation; French involvement would transform a backward society, culture, and religion into a civilization that embraced the universal ideals of post-Revolutionary France, which was seen as the beacon of future historical progress. In practice, of course, French colonial rule and colonial encounters were hardly as monolithic as the ideology portended. Often, the policy of assimilation was set aside for one of ‘association’, where French administrators would build on the local social structures of the Muslim populations’ as a platform for change and a pathway leading towards a republican future. In general, despite humanistic rhetoric, the experience of colonization was marked by violence and upheaval. The promises of modern development were rarely kept (Sessions 2015; Abi-Mershed 2010). By the 1930s, colonial elites and their representatives in government ensured a system in which they profited from cheap labor and unequal land distribution while reformers were thwarted at every turn.

This model of historical development was diffusionist in its outlook and froze North Africa in a backwards, allochonic sense of time. For French policy makers and administrators in North Africa, this meant introducing technology from Europe in order to develop the territory into a modern nation. Furthermore, these notions of time held that persons or groups existing in the same chronological era could nonetheless represent different stages in world-historical development. Two such groups could be at once coeval, existing in the same synchronic moment, while one was labelled modern and the other non-modern, backwards, savage, or primitive (Blaut 1993; Fabian 2014: 37-69). Nineteenth and early twentieth-century French discourse on North Africa held that historical development had been halted at least since the seventh-century Arab conquest, and perhaps even as far back as the waning of the
Roman Empire. The French conquest of North Africa, then, was supposed to bring the area out of its temporal lag by injecting it with France’s modern technology and civilizational ideals.

Berque’s early studies on Moroccan law and social practices attempted to mediate between local particularities and universal models as he traced the pre-Islamic and pre-colonial legal traditions that remained in place in the rural countryside. As a result, his work often blurred the line between legal anthropology and abstract legal theory (Mahé 2001). In his studies of the technological and agricultural development of Morocco, he drew from the sociological and historical models of feudal societies being developed by early Annales School theorists in order to interpret the particularities of the Maghreb. For instance, in a 1937 article published in Annales d’histoire économique et sociale, Berque stressed the specificity of Moroccan society even as he pointed to broader features which would enable broader comparisons with the rest of the Maghreb as well as with other regions. In Berque’s view, the Maghreb was ‘primitive’ according to the framework developed by orientalist historian Robert Montagne, but the cross-cultural exchanges in the region meant that the typical inhabitant of the Maghreb was both primitive and precocious. As was common at the time, Berque characterized North African society as fundamentally feudal, especially when describing the social and political structures that were furthest removed from the French administration. This feudal nature also encouraged comparisons with other feudal societies, notably pre-Revolutionary France. According to Berque, for instance, the periodic fluctuations in the use of the Moroccan countryside were both peculiar and fundamentally similar to the rhythms of pre-modern French forest clearing (1937: 229, 232). Famed historian and Annales co-founder Marc Bloch introduced Berque’s essay by discussing the benefits of comparative history, noting ‘For these studies, could one imagine a field more appropriate than our own Morocco…?’ (Bloch 1937: 229). While the French presence in Morocco had disturbed its traditional social structures and practices, Morocco’s development nonetheless remained
analogous to that of pre-modern Western Europe.

The reform programs proposed by Berque following the Second World War called for massive investments in Morocco’s agricultural base. As early as 1939, he outlined a position that tried to understand the remnants of the pre-colonial Moroccan economy on its own terms. Yet he also stressed the need for adapting western industry to Moroccan society (1939: 8). Openly critical of what he characterized as ‘the myth of progressive reforms’ instituted gradually over a long period of time, he called for ‘nothing less than the refabrication of the Moroccan countryside’, claiming that these interventions ‘[would] either be complete or amount to nothing at all’. Such a program would not only improve the material lives of rural Moroccans (whom he compared to rural French peasants, the true peuple of the country) but would also be the foundation for social and cultural modernization. According to Berque, this ‘apprenticeship to modern life’ was directly tied to the ‘majority’ of the people, meaning both their democratic will and their legal maturity. Muslim Moroccan participation in the programs would provide experience in democratic decision-making and integrate them more fully into French civic and legal systems. Though most changes would be initiated via colonial administrators, local councils should also have a say in reform projects. According to this plan, ‘the tractor and the threshing machine become tools of freedom [matière à liberté]’ ([1945] 2001: 37, 39, 40, 41). Not only would Berque’s vision have provided a framework for greater political participation within the Moroccan protectorate, but it also implicitly called for the direction of the Moroccan economy by local Moroccans. On the political spectrum of the time, Berque’s views were certainly radical (Julien 1953: 64), even though he thought the future of Morocco would be achieved with French mentorship. While Berque did not yet advocate for Moroccan independence from France, critics of these reforms pointed out that they threatened French political and economic hegemony by ceding more economic and political control to Muslim Moroccans.
The exile to the Atlas Mountains that resulted from Berque’s proposals proved fortuitous as it provided the basis for his study, *Les Seksawa: Recherches sur les structures sociales du Haut-Atlas occidental* (*The Seksawa: Research on the Social Structures of the High Atlas Mountains*, 1954). Berque argued against the notion that Maghrebi society enjoyed a stable tribal structure, pointing out that tribal affiliations and motivations changed according to historical circumstances. Familial ties were not the only consideration to take into account; one also had to account for needs relating to pasturage and water as well as the changes brought upon by colonial administration. While arguing for the uniqueness of the social communities in the Atlas Mountains, he also demonstrated that they were not isolated from and immune to historical change, as had been held by nearly all Orientalist commentators since the nineteenth century. And yet, Berque reiterated many of his earlier positions with regard to North Africa’s relationship to historical change. On the one hand, the Seksawa of the High Atlas Mountains lived in ‘a Mediterranean island, isolated and outside of time [anachronique]’. This led to a social system that was largely self-referential. However, Berque postulated that many of the features of this mountain-society could be compared to those of the European Pyrenees, and was able to discern traces of interaction with French authorities (1954: 6, 28, 59, 445).

The book was well received when it was published in 1954, earning him university positions and recognition among Paris’ intellectual circles. In 1956, Berque received the newly created Chair of Contemporary Islam at the Collège de France and was elected to the Sixth Section of the École Pratique des Hautes Études, which later became the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS). Following the outbreak of the French-Algerian War, he became a regular expert commentator on the social and political development of North Africa. By 1958, his university seminars and public interventions made a forceful case regarding the necessity for, and legitimacy of, Algerian independence. In turn, his scholarly output changed as well. For example, he more openly and consistently challenged earlier scholarship dealing
with Arab societies. He also began to rethink Europe’s privileged place vis-à-vis North Africa, though he still maintained many of his assumptions about historical development, particularly with regard to the role of technology.

**From the Civilizing Mission to Third Worldism**

Berque’s Paris-based work throughout the 1950s and 60s marked a turning point in his estimation of the civilizing mission and the historical development of North Africa. He argued that the process of decolonization was not only triggered by problematic colonial relationships, but also represented the fulfilment and surpassing of the civilizing mission itself. After leaving the High Atlas Mountains in 1953, following the French-backed coup against Sultan Muhammad V, he briefly worked for UNESCO as an expert on agrarian and technological modernization, living in the Egyptian village of Sirs al-Layyan. He later claimed that it was in this period that his politics became third worldist, particularly as a result of interactions with North African nationalists (Whidden, 2010: 25-27; Berque 1989: 153, 1980: 61-62).

His sociological work would take a similar turn. The very term ‘third world’ had only been coined in 1952 by demographer Alfred Sauvy. It soon became a broad category for both social scientists and political activists (Sauvy 1952; Kalter 2016: 42-46). Berque’s embrace of third worldism is apparent in his university lectures, his newspaper interviews and editorials, as well as his major published works from the period. For instance, from 1957 to 1959, Berque led the University Committee for the Solution to the Algerian Problem, describing the aims of the first conference as attempting to answer the question ‘What is Algeria?’ (Sacriste 2011: 154-162). In early 1956, like many French intellectuals, even those who self-identified as anti-colonial, Berque still held out hope for a peaceful reconciliation between metropolitan France
and Algeria. Yet by 1958 he saw the divorce between the two territories as unavoidable and even necessary.

Early in this period, Berque wrote two influential and now-famous evaluations of French studies of North Africa, highlighting the contributions of nineteenth and twentieth century French Orientalist studies as well as their conceptual limitations (1956; [1956] 2001). First and foremost, Berque indicted the continued tendency to speak on behalf of Arabs without actually speaking to them or immersing oneself in their cultures. Secondly, because the study of North Africa emerged in a colonial context, it was impossible to separate individual studies from their institutional and political support. This was perhaps most clear in the case of the Arab Bureaus (Bureaux Arabes), the French-government-run offices in charge of colonial policy in North Africa, whose studies were ‘too engaged, too contiguous […] with their object. Their sin was utilitarianism and impressionism’ (1956: 302). But even subsequent researchers had been carried away by contemporary concerns and as a result left significant gaps in the historical record of North Africa. Sources for the process of the French conquest, as well as for local social and legal conflict, existed and were accessible. But their research did not meet the political demands of the present. The result had been the absence of a concrete study of the ‘Maghrebi man’ (l’homme maghrébin).

Berque believed his own period showed promise of changing this ironic situation, even if it came at a time when some North Africans were rebelling against French rule (324). As Berque explained in his first lecture at the Collège de France: ‘It is no longer possible today, if it ever were in the first place, to study what might become of the Arab language or civilization without the cooperation of Arabs’. Though abstract methods of quantification and measurement in fields like economics and demography were increasingly necessary, Berque pushed against arguments made by contemporaries like Alfred Sauvy that saw population
growth and economic investments as the main drivers of political life\textsuperscript{1}. He furthermore warned against seeing these quantitative sciences as automatic keys for divining the future. Careful attention to local constraints, customs, and habits was needed. Studying the vehicles of modern Arab renewal, such as the unifying force of radio broadcasts or the desires expressed in novels, made evident previously silent dynamics of historical change (Berque [1956] 2001: 229, 231; 1953).

Even while Berque argued for understanding North Africa on its own terms, he also stressed that ‘This history is not autonomous’. While it was not appropriate to simply rely on a rhetorical gesture of positing the Arab world as the antithesis of the western world – ‘alterity, according to our philosophers’ – the modern Arab world was looking for its own identity in a context where the industrialized West had already determined the rules of the game. Invoking Octave Mannoni’s then-popular heuristic of colonial revolt, Berque cautioned:

This time, Caliban does not rebel against an enchanting Florentine, but against ‘already-existing conditions’. In the background a tempest rages that no genie could appease. We invoke Ariel in vain. No contemporary revolt could succeed without being integrated into technical civilization, otherwise known as the merciless dominion of cause and effect. ([1956] 2001: 227-228; Mannoni 1950)

The Arab world could not rely on a notion of radical alterity, cut off from the rest of the world, even in a moment of independence. This was especially true if this alterity relied on a pre-colonial identity. Likewise, the sociologist writing in 1956 could not separate himself from current events. ‘The researcher is a man, of a particular country’, admitted Berque, adding that ‘Neglecting this fact amounts to a personal fault, hiding it amounts to lying’. Responsible

\textsuperscript{1} Sauvy, A., “Trois mondes, une planète”, \textit{L’Observateur}, 14 August 1952.
science took the world as it presented itself at a particular historical conjuncture, neither fleeing nor encouraging conflict ([1956] 2001: 237).

Berque’s academic conclusions also reached a broader public audience thanks to shorter editorials he published in the journal *Esprit* and newspaper *Le Monde*. In the March 1958 issue of *Esprit*, Berque agreed with the Algerian National Liberation Front’s (FLN) criticisms of French intellectuals who only saw the struggle in terms of static ‘ideologies’ and ‘sentiments’ that failed to capture the realities of the war. He also presented a new vision of North African politics that would replace his earlier commitment to French guardianship. ‘I do not believe’, he stated, ‘that the existence of these new North African nations represent a disavowal, but rather the continuation and surpassing of the work France has done in these countries’. If Algeria had been a nation of apprentice-Republicans, now they were journeymen on track to overtake the position of their former masters (1958a: 491-492). After the French military and *pieds noirs* demonstrators brought down the Fourth Republic in 1958, Berque became less convinced that the European population in Algeria had any right to be a part of Algeria’s future. As he explained in *Le Monde*, a divorce from France was now inevitable, since it was part of a ‘natural evolution’ that demonstrated ‘the validity of the French project in this country’. The *pied noir* population of European descent in Algeria, however, proved they were not living up to the heritage of the French Revolution through their continued support of the colonial status quo.²

This change in attitude toward the future of France’s relations with Algeria accompanied Berque’s first major statements on the historical trajectory of the Orient (by which he meant the Middle East inhabited by Arab peoples). First in *Les Arabes* (*The Arabs*, 1959) and then expanded upon in *Les Arabes, d’hier à demain* (*The Arabs, from Yesterday to Tomorrow*, 1960), Berque outlined a view of history informed by his earliest writings as a

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colonial administrator. In the early years of the Fifth Republic, he set forth a vision centred on the need for technological reform and innovation, employing heterogeneous references to contemporary social theorists and philosophers that ranged from Georges Gurvitch, Claude Lévi-Strauss, and François Perroux to Jean Hyppolite, Gilbert Simondon, Ferdinand de Saussure, Henri Lefebvre, and Martin Heidegger.

In this historical vision, two ruptures punctuated world history: the emergence from the paleolithic era with the institution of agriculture and sedentary societies, and the passage from pre-industrial modes of production to rationalized industry. According to Berque, while the latter shift first occurred in Europe at the end of the eighteenth century, the Orient was currently on the verge of going through the same shift; it was torn between a pre-industrial ‘sacral’ orientation and an industrialized ‘historic’ orientation (1960: 46). While this schema looks in many ways like a move of Orientalist dehistoricization, Berque did not claim that the Orient had no history. Instead, he asserted that its history was coded in sacred imagery, a cyclical temporality punctuated by ritual, tradition, and natural cycles. These rhythms are strikingly similar to the early Annales analyses of Ancien régime France that Berque read in the 1930s. In contrast to the sacral, the historic displayed a self-conscious version of technical progress. This framework effectively recoded the reigning developmental discourse, outlining a technologically based Hegelianism. In this schema, modern movements for decolonization emerged as the result of imperialism’s internal contradictions. Berque explained that:

[T]he history of the Orient appears as the inverse of that of the contemporary West. This last fittingly begins by a technical revolution, in order, little by little, to found a national entity, from economic entities, then to pass to perspectives of social reorganization, always moving from the most concrete to the most ideal, and from force to justice. For the Orient, it will be exactly the inverse. It commences through the ideal, or at least through the claim to justice. One might almost say of this Oriental history
what Marx said of Hegel’s philosophy: one must turn it over, since it proceeds by walking on its head. (90)

Before the colonial encounter, a historical time lag existed between the Orient and Occident, but European colonial projects and western technological norms had begun to close this gap. The movements against imperial rule Berque described thus represented the beginning of a new stage in world history. Anticolonial struggles were therefore not simply an uprising where ‘the colonial age is simultaneously the object’ of revolt, the thing against which the colonized rebelled. Those colonial ventures were ‘also the motor of their revolt’ (25-26). This was not an automatic transposition of the West’s economic and technological versions of modernity, nor did it necessarily require further integration into imperialist markets.

From this dialectic emerged a new set of possibilities for the Arab world. ‘Concretely’, Berque reasoned, ‘the study [of the Arab world’s modernization] must distinguish between psychological stages, geographic zones, the phases of an evolution’. This results in an allochronic map of the Orient’s path toward an appropriated western modernization: these evolutionary phases ‘may even be observed with an experimental clarity because the diverse Arab milieux reveal the successive stages and put into play the various themes of modernization’ (107-108). Berque was perhaps overly optimistic of the international economic rewards of such a process, parrying the pessimism of François Perroux’s theory of economic domination. According to Perroux, economic transactions were never neutral. Rather, they always created and reinforced relations of power and control (Perroux 1948). In Berque’s vision, new nations would place themselves ‘out of circulation’ (hors-marché) and create economies of ‘de-domination’ (Berque 1960: 45).

Subsequently, the development of the Orient was a dialectic that sat somewhere between analogy and homology with the West. The two modernizations had the same source
in Western technology, but similarities between their developmental stages and outcomes remained at a structural level. The Orient’s modernization appeared similar to that of the West because both were grounded in technological change. The differences between the Orient and the West, however, were due to the cultural, social, and political contexts in which the change occurred. Each new instance of modernization in the Orient would necessarily bring the same essential developments as their modern Western predecessors, albeit with local cultures, recent historical experiences, and preserved traditions producing a new species of modernization. Modernizing nations would always have to negotiate which elements of its ‘authentic’ past would be kept as they changed to accommodate the future. Berque’s references to European revolutions show this dynamic at work and imply that the French Revolution provided the ultimate template for all revolutionary change. For instance, when describing the process of adapting and at times abandoning local traditions in the process of modernization, Berque explained, ‘Every society, and perhaps [Arab society] more so than others is today constrained to choose between rival values and at times between mutually-exclusive options’. He then noted that the same drama of the ‘liquidation of values’ is littered throughout Michelet’s History of the French Revolution (1960: 153, 153n.). Revolutions in the Orient were therefore the logical long-term consequence of the West’s imperial expansion, despite the West’s refusal to admit as much: ‘Europe, and above all France, refuses to acknowledge Arab fidelity to [Europe’s] lessons in their national and social upheavals. Though they are an historical accelerant, they paradoxically, ruinously remain attached to the past’ (244).

Berque’s description of the Arab Orient was largely silent on the Maghreb, but he subsequently published an analysis of the Maghreb during the interwar years. In this work, he applied his analysis of the Orient to Charles-André Julien’s basic narrative of the growth in nationalism during the first four decades of the twentieth century (Julien 1953). Composed in the final three years of the Algerian War, Le Maghreb entre deux guerres (The Maghreb
between the Two World Wars, 1962) portrayed the political history of the interwar years as the implosion of French imperialism and as the self-fulfillment of the civilizing mission. The Maghreb’s historical trajectory matched the rest of the decolonizing Arab world. Imperialism transformed the sacral orientation of the Maghreb and in the process the French civilizing mission fulfilled its project in its own self-destruction: ‘the interwar Maghreb, triumph of the colonial project, fed its own undoing [nourrissait sa propre perte]. It contained within itself, as the philosopher would say, its own negation’ (1962a: 11).

In response to the colonial situation, the Maghreb’s nationalist political identity formed around three elements: a resurgent ulema class holding to notions of purifying Islamic society – a tendency Berque called ‘Jacobin’ (73) – the unifying role of mass communication through Arabic print publications and the radio, and the failures of colonial reform projects. Reality never lived up to the civilizing mission’s symbolic promise and the colonial venture was ‘just as wasteful of the faculties of the colonizer’s as of the colonized’s existence’ (412). The only thing saving this historical process from tragedy was the belief that ‘history carries in itself its own remedy and perhaps its pardon’ (423). Elsewhere, Berque stated that ‘the new North African nations did not contain within them the disavowal, but the continuation and overtaking of the work France had done in these countries’ (1958a: 492). In the process of fulfilling French ideals, however, the Maghreb also had to enter into a struggle with itself, an attempt to mediate its past and future orientations. The result was a new jihad in the Maghreb, according to the dual meanings of the term as a struggle against an outside force and a struggle within oneself: ‘less as a war against the other than as a war against the self, against a certain sort of self. And it is equally in this sense that one might interpret the title of this book’ (1962a: 421, 424). In the struggle for national independence, the Maghreb needed to not only to find its identity by rejecting French civilization but also manage to transcend its own internal contradictions.
Europe Decentered

Both *Les Arabes d’hier à demain* and *Le Maghreb entre deux guerres* were written in the middle of the Algerian War of Independence and the process of decolonization, a process that was never self-evident and whose aims and structure constantly evolved (Shepard 2006). As the war ended, Berque began to reflect on what the process of decolonization itself meant, attempting to not only reevaluate the past of the colonized world, but also map possible trajectories for its future and that of the West. On the one hand, Berque continually insisted that this was necessary, since the ‘sense’ of history determined what comprised its essential components (1962: 10). Without a view toward the future trajectory of the current historical moment, it would be impossible to discern what was most important about the present. Yet on the other hand, this was an immensely arduous task. Historians can make sense of the past, ‘But it is much more difficult, I don’t say to predict the near future, but to analyse what the present holds’ (1962b: 1). Put another way, for Berque this balancing act meant discerning between ‘the fate of the gods’ and ‘the freedom of men’ (1962a: 412). Berque believed history moved in a knowable direction, but when one was within the historical processes under examination, it was often impossible to gauge the present’s historical potential. There was no Archimedean position from which historical certainty could be achieved.

Despite these developments in his thought, as well as the dashing of his hopes for the postcolonial world in the 1960s, he still believed that historical change must be progressive and that historical developments were largely structured by the proper adaptation of technology to local contexts and global needs. After the colonial world rid itself of European domination, technology could then be developed according to local needs and cultures, rather than simply being shoe horned according to Western models (1962c; 1964; 1970; Berque, Domenach, and
Thus, according to Berque, the process of decolonization involved not simply a reversal in terms of sovereignty, but instead implied a process of self-discovery and new becoming. In one sense this was a continuation of his earlier dialectical understanding of historical development. Coded in terms of Aristotelian drama, decolonization meant a form of *anagonoresis*, or the moment of self understanding that follows *peripeteia*, a reversal in standing: ‘In truth, many people today, ex-colonizers and ex-colonized, discover themselves, which is to say gradually decoding their past of sufferings and outrages, resume a path that is no longer mythical, but real, no longer personal, but collective, the Oedipal search’ (1964: 43).

The problem according to Berque, as well as many of those who speculated about the postcolonial future, was twofold. Newly-decolonized territories needed to embark on a new path without reverting to a stagnant imagined past deemed authentic at the expense of innovating according to the modern world. And these territories needed to avoid repeating the sins of the colonial father: concentrating capital in the hands of the few and embracing a nation-state model that prevents international cooperation. For decolonization to be successful, it needed to vertically integrate all forces – both within its society and eventually to the international arena. In the eyes of Berque and other third worldist thinkers, ‘the struggle for emancipation is a rehearsal for what will – what should – be the future global society’ (1964: 161). The high stakes of decolonization, which was a central development for the future of the entire world, and the high demands Berque placed on decolonizing territories, point to the very utopianism of Berque’s vision. It is difficult to think of a decolonized territory that achieved such ambitious goals. For example, following Houari Boumédienne’s 1965 coup in Algeria, Berque became more and more pessimistic about Algeria’s ability to achieve its potential (1989: 198-99). Ben Bella, after all, had promised a plan of socialist reform, and a military-backed coup suggested that the earlier Jacobinism of the war was now followed by a period of Bonapartism. Nonetheless, Berque remained optimistic about the future.
With North Africa’s entry onto the modern world-historical stage, Berque also revisited the once-dominant place he held for Western Europe. Within the North African colonial world, European civilization had failed, since it never lived up to its promises of technological modernization. By the end of the French-Algerian War, Berque took Algerian decolonization as emblematic of the tendencies present in anti-colonial movements (1964: 45). To the extent that Western Europeans did not recognize their revolutionary heritage in struggles for decolonization, they placed themselves in this historical rearguard. Whereas previous crises of national consciousness in France, such as the Dreyfus Affair, were limited to the framework of ‘institutional critique’, decolonization engaged ‘a global space. It reflected the movement not of only one people but of all peoples’ (1964: 44). This process of Western self-reflection also involved reassessing the West’s relationship to technology in the modern era.

Rather than simply fetishizing the West’s industrial development as an automatic sign of progress, Berque now held that current manifestations of Western development attested to an historical blockage: the problem of rising inequality and capitalist accumulation were problems that a socialist politics needed to overcome in order to achieve a truly industrial civilization, or what Berque called the ‘value world’ (valeur monde). The emergence of this value world ‘catalysed in the achievements of independence, in the Afro-Latino-Asiatic revolutions, and in the exercise of diversity. This will penetrate our own social conflicts and interiority. The reciprocal is no less true. History must operate on three registers: through the personal level, social liberation, and global pluralism’ (Berque, Domenach, Thibaud 1970: 335). According to Berque’s position in the 1960s, formerly colonized territories were no longer at a developmental remove from the West, but rather different coeval iterations of the same modern phenomena. In this way the West no longer held its hegemonic historical place in the postcolonial world.

While it might be tempting to conclude that Berque had completely provincialized the
West’s place within the world, elements of his earlier comparative biases remained in his conceptualizations of the Western and the Arab worlds. Berque maintained that in the course of practising social science, local conditions always needed to be privileged above and beyond generalized schemas. These schemas included the French Revolution, the Soviet Revolution, ‘the American Way of Life’, and British Parliamentarianism; each one could highlight historical dynamics at work in non-Western spaces. According to Berque, ‘if they are adequate, it is not because of the original experience from which they proceed, whatever its shock value or exemplarity’. This position seems to be at odds with his earlier diffusionism. But nonetheless, he still held that these schemas ‘matter because they more profoundly penetrate the human condition [ils pénètrent plus profondement dans l’homme et dans les choses]’ (1962b: 4-5). Even at the end of his life, Berque maintained hope that France’s history contained not simply errors – imperial and otherwise – but also a unique set of tools for future progress (1995: 302-303).

Conclusion:

Berque’s continued optimism about the future prospects of North African development reinforces the power of third worldism’s utopian visions in the second half of the twentieth century. Especially in the wake of the West’s confrontations with the dark sides of its modernity, whether in the horrors of the Holocaust and World Wars or the traumas of decolonization, a wide range of thinkers and activists found that the third world offered hopes for political renewal, revolutionary change, and alternative futures. Many radical metropolitan Europeans were interested in third world revolutions because they pointed to the possibility of revolutionary renewal in Europe itself. Third world leaders also followed Berque’s analyses of
North African history – its historical past and future trajectory – with close attention. Algerian nationalists regularly attended his lectures at the Collège de France. Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi, a member of the FLN and future Minister of Culture for Algeria read Berque’s work while imprisoned in France and corresponded about Berque’s work with other FLN members (Sacriste 2011: 150-153; Ibrahimi 1988: 42, 49, 52-53, 74, 82).

In Berque’s case, third worldism emerged out of his commitment to the civilizing mission’s belief historical progress driven by technological modernism, not in opposition to it. Rather than simply being a process of recognizing the formerly colonized other, this was also a process of self-recognition – hence Berque’s emphasis on the French and Industrial Revolutions as diagnostic analogies for understanding the Arab world’s development. The more Berque could objectivize North Africa’s historical development as a continuation of technological adaptation, the more confident he could be about its prospects for future historical progress after independence. This belief in progress also offered him hope that the West could develop into a more egalitarian entity as well.

This last point further reinforces the lesson that the third world, and the postcolonial condition in which it found itself, was not simply a self-evident category in the postwar period. Rather, the third world was a category of analysis that was discursively created, often through the combination of experiences and conceptualizations stretching back to the height of French imperialism itself. Western third world theorists often molded the category from experiences within imperial spaces that structured their expectations for post-imperial futures. Berque lived the first half of his life in North Africa, immersing himself in the varied cultures, customs, and social structures of the Maghreb. His experiences within North Africa, his frustrations with hollow reform promises, and his interactions with nationalist leaders led him to reconceptualize what he envisioned as the Arab and Western worlds. There were clearly the limits to his analyses in which Europe remained the source of historical change in North Africa. Yet they
were nonetheless prescient forays into thinking about the colonial encounter that transcended strictly Manichaean terms and explored both the hybridity of empire, as well as the possibilities for cross-cultural exchanges.
Bibliography


“Foreigners in Our Own Land”: Importing North African Experiences of Nativism, Gendered Islamophobia, and Muslim Activism to Europe

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Abstract:

It is counter-intuitive that to understand current developments in constructions of nationalism and anti-immigrant sentiment in Europe we would be advised to look at North Africa, at the Spanish colonial outposts of Melilla and Ceuta and what happened there since the 1980s. Few scholars have incorporated the history of these cities into European narratives of democratization, migrant incorporation, and anti-immigrant prejudice. Ceuta and Melilla have been perceived as peripheral exceptions, as uncomfortable legacies of a colonial past only relevant insofar as they could undermine diplomatic and good-neighbourly relations with Morocco. I argue that Ceuta and Melilla have also been microcosms of the challenges connected with migration and cultural diversity Europe is experiencing today. Looking at how ethnic Europeans experimented with and ultimately discarded nativist positions, how Muslim Melillans became active citizens rather than tolerated foreigners, and how Muslim women negotiated their rights while avoiding the traps of gendered Islamophobia shows an alternative way of migrant and minority incorporation with relevant historical lessons for Europe today.

Keywords: Nativism, Migration, Gender, Islam, Europe, Spain, Islamophobia, Citizenship, Democratization, Muslim Women, Melilla, North Africa
Does what happen in the North-African Spanish city of Melilla stay in Melilla? Many scholars seem to think so. Melilla is a colonial outpost believed to be a remnant of a previous time. As a result, it is assumed that experiences regarding migration, religious pluralism and gender relations, as well as the socio-economic difficulties in the city, bear little resemblance to the rest of Europe. Or does it? In this chapter I argue that the experiences regarding Muslim incorporation, gender dynamics, and exclusionary constructions of nationalism that emerged in Melilla in the mid-1980s have proven to be a forerunner of what European societies are experiencing in the twenty-first century.

The study of Ceuta and Melilla has taken place in three different levels. First, scholars have focused on the cities as conflict-ridden spaces in the context of international relations between Spain and Morocco (Planet 1998; Gold 2000; Wiegand 2011). Second, they have been analysed as transit cities for immigrants and refugees in the context of protecting the borders of the European Union (EU) (Saddiki 2014; Andersson 2014). Third, they have been viewed interesting anthropological and ethnologic case studies (Rosander 1991; Driessen 1992). Yet it is rare for them to be included as part of the conversations on the characteristics and dynamics of an intercultural city (García Rodríguez 1999), the processes and outcomes of the democratization process Spain experienced after 1975 (Guia 2014), or the discourses and practices of nativist and anti-immigrant outbursts in Europe (Guia 2016).

Melilla is a mid-sized Spanish city located on the Mediterranean coast of North Africa, at the northeast edge of the Moroccan Rif Mountains. Prior to the conquest of the city by Spain in 1497, Melilla was part of the Kingdom of Fez. Although bordering Imazighen tribes and Moroccan authorities have repeatedly threatened the sovereignty of the enclave, Melilla has remained a Spanish military outpost since its conquest. In addition to being an important military hub, Melilla’s free port was integral to the transport of both legal and illicit goods; its economy was dependent on trade with the surrounding Moroccan territory, as well as on
investments and tax breaks from Spain. By 1975, however, Melilla’s economic splendour was behind it and its free port status was threatened by Spain’s application to join the customs union of the European Economic Community.

Melilla reached a peak population of 81,182 in 1950. Most of those of European descent came from the Spanish provinces of Madrid, Malaga, Barcelona, Seville, the city of Ceuta – also on the north coast of Africa, and other Andalusian provinces.¹ The census of 1985 put the population of Melilla at 52,388, of these 2,827 were of Moroccan descent. But because the border that divided Melilla and Morocco was porous, the number of undocumented residents was unknown. Some Muslim leaders claimed that 27,000 undocumented residents lived in Melilla; a 1986 census indicated they amounted to 17,824, that is, 25.3 per cent of Melilla’s official residents in 1985. Undocumented Muslim residents were either Moroccan citizens, stateless, or held a colonial document called a Statistics Card, which was used for little more than identification purposes (Planet 1998, 30-37). Regardless of their numbers, undocumented residents of Melilla had none of the democratic guarantees enshrined in the newly 1978 Constitution.

First, this article discusses Melilla’s anti-Muslim conflict from 1985 to 1987 and explains the appeal of nativism, which posed a challenge to liberal democracy. The term ‘nativism’ was coined in the nineteenth century to describe principles advanced by the anti-foreign and anti-Catholic American Party, also known as the Know Nothing Party, in the United States of America (USA) in the 1850s (Higham 1988 [1954]). Nativism is a philosophical outlook and an eclectic collection of policies that redefines who the ‘real’ people of a political unit are and who consequently should have more rights and decision-making power to determine the characteristics of that society vis-à-vis a group considered as exogenous.

and incapable of assimilating. Today, nativism can refer to the movement that seeks to restrict the flow of immigrants, or more broadly to an ethnocentric view that seeks to maintain the racial, religious, and political status quo in a political unit. These two policy-oriented and philosophical approaches are not incompatible. Here, I define nativism as a philosophical position, sometimes translated into a movement, whose primary goal is to restrict immigration to maintain some deemed essential characteristics of a given political unit, being it a city, region, or country (Guia 2016).

Despite nativism having becoming a mainstream political position in post-1989 Europe, the concept has not been applied to the region because of the characteristics of Europe’s national myths of origin, which, unlike the USA and Canada, are based on the settlement of peoples and their consequent rootedness. Today’s narratives of belonging still claim that there are ‘true’, ‘autochthonous’, ‘de souche’, ‘de socarel’ Europeans who are the ‘natural’ inhabitants of a territory, while others cannot establish that centenarian or millenarian connection to the land. In Melilla, the ‘nativeness’ of European descendants that adopted nativist positions was suspect because the Muslim minority could, at the very least, match their claim of having roots in the city. When most European descendants begun to abrogate for themselves the right to decide who was and was not a Melillan along nativist lines, they did so by defining that a “true” Melillan was ethnically European, democratic, and Christian.

Second, I argue that Muslim activism in post-war Europe should be primarily understood as a tool for migrant and minority incorporation that promotes equality and democratic practices, rather than feared and dismissed as a tool that fosters ethno-nationalist or religious segregationism (DeHanas 2016; Peucker 2016; Peucker and Ceylan 2016). In Melilla, Muslim activists used non-violent disobedience and protests to access Spanish citizenship. While they were eligible for this right, they were unable to obtain due to the opposition of civil actors (i.e. lawyers), and political and legal authorities in town. In the end, Muslim Melillan
activism cemented rather than challenged European control of the city, while also making political representatives and legal authorities more accountable to all of the city’s inhabitants. In short, Melilla became a more mature democracy thanks to the activism of its hitherto excluded Muslim residents (Guia 2014).

Third, I look at the stereotyping of Muslim women, how essentialised cultural norms are turned into gendered Islamophobia and how Muslim women have been key to challenge it. The 1997 report “Islamophobia: a challenge for us all,” a pioneering attempt to understand anti-Muslim prejudice in Europe by the British Runnymede Trust, explained that one type of Islamophobic discourse concerns the belief that “Muslim cultures mistreat women, but that other religions and cultures have outgrown patriarchy and sexism.” Another characteristic of this discourse is the treatment of Islam as a “single monolithic bloc, static and unresponsive to new realities.” Those positions portray Islam as intrinsically inferior to and different from the West because it is “barbaric, irrational, primitive, and sexist” (Runnymede 1997, 7 and 5). They thus echo the narrow perceptions of Muslim women as victims of an autocratic religion that undermines their individual rights, which the sociologist Jasmin Zine calls these “gendered Islamophobia” (Zine 2006; Spivak 1994).

**Melilla: North African Spanish Nativism**

Melilla’s and Ceuta’s Muslim irregular residents had been tolerated as customary, but the 1985 Immigration Act would radically change this by demanding that all foreigners in Spanish territories apply for a residence and work permit. The Act developed provisions to grant foreigners the fundamental rights enshrined under the Spanish Constitution. In recognition of Spain’s colonial past, the Act offered “preferential treatment” to Latin Americans, Portuguese,
Filipinos, Andorrans, Equatorial Guineans, Sephardi Jews, and Gibraltarians who “identified with or had a cultural affinity to” Spain. Residency and work permits were expedited for these immigrants, as was the mandatory waiting period otherwise required before applying for citizenship.²

Although Spain held the disputed territory of the Western Sahara until 1975, and parts of northern Morocco until 1956, the Immigration Act denied preferential treatment to immigrants from these territories. While it made a point to include Sephardi Jews, whose ancestors had been expelled from Spain in 1492, it ignored Muslims and _Moriscos_ (converted Muslims), who were expelled in successive waves between 1492 and 1614. Centuries of autocratic rule and religious homogeneity in Spain contributed to a peculiar designation of those perceived not to share Spain’s culture and identity, as did the fear of a growing population of Muslims who would gain Spanish citizenship quickly if granted preferential rights. Cool relations between Spain and Morocco, meanwhile, revived the historic rivalry between Christian Spain and Muslim North Africa, further fuelling the exclusion of Muslims.

However, of all the groups that had maintained long-standing cultural and historical ties with Spain, perhaps the most blatant form of exclusion was visited upon those Muslims who were born in, or were long-time residents of, Ceuta and Melilla. Under the Immigration Act, these individuals were automatically considered foreigners, and thus were forced to apply for residency and work permits. These approximately 20,000 undocumented residents differed from other immigrants in that they did not need to be smuggled into Spain; the border had been permeable before the 1980s, and many people from Melilla’s hinterland could simply relocate to the city at will. Melilla-based journalist and writer Ricardo Crespo suggested this exceptional borderland situation could be used to solve the problem created by the Immigration Act:

The Immigration Act is too narrow for Muslim Melillans. After many years of extraordinary abuse, we should compensate them with an Exceptional Law that considers the full extent and complexity of their situation. Otherwise, the Immigration Act is almost entirely anti-Muslim, and on some points, probably unconstitutional as well.³

The early 1980s was also difficult period for ethnic Europeans in Melilla. The post-World War II wave of decolonization rendered European control of contested African territories anachronistic. The United Nations Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, adopted by the General Assembly in 1960, together with Moroccan calls for the return of Ceuta and Melilla, made Spanish control of these cities problematic. Memories of decolonization in the Spanish Sahara were bitter. While Spanish authorities in the late Franco years had promised a peaceful transfer of power, premised on the right to self-determination for the native populations of the region, Morocco and Mauritania claimed traditional ties to the territory. As Franco was dying, both countries participated in the division and occupation of the former Spanish colony. The 1975 Green March, which saw hundreds of thousands of unarmed Moroccan civilians, inspired by King Hassan II and protected by Moroccan troops, occupy the Spanish Sahara, was particularly frightening for European descendants in Ceuta and Melilla. They feared they would not be able to resist a similar move against their cities and dreaded the possibility that their own government, weakened during the transition to democracy, would be reluctant to use force to defend them.

Their greatest fear was Morocco. After negotiations in 1984 between Spain and Britain over the future of British-held Gibraltar, king Hassan II warned that “[w]hen Spain recuperates

Gibraltar, I believe she will find it difficult to maintain her sovereignty over both sides of the Strait [of Gibraltar]”. This was a restatement of what was known as the ‘Hassan II’s doctrine’, the idea that the resolution of the issue of Spanish-controlled Ceuta and Melilla was linked to the resolution of the Gibraltar question.\(^4\) To compound ethnic Europeans’ fears, Spain’s agreement to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in 1986 excluded the two cities from its mandate to protect Spanish territory. Morocco was, after all, a strategic ally of the USA. Worse still, Spain had announced its intention to reduce its military presence in North Africa and some Spanish intellectuals and the Communist Party of Spain favoured ceding Ceuta and Melilla to Morocco.

Yet perhaps the greatest immediate threat in the eyes of local ethnic Europeans was the rising number of Muslims in Melilla. According to the then Socialist mayor of Melilla, Gonzalo Hernández, this growth was a “crucial problem for the city’s future”. Hernández favoured a firm implementation of the Immigration Act to reduce the proportion of Muslims in Melilla. Juan Díez Cortina, leader of the Nationalist Party of Melilla, echoed this view when he warned that “Melilla could die due to excessive Moroccanization”. Some ethnic Europeans believed an increase in the number of Muslims would lead to the election of a Muslim mayor, a sign that Melilla had lost its European character.\(^5\)

Far right nationalists like Cortina had been warning about the growth of the Muslim Melillan population for decades, but their nativist positions did not become mainstream until the Immigration Act in 1985 forced all Melillans to contend with the demands of the twenty thousand undocumented Muslim residents. In November 1985, Muslim Melillans organized the first “Muslim” march in town, which was attended by thousands of people, to demand citizenship rather than foreigner’s permits. While parties at the far right of the political spectrum were the initial proponents of nativism, the mainstreaming of this outlook came with


the endorsement by the local Socialist Party of a counter demonstration to demand a strict
application of the Immigration Act and deny citizenship to Muslim Melillans. This
counterdemonstration mobilized over 40,000 people, nearly the whole ethnic European
population in town.

Each organization in town was forced to take a side in the battle between those who
were for or against Muslim incorporation. All political parties and organizations, except for the
Communist-leaning trade union Comisiones Obreras, sided with nativist positions. Over the
two years of conflict, nativists used the weight of executive institutions, such as the City Hall
and Madrid’s Government Delegate’s office, in charge of policing and security, as well as
judicial authority and elected representatives to the Spanish Senate and Congress to oppose
Muslim Melillans’ access to citizenship. Embracing nativism was not a winning strategy for
the Socialist Party, which was in power both in Madrid and in Melilla at the beginning of the
conflict. The effect of the nativist outburst in town was that the Socialist party lost the City
Hall and the senate and congress seats in favour of the Francoist-connected conservative party
Alianza Nacional.

Nativists often portrayed Muslim Melillans as uneducated enemies of democracy with
“fanatic” mentalities that belonged to “our 1940s [the period of early Francoist rule]”. Nativist
reactions to non-violent mass Muslim activism against the 1985 immigration act were premised
on a descriptive understanding of democracy. According to this view, democratic practices
were reduced to the narrow space provided by electoral politics, established political parties,
and associations such as trade unions, all of which were controlled by European descendants.
When Muslims created their own organizations, these were perceived as authoritarian in nature
and as a front for Moroccan interests in Melilla. Nativists felt justified in this position by their

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6 The only judge in town was accused of pro-nativist bias and the Spanish government had to send in a second
judge to balance things out (Guia, 2014).

feeling of European superiority, ethnic solidarity, and claims of victimization towards mainland Spain. Their criticism of Muslim Melillans as undemocratic paradoxically echoed how nativists themselves were perceived in mainland Spain. According to El País, the first pro-democracy national newspaper founded in 1976, Melilla was subject to “an authentic religious and racial ‘apartheid’.”

The gap between the two communities was not merely a matter of perception; nativists also feared losing their privileges and entitlements if forced to share power and resources with their Muslim neighbours. Civil servants and law enforcement officials had a key role in sustaining the status quo of discrimination against Muslim Melillans. El País argued that the judiciary did not adequately protect Muslims and that defence lawyers contributed to Muslims’ social ostracism by refusing to represent them. Nativists held control of local authorities and elected representatives to Spain’s Senate and Congress.

Like other colonial settler populations before them, nativists also felt victimized and feared being ostracised and abandoned by mainland Spaniards. Editorials in El País confirmed this apprehension by comparing local nativists to other European colonialists, and even South African racists: “Political discrimination coloured by racism, the worst traditions of religious fundamentalism, abuse of the most basic respect for human dignity” was not the image the country wanted to promote. Nativists’ protests, the same editorial continued, “recalled the historical short-sightedness and political insensitivity that many European nations often displayed when they had been forced to live together with other peoples”. Moreover, the governing Socialist Party’s initial support and acquiescence in nativism recalled the socialism and ‘pacification’ campaigns of Guy Mollet, the French Prime Minister during the Algerian

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War of Independence. Nativists were caught in a circular loop: the more they excluded Muslim Melillans, the more they were out of synchrony with politicians in Madrid, which increased nativists’ sense of abandonment and isolation even further, and made the exclusion of Muslim Melillans more pressing as a matter of survival in the face of a capital they felt was not backing them. In this context, nativists rejected the movement towards decentralization and creation of autonomous communities taking place in mainland Spain. The vulnerability the Melilla City Hall felt made it ask to remain as part of the newly created Andalusian region.

In addition to their association with the ills of colonialism, nativists also provided a reminder of the history Spanish society would have to leave behind in the transition to democracy. According to El País, nativists held “despicable views of religious intolerance and ethnic discrimination that recalled the sad days of Spain’s past”. They exhumed Spain’s “historical nightmare, the expulsion of Spanish Jews by the Catholic Kings and of the Moriscos by the Austrian [Habsburg] monarchs”. Their protests were a “remnant of [the days of] old Christianity and blood purity [limpieza de sangre y de cristianismo viejo], which the Spanish government seems tempted to re-enact in Melilla”. The government, El País maintained, had to stand up against the ancient privileges of “old Christians”, those with “Castilian ancestry and a pink complexion … Racism does not only occur in [Apartheid] South Africa”. The point was that its treatment of minorities was a test for Spain’s fragile decade-old democratic institutions, culture, and constitution. Nativists were unable to detach themselves from these damning associations, which made any other arguments, for instance security, seem weak by comparison.

The choice of historical narratives favoured by nativists did not help dispel their association with colonialism and ethnic cleansing. Nativists had a long tradition of anti-Islamic narratives to choose from, but they embraced the most hegemonic and enduring one: Islam as

a historical antagonist of Christian Spain. According to this nineteenth-century interpretation, whose main proponent had been Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo, those periods in which the Iberian Peninsula was controlled by Muslims were considered centuries of occupation by foreigners, a hiatus in the evolution of the real Spanish essence from Roman times, via Visigoth influence, to a medieval ‘reconquista’ and a glorious renaissance after 1492. Nevertheless, albeit insubstantial and strategic, dictator Francisco Franco had attempted to model a differing portrayal of Muslims as friends and allies in his crusade against the Spanish Republic, Marxism and secularism (Hertel 2015). Nativist chose instead Menéndez Pelayo’s view of Spain. And as much as Melillans revered Franco for his supposed defence of the city in 1921 (Cazorla-Sánchez 2013, 23), they disregarded his view of Muslims as strategic friends.

The Nativists’ aim to exclude Muslims from citizenship and embrace instead an ethnic definition of identity incompatible with religious pluralism and other fundamental rights enshrined in the 1978 Spanish Constitution hindered democratic consolidation and deepening in the city. While nativists in Melilla genuinely supported the rule of law and the establishment of new democratic institutions, their descriptive understanding of democracy, combined with their adoption of passive citizenship, rendered them oblivious to both the exclusionary nature of their positions as well as the democratizing efforts of their Muslim neighbours.

Nativism in Melilla ultimately failed, but that was not a given outcome at the start. Muslim Melillans and their few allies had to fight hard over two years, risking their physical integrity and freedoms, to be able to achieve their ultimate goal: an exemption from the Immigration Act and removal of the barriers that hindered their access to Spanish citizenship (Guia 2014). Their success in securing access to Spanish citizenship was slow and gradual, but ultimately all those who wanted to become Spanish, and were eligible, were granted citizenship. Muslim Melillans could not have done it alone. Had Madrid not sided with them in the end of the conflict, Melillan nativists might have succeeded in stopping their integration
with equal rights. It was thus the combination of Muslim activism and the geostrategic interest of Spain to maintain Melilla as a democratic Spanish territory that allowed for the defeat of nativism in the city.

Making Spaniards: The Muslim Melillans’ Fight for Citizenship

The struggle mounted by Muslim Melillans became a large civil rights movement similar to the demonstrations by the “sans papiers” in France in the 1970s. From May 1985 to February 1987, thousands of undocumented Muslim Melillans created a new political movement to oppose the Immigration Act, which made visible the social, political, economic, and judicial exclusion of Muslim Melillans. The struggle was triggered by the approval of the 1985 Immigration Act and its applicability to Melillan Muslims. Most of them refused to apply for foreigner permits as the Act specified, even after the deadline was extended three times, preferring instead to risk deportation to Morocco. Its leader was Aomar Duddu, an economist, former member of the Socialist Party, and Muslim with Spanish citizenship. Protesters said that they were tired of being viewed as “foreigners in our own land” (Yáñez 1985c).13

Muslim Melillans had not participated collectively in politics until this point. Their only voice had been that of the Muslim Association, a religious organization formed shortly after the 1967 Religious Freedom Act. However, faced with the imminent implementation of the 1985 Immigration Act, Duddu formed a new secular organization called Terra Omnium [every man’s land] and, together with the Muslim Association, founded an umbrella coalition called the Organizing Committee for the Muslim People. This Committee organized mass assemblies

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of thousands of people and elected an executive body to implement their decisions. After each meeting, word of mouth reached the tight residential quarters of Muslim residents and made sure protests were successful. The Committee’s goals were simple: reject a blanket application of the Immigration Act to Muslim Melillans and instead secure citizenship for those who were eligible. Most Muslim Melillans were indeed eligible by having been born in the city or having lived there for more than 10 years. Yet they had been unable to process their applications due to the combined actions of bureaucrats who refused to issue them documentation, lawyers who refused to represent them, and the single judge in town who stalled their applications.

The Committee chose non-violent protests, such as rallies, marches, Argentinean-style caceloradas [a banging-pots noise-making protest], closing of stores and market stalls, and writing letters to the United Nations and King Juan Carlos I of Spain. They also tried to bypass local authorities, with whom they rightly figured they did not stand a chance. Instead, they attempted to and negotiate directly with Madrid. The end of the conflict saw an escalation of violence, with barricades on the streets and calls to re-unite Melilla with Morocco that met a stark police and judicial response: members of the Committee’s executive were arrested and sent to jail in mainland Spain accused of sedition, charges that were eventually rescinded.

The conflict in Melilla was not a cultural conflict between people with different religions; rather, it was a political conflict over access to citizenship, power, and resources (Irujo 2005). The long-term struggle to improve living conditions and end discrimination against Muslim Melillans remained, but Muslim activists could say they had won the short-term battle for citizenship. In three years, the number of legal Muslim Spaniards in Melilla quadrupled. In 1988, 6,500 Muslim Melillans had acquired Spanish citizenship, 5,000 were on

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14 While religion was a cultural marker in Melilla in the 1980s, it has since become increasingly politicized. Morocco and Saudi Arabia have been seeking ways to influence devout Muslims in Ceuta and Melilla, but thus far their influence remained limited. See also Irujo, J. M., “La presión de 'nuestro' islam”, El País, 12 September 2005.
their way to becoming citizens, and 1,500 had obtained provisional identification cards. In total, 14,000 Muslims were naturalized, which still left 4,000 undocumented by 1988. The struggle of Muslim Melillans for citizenship had resulted in the enfranchisement of no less than 38 percent of the city’s population. People have historically conquered the right to vote by demanding, and eventually enforcing, concessions from the ruling elites. In Melilla, this burden and its inherent risks were shouldered by Muslim residents.

The struggle in Melilla speaks to the exclusion of undocumented residents and non-EU legal residents from electoral politics. With voting rights, Muslims Melillans became a force to contend with in local elections. For example, Abdelkader Mohamed Ali, one of the leaders of Muslim Melillans in the 1985-87 struggle and by 1996 a member of the United Left Party, became the first Muslim deputy elected to the European Parliament. Three years later, Mustafa Hamed Moh Mohamed Aberchán, a leader of Coalition for Melilla, a PSOE splinter group that aimed to represent Muslim Melillans, became the first Muslim mayor of Melilla. Aberchán had only obtained Spanish citizenship in 1987 when he was twenty-seven years old, and as a direct result of the fight by Muslim Melillans. Muslim candidates won electoral representation in every election since 1995 and have been a crucial player in both coalition making and opposition politics in town (Márquez Cruz 2003). The Coalition for Melilla was the third most voted party in 1995 and the second in 1999.

Muslim activism in Melilla also reinforced civil society. From only two organizations in 1985—the religious Muslim Association and the political Terra Omnium—the number of political organizations representative of Muslim interests in Melilla grew to four by 1988: The Muslim Association, the only one that survived the troubles unscathed; the re-founded (on a pro-Spain basis) Terra Omnium; the newly created Averroes Association; and Neópolis, a

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mixed Muslim-Christian organization. The days of one single leader and Muslim unity under Aomar Duddu were over.

The internal dynamics among Muslim Melillans was also democratized during the struggle for citizenship. By the end of this struggle, the power of the autocratic Duddu was widely questioned; his authoritarian style in mass assemblies no longer seemed acceptable, and the willingness of the Muslim community to follow his political manoeuvrings was exhausted. Duddu self-exiled himself to Morocco, swore formal allegiance to Hassan II in March 1987, and was eventually given a government job in Rabat. Nativists continued to lobby Madrid to repeal his Spanish citizenship, but since Duddu kept a low profile, the government did nothing. It was only when he became a governor in Morocco that he formally lost his Spanish citizenship. Mohamed Alí said that in retrospect, Duddu’s role “was necessary, he brought us recognition. He played an important part, but leaders are products of masses and unfortunately he grew vain”. Ultimately, autonomous, democratically organized movements proved that they help to keep in check the aspirations of personal power so common to political leaders like Duddu. While the movement was disproportionately focused on the figure of Duddu, it nevertheless set a precedent in democratic practices and trained a new set of leaders that would take over the fight for human rights and equality. His 1987 turn to Morocco and escape from Melilla, at a crucial moment of state and nativist repression, strengthened Muslim Melillans’ allegiance to Spain and severed the community’s ties with the Moroccan monarchy. Eventually, nativists were sufficiently appeased by Duddu’s departure, Muslim disunity, and the restoration of law and orders. Old animosities ebbed and nativist discourse softened. Slowly, they began to accept that Muslim Melillans were not Moroccans, but fellow Spaniards.

The end of the conflict, with a rapprochement between nativists and Muslims in their

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opposition to Morocco and Duddu, set the stage for the slow growth of multiculturalism. In the
Melilla borderland, where ‘bonded solidarity’ premised on a sense of common nationhood and
cultural identity could not be taken for granted, the Muslim struggle created personal and
institutional bridges that increased the city’s social capital and helped generate the necessary
consensus for inclusive governance. The best symbolic example of this cooperation was when
Eid al-Adha, the Islamic Festival of Sacrifice, was incorporated as a statutory holiday in 2009.
Melilla was the first city in Spain to incorporate an Islamic holiday into an official calendar
otherwise populated by Catholic and nationalist holidays. The city, through the newly created
_Instituto de las Culturas_, has also begun to organize public celebrations and cultural activities
during Ramadan and incorporate Amazigh cultural performers, such as the group Ithri
Moraima, during their annual fiestas.

The Muslim struggle also brought material gains as Madrid allocated significant funds
for socioeconomic development and border control. The goal of narrowing economic
inequality, erasing symbolic borders and geographical segregation between communities, all
preconditions for the growth of social cohesion, has also been a legacy of the struggle.
Segregation by ethnicity remains as a product of both socio-economic status and white flight,
but not at the same levels as before. For example, Mohamed Ali and his wife Karima Tufali
were eventually able to open a clothing store on the main commercial avenue, something
unthinkable in the 1980s.

Muslim Melillans were thus pioneers in fighting a bottom-up campaign to question and
enlarge the meaning of Spanish identity along the lines of Habermas’s (2001) constitutional
patriotism. They claimed that what united Melillans was not their cultural and religious
identity, but rather their identification with Spain, its democratic institutions, and its rights and
responsibilities. The degree to which one identified with its various identities—European,
Amazigh, Moroccan, or Spaniard, to name just a few—was now a private affair, with little-to-
no public significance. Mohamed Ali, in line with sociologist Zygmunt Bauman’s (2004) concept of fluid modernity, claimed that multiple identities were indeed compatible and that most Muslim Melillans considered themselves a mixture of Muslim, Melillan, Riffian, and Amazigh/Berber. Some also added Spanish and Moroccan to this formula. Thus, they rejected a static and homogeneous conception of national identity, one that led to a dichotomy between ‘us’ and ‘them’.

According to Mohamed Ali, the question of rights and citizenship took precedence over definitions of identity amongst Muslim Melillans. The case was made that one should be entitled to Spanish citizenship without having to necessarily embrace Spanish identity. Most Muslim Melillans did not want to join Morocco because they saw it as an underdeveloped and authoritarian state. Moreover, Spanish citizenship was a way of ensuring a democratic and prosperous future for themselves. Thus, once their access to Spanish citizenship was readily available, most chose to apply.

Granting citizenship to Muslim Melillans, argued Mohamed Ali, was the first step towards widening Spanish identity and tackling discrimination. Citizenship was a path by which Muslim Melillans could begin to feel Spanish. They fought to obtain Spanish citizenship, but also to include their hyphenated identities in what it meant to be Spanish. Muslim activists tried to make Madrid sympathize with their position and support their demands, but the national Socialist government was initially reluctant to modify their own proposed Immigration Act and depart from Melillan Socialists’ support for nativist positions. As Muslims maintained their struggle for accessing citizenship for two years and international pressure mounted, driven by Moroccan nationalists aiming to annex Ceuta and Melilla to Morocco, Madrid disavowed nativist positions in Melilla. It came at a high cost for the Socialist Party, who lost all of its congress and senate seats, but Spain managed to defuse the conflict.

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18 Interview with Abdelkader Mohamed Ali, Melilla, 23 August 2010.
19 Ibid.
and maintain sovereignty over the two cities. While Muslim activists did not acquire the status of “cultural affinity” for former Spanish colonial Muslim subjects and descendants of Muslims expelled from Spain, they nevertheless won democratic rights for Muslims in the borderland cities of Ceuta and Melilla and commenced the long fight to improve Spanish immigration laws. The challenge, a precedent for others, had been set.

Out of the Oriental Closet: Muslim Women Leaders and Gendered Islamophobia

Muslim women were also active in Melilla’s struggle for Spanish citizenship. They formed the first Melillan Committee of Muslim Women to support various actions planned by Terra Omnium, such as Argentinean-style pot noise demonstrations at night, market-stall strikes during the day, or giving white carnations to soldiers sent to Melilla to reinforce safety. In January 1986, an all-women’s rally became infamous when riot police charged against the hundreds of women gathered at Melilla’s central Plaza de España. The unnecessarily violent actions of the police was used by both Moroccan nationalist parties and Muslim Melillans to exemplify the nativist and exclusionary nature of local authorities.

Isabel de Torre, an Andalusian female lawyer who had defended the rights of Muslim Melillans when lawyers in the city refused to do so criticized Aomar Duddu and the male leadership of Terra Omnium. She claimed they had manipulated misinformed Muslim women into participating in an illegal protest that was expected to be violently dispersed by Spanish police. The Melillan Committee of Muslim Women rebuked her in a public statement called “We [Muslim women] also think” in which they defended their agency and independence from their male counterparts (Guia, 2014, 19). 24 years later in mainland Spain, Amparo Sánchez Rosell, the first woman to run for vice-president of Spain’s Islamic Commission, the most influential Islamic institution in the country, made a similar statement: “Muslim women also
have a voice”.²⁰

In the 1980s, Melillan Nativists used the alleged male chauvinism of Muslim activists to question their attachment to democratic values. The Pro Melilla Association and Nationalist Party of Melilla, both extreme-right groups, issued a press release which raised the point: “[The men] separate the women from them and put them at the back during meetings … some leaders … want to put them back in veils; but we will free Muslim Melillan women and their sound of freedom will echo throughout Melilla.”²¹ Gendered Islamophobia in Melilla was characterized by representing Muslim women as mere appendices of their male relatives. Even though these women were actively engaged in the struggle for citizenship, and were in many cases the breadwinners in their families, they were still perceived as agentless and voiceless.

Melillan women who participated in mass protests in the 1980s were not oblivious to the challenges of denouncing gendered Islamophobia while at the same time fighting against misogyny within their own communities. As Karima Aomar Tufali, a young Melillan Muslim woman said in 1986: “To be a belittled Moor and a woman is difficult enough. But to be a belittled Moor to Spaniards and a woman to belittled Moorish men [is impossible]” (Guia 2014: 21). This double struggle has also been present in mainland Europe, for example in the notorious French association Ni Putes ni Soumises [Neither Whores nor Submissive] (Amara et al 2011). The risk for Muslim women in denouncing misogyny within their own community is that they may reinforce stereotypes and thus fuel gendered Islamophobia.

Women’s participation in electoral politics was already on the rise in Spain when the 2007 law on substantive equality forced political parties to implement gender quotas in their electoral lists. From 21.6 percent of female elected representatives at the national parliament in 1996, Spain reached 36.6 percent in 2008, but went back to 36 percent in 2011. According

to a European Parliament report, Spain’s advances regarding gender equality in representative politics have stagnated and not reached yet the desired 40 percent (European Parliament 2013). In Ceuta and Melilla, after the 1987 victory, most Muslim Melillans went home and embraced their hard-won passive citizenship. A few remained in politics and started new parties to represent their community in local politics. Muslim women kept a low profile during the 1990s and did not re-emerge until the turn of the century, when they joined local parties created to defend the interest of the large Muslim populations in the cities, such as Coalition for Melilla and Coalición Caballas and Movimiento por la Dignidad y la Ciudadanía [Movement for Dignity and Citizenry] in Ceuta.22

Today, devout Muslims in Ceuta and Melilla can be found in all political parties, including the traditionally nativist Conservative Party. Muslim women have run for office, been elected and reached positions of authority in those chambers. Jadu Dris Mohamed Ben Abdelah was the first Muslim woman to become second vice-president of the Melilla City Assembly in 2006, before the passing of the 2007 law. A few years later, another member of Coalition for Melilla, Dunia Al-Mansouri Umpierrez, became first vice-president of the City Assembly.23

Veil-wearing Muslim women have also been politically active and elected to Ceuta’s and Melilla’s City Assemblies. Salima Abdeslam Aisa, a 27-year old student of economics, became the first hijab-wearing elected representative in a continental European country when she was elected to the Melilla City Assembly in 2005. She was followed by the lawyer Fátima Hamed Hossain in 2007 in Ceuta and Mahinur Özdemir in Belgium in 2009.24 The way Abdeslam Aisa and Hamed Hossain were elected exemplifies the evolution of the debate

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regarding the acceptability of headscarf-wearing Muslim women in politics and how the politics of presence affects differently visually identifiable religious minorities. Abdeslam Aisa was not placed in the top positions in the Coalition for Melilla list. It was only after two male candidates ahead of her resigned that she got to be sworn into the City Assembly. Mustafa Aberchán, the first Muslim president of the Melilla City Assembly and leader of Coalition for Melilla, explained that "I had this planned for a long time. If I had placed Salima [Abdeslam Aisa] at the top of the list, we would have been destroyed. Now, thanks to the fact that two members of the list renounced, I managed to get a woman in hijab, who represents an important part of our citizenry, into the Assembly by the back door".25 The election of Fátima Hamed Houssain, on the contrary, came after a successful public campaign in Ceuta against the Conservative Party’s reluctance to allow headscarf-wearing women in the City’s Assembly. After a few years in Coalición Caballas, Hamed Houssain became disillusioned with its leadership and created and led her own party, Movimiento por la Dignidad y la Ciudadanía, obtaining three representatives in the Ceuta City Assembly in 2015. She became the first Muslim woman to lead a political group in the Ceuta City Assembly and has become one of the fiercest opposition voices.26

Despite some exceptions, traditional political parties have been generally slow in incorporating Muslims to positions of authority, which is one of the reasons that Muslim women have joined small local parties. Non-traditional political parties emerging from the social movements created after the popular protests in Spain in 2011, called 15-M or Indignados, have also offered a new window of opportunity for Muslim activist to become elected representatives.

26 Interview with Fátima Hamed Houssain, Ceuta, June 19 2015.
This time, it was females that took the lead. Moroccan cultural mediator Fatima Taleb was elected under the banner of Guanyem Badalona [Let’s win Badalona] in 2015. She was, after Fatima Mohamed Kaddur, elected in 2003 in the small Andalusian town of Gines for the conservative party, the second veil-wearing Muslim woman to be elected to a city hall in mainland Spain.

Devout Muslim women active in politics in Melilla have had a manifold agenda. They have fought for access to citizenship joined newly created parties to fight for socio-economic equality for Muslim residents. They also enjoyed an important role in defending women’s rights, such as protection against sexual violence and domestic abuse, and the religious rights of Muslim women, particularly their right to wear veils. Their combined actions have been a clear indictment of gendered Islamophobia. By now, they have not only joined political parties but have created and lead parties of their own (Hamed Houssain is the first Muslim woman in Spain to lead a political party). In claiming a public voice, they have effectively denounced their supposed liberal and feminist allies that only will only accept them if they leave their religious demands aside.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, many many self-identified feminists seem to have trouble accepting that the hijab is freely worn by many European Muslim women. Twenty years after the progressive lawyer Isabel the Torre assumed that Muslim women had been manipulated by male activists, the spokesperson of the Socialist Party in Melilla, Celia Sarompas, offers another example of the prejudice that underlies alleged allies of these women. Sarompas reacted to Salima Abdeslam, a veiled woman, being elected to the Melilla City Assembly in 2005 by saying that “I understand it, even if for us it [veil] is a symbol of oppression. If nobody is forcing her and her religion does not have an impact in public affairs, I have nothing to

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object". Sarompas use of “us” [“nosotras”], meaning Spanish women, excludes Abdeslam, who is also born in Melilla and a Spanish citizen. Moreover, Sarompas’ perception of the hijab as a “symbol of oppression” and of Islam as a hindrance for the involvement of women in public affairs, as well as her suggestion that Muslim males may be forcing Muslim women to wear a headscarf exemplifies many of the mechanisms underlying gendered Islamophobia. Sánchez Rosell called these attitudes “poorly interpreted paternalism by supposed ‘defenders’ of Muslim women”.

Gendered Islamophobia can also come in a less overt form, by valuing, embracing, and highlighting only those Muslim women who are “modern” and “secular.” When El País journalist Gabriela Cañas went to Melilla to cover the 2005 election of Salima Abdeslam Aisa, she chose to highlight two types of Muslim women. One, Jadu Dris Mohamed Ben Abdelah, the second vice-president of the City Assembly for Coalition for Melilla was described as follows: “[S]he is also a Muslim, but wears high heels, tight clothing, and also makeup.” Jadu was portrayed as “a woman with personality and very talkative, a volcano.” By contrast, the “other” Muslim woman, Salima is defined as “demure… [speaking] little and always in a restrained manner”. There was little evidence left of restraint, even though she still dressed modestly, when I interviewed Abdeslam Aisa a few years later. She acted as a shrewd and self-assured politician who had carved spaces of power and independence both within its own party and the City Assembly. Could lack of political experience rather than Islam explain Abdeslam Aisa’s initial caution?

Conclusion

31 Interview with Salima Abdeslam Aisa, Melilla, June 17 2015.
Around 30 percent of Melilla’s population in the 1980s was ethnically and religiously diverse from the ethnic European majority. Many European cities are today approaching these numbers, if they have not already surpassed them. While there are many differences between Melilla in the 1980s and mainland Europe today, some of the phenomena that were experienced in the Melilla in the 1980s have become mainstream in Europe. For example, the nativist reaction against Muslim Melillans has an obvious echo in today’s anti-Islam narratives in Europe. The writer Juan Goytisolo once described nativism as “a sacrosanct ethnic union against the Moor”.\textsuperscript{32} Similarly, Dutch politician Geert Wilders, who leads the increasingly popular Party for Freedom, considers Islam a totalitarian ideology rather than a religion and has been indicted various times for hate speech.\textsuperscript{33} He was found guilty of inciting discrimination against Dutch Moroccans in 2016 (Lucassen and Lucassen 2015; Wekker 2016). Melillan nativists shared many of these forms of prejudice, refusing to consider Muslim Melillans as equals. They also invoked the same kind of populist discourse that Wilders has employed against the multiculturalist elites that are allegedly trying to ruin the Netherlands by arguing that Madrid and mainland Spaniards were out of touch with reality in Melilla and could not be trusted. Nativism, both in Melilla and in Europe today, re-writes who is a ‘real’ member of the unit and rallies ‘true’ members to defend their country/city against a chosen minority and the ethnic ‘traitors’ that defend it. Similar to the fear felt in Europe (Wodak 2015), ethnic European Melillans perceive themselves as being under threat by Morocco and the Muslim minority that they consider as a fifth column for the King of Morocco. Nativists in mainland Europe accuse Muslim Europeans of supporting terrorism in the name of Islam and of threatening European values, such as secularism, gender equality, and sexual freedoms.

\textsuperscript{32} Goytisolo, J., “De la OTAN a la ley de extranjería,” El País, 6 March 1986.

For a nativist logic to take hold, it requires a clear external/internal enemy, the erasure of internal cleavages within the ‘native’ population, and a compelling and uncontested narrative of belonging. In Melilla, a clear threat was identified, but the ‘native’ population was split. An absolute majority of ethnic Europeans in Melilla wanted to exclude Muslim Melillans from citizenship, but they could not get Madrid’s full support behind this project. While Socialist politicians in Madrid did initially embrace nativism, they ultimately disavowed it. Nativism also requires a hegemonic narrative of belonging (Mudde 2012). Yet alternative forms of nationalism can emerge alongside nativist projects. Historian John Higham points to one alternative type of nationalism, a “cosmopolitan faith”, which he defines as “a concept of nationality that stressed the diversity of the nation’s origins, the egalitarian dimension of its self-image, and the universality of its founding principles” (1988, 334). Melillan nativists also lacked a convincing narrative of belonging that could justify the exclusion of Muslim Melillans to other Spaniards without being perceived as racist. Madrid ultimately sided with the position that a new democracy could not exclude membership rights based on religion or ethnicity. While conditions for the emergence of a nativist outburst were ripe in the 1980s, the necessary requirements for nativism in Melilla to succeed were lacking. How far are certain European countries today from embracing nativism is still an open question.

Shortly after some immigrant men committed mass sexual assaults in the German city of Cologne on New Years Eve, 2015, Pegida (Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the West) rallies begun to show banners against ‘rapefugees’. It was a moment where the lines between ‘us’, ethnic Germans who respect women and women’s rights, and ‘them’, immigrant and refugees who assault women and reject gender equality became clearly visible. Anti-Islamic activists, pretending to speak in the name of all ethnic Germans, proclaimed themselves defenders of ethnic German women against the threat ‘brown’ men pose to them, reviving constructions of benevolent sexism with a long tradition in the continent. Seeing Muslim men
as a threat to both ethnic European women and Muslim women (i.e. forcing them to wear the veil) is a growing part of Islamophobia in Europe. Muslim Melillan women, veiled or not, politically active and powerful leaders in their communities, have chosen to fight to protect their freedoms and those of their communities in an increasingly hostile environment. If Melilla can serve as a window into Europe’s future, Muslim activism could help Europe fight nativism and contribute to make it a more democratic continent for all.
Bibliography


Hope and Disillusion: The Representations of Europe in Algerian and Tunisian Cultural Production about Undocumented Migration

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Abstract:
Combining digital humanities, cultural studies and migration studies, this chapter analyses the depiction of Europe in Algerian and Tunisian cultural productions about undocumented migration. These cultural productions are used as gateway to imaginaries of migration and imaginative geography. Europe first appears as a fortress and a land that is especially hard to reach as well as a land where everything is possible: a land of freedom where one can succeed and be accomplished. However, Europe is not only the land of hope but also the land of disillusion. Cultural productions about undocumented migration sometimes portray the loneliness of migrants or the racism that they face. These works also speak of the economic hardships, as well as the fear of being expelled from this land that they risked so much to reach. Finally, the present chapter provides a constructive alternative to mechanistic approaches in migration and diaspora studies. We will analyze the different artistic strategies for expressing the agency of the harragas, that are rooted in their imagination, but still evolving in a specific political, social and economic context.

Key words: undocumented migration, harraga, Algeria, Tunisia, cultural production, music, imaginaries.
Borders between North Africa and Europe are increasingly difficult to cross because of the implementation of restrictive migration policies (Souiah 2012). Despite these restrictions, migrants and refugees attempt to leave their home country without passports or visas, often on boats, and usually at a great risk to their lives. The Mediterranean Sea has become the deadliest migration route in the world (IOM, Missing Migrants Project 2016). In the Maghrebi dialects, those who leave without documentation are called *harragas*, literally “those who burn” the borders. This name reflects that fact that they do not respect the mandatory steps for legal departure. Also, they figuratively “burn” their papers to avoid deportation once in Europe.

This form of migration—*harga* (the burn)—is a source of inspiration for many artists (Peraldi et al. 2014). Songs (Salzbrunn, Souiah and Mastrangelo 2015a; Souiah 2011), films, and many forms of art have depicted *harragas* (Souiah 2014). The discourse about migration and borders in art stands in contrasts to political and media discourse mainly because it focuses on the narratives of the migrants themselves (Canut and Sow 2014). In addition, some *harragas* post content online that is related to their migratory desires and their “adventures” (Bredeloup 2008; Timera 2012; Gaibazzi 2015; Bachelet 2016). For example, they create pages dedicated to this topic on Facebook, where they also post and comment on footage shot during their journey across the Mediterranean. They also share the videos they create using images and songs they find on the web (Salzbrunn and Mastrangelo 2014). In this chapter, we purposely choose not to distinguish between “high art” and “low art,” nor between “art” and “non-art.” Therefore we will invoke the notion of “cultural productions” to refer to songs, books, paintings, videos, collages and Facebook posts about *harga*. These cultural productions, which are both digital and non-digital, are used as gateway to imaginaries of migration.

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1 The verb “to burn” in Arabic can mean “to free ride”, “to jump a queue” or to “run a light”.

These imaginaries are “culturally shared and socially transmitted representational assemblages that interact with people’s personal imaginings and are as used as meaning-making devices and world-shaping devices” (Salazar 2014: 124). Moreover, “They are imaginary in a double sense: they exist by virtue of representation or implicit understandings, even when they acquire immense institutional force; and they are the means by which individuals understand their identities and their place in the world” (Gaonkar 2002: 4). A focus on mechanistic economic visions and macro-political approaches have dominated the study of migration (Wihtol de Wenden 2002). The study of imaginaries as an important factor in the decision to migrate is quite recent and remains rare despite the pioneering work done by Abdelmalek Sayad (1975). In his article “El ghorba: From original sin to collective lie,” he describes the mythification of migration in rural Kabilya and notably the collective misrecognition of the migrants’ life as workers in France (Sayad 2000). Various social scientists have subsequently analysed social imaginaries in relation to the decision to migrate (Barrère and Martuccelli 2007; Bredeloup 2008; Camacho 2008; Friese 2014; Karoui 2013; Lacroix 2010; Mbodji 2008; O’Reilly 2014; Poulet 2014; Ragaru 2008; Salazar 2010a, 2010b, 2014; Salzbrunn & Friese 2013; Souiah 2011; Timera 2012; Vigh 2009). Following Salazar, this article builds on the observation that “The motivations to cross boundaries are usually multiple, but they are largely linked to the capacity of migrants and their social networks to imagine other places and lives” (Salazar 2011: 577).

Analysing images and representations is even more crucial in a postcolonial migratory context. As Edward Said argues, “Just as none of us is outside or beyond geography, none of us is completely free from the struggle over geography. That struggle is complex and interesting because it is not only about soldiers and cannons but also about ideas, about forms, about images and imaginings.” (Said 1993: 7) Inspired by Said’s concept of imaginative
geography, we study the images of Europe in Algeria and Tunisia as rooted in a specific power relation. However, this article breaks with a focus on the images of the dominant and how they perceive and construct the “others” and “otherness”. Rather, it focuses on the imaginative geography of those who are socially, politically and geographically at the margins: the subaltern.

This article also treats Algeria and Tunisia together rather than employing a comparative perspective, since the representations of Europe in cultural production in Algeria and Tunisia contain similar themes. In both cases, the images of Europe are neither homogeneous nor consistent. Europe first appears as a fortress and a land that is especially hard to reach. The cultural productions about hargha also evoke Europe as the land where everything is possible: a land where one can succeed and be accomplished. Some of these works depict a picturesque Europe, while others focus on material gain such as money and cars. Europe also appears as the land where one can free oneself from social pressure and where one can for example, drink and flirt openly. However, Europe is not only the land of hope but also the land of disillusion. Cultural productions about hargha sometimes portray the loneliness of migrants or the racism they experience on the other side of the Mediterranean. They also speak of the economic hardships they face, as well as the fear of being expelled from this land that they risked so much to reach. Finally, the present chapter provides a constructive alternative to mechanistic approaches in migration and diaspora studies. We will analyse the different artistic strategies employed to express the agency of the harragas, which is rooted in the force of their

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2 This chapter is based on data collected for a Ph.D. thesis about hargha and contestation in Algeria (Souiah, 2014) and on data collected as part of a project directed by Prof. Monika Salzbrunn and funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation entitled “Undocumented Mobility and Digital-Cultural Resources after the ‘Arab Spring’”. Simon Mastrangelo is completing his Ph.D. as part of this project and Farida Souiah is a postdoctoral fellow. As part of her dissertation, Souiah interviewed 30 harragas and their family members in Oran and Mostaganem. She analyzed Algerian artistic productions such as songs, movies, novels, paintings, political cartoons, etc.) during eight months of fieldwork in 2011. The results of the “Undocumented Mobility and Digital-Cultural Resources after the ‘Arab Spring’” project are based on three years of ethnographic fieldwork in Tunisia, Europe and in the digital space: we notably analyzed a corpus of 54 Tunisian songs and 20 private and public pages on Facebook.
imagination, but also draws on a specific political, social and economic context.

**Europe as Fortress**

Cultural productions about *harga* often depict restrictive migration policies and visa restrictions. Mobility constraints are notoriously more difficult for the citizens of the Global South, as all passports do not have the same “power”: they do not grant the same rights to their holders. For instance, in 2016, German and French passports allow their holders to visit 158 and 156 countries respectively. That is, their holders were allowed on foreign soil without a visa (or by getting a visa directly at the border), whereas an Algerian can visit only 48 countries and a Tunisian 61 countries in similar conditions. The right to mobility is fragile and highly unequal (Barry and Goodin 1992; Corradi 2009; Golash-Boza and Menjívar 2012; Miaille 2009; Pécoud & Guchteneire 2006; Wihtol de Wenden 2009, 2013). While some are denied the right of entry in the Global North because they are perceived as potentially “undesirable” migrants (Agier 2008), borders are less constraining for other subjects—even if their passport does not grant them the right to mobility—who have resources such as money, qualifications, or networks.

Social scientists have documented the closing of borders and the restrictive migration policies that comprise the basis of unequal mobility, noting that migration policies shifted in the 1970’s (Massey et al. 2005). This “historical moment” marked the entry in a “new migration world” where migration policies were primarily understood as tools of control (Guiraudon and Joppke 2001). Indeed, since the 1970’s, migration has been perceived mainly as a problem since migratory flows are generally unplanned (Cvajner and Sciortino 2010). This negative perception of migration directly impacted the mobility regime. Those who claim to stay for a
short period of time are now suspected of presenting false motives and secretly harbouring a
desire for a more permanent migration. According to Paolo Cuttitta, the imposition of visas is
the primary instrument of migration control policies (Cuttitta 2007). Moreover, individuals are
systematically suspected if they belong to a country of emigration or that is politically unstable.
As Didier Bigo notes, this suspicion makes “the granting of a visa (…) an exception to the
exclusion” and “obeys a logic of rarity “in the minds of those who deliver them” (Bigo 2010:
254).

Due to the restrictive and unequal nature of migration policies, cultural production on harga
predominantly represents Europe as a land that is hard to reach or even as a fortress. Seen from
the harragas’ point of view, Europe is a place of rejection and exclusion, where one is deemed
unworthy of a visa. Harragas are on the “wrong” side of both the geographical and social
divide; because they are mainly young urban men without professional qualifications, getting
a visa for Europe is almost impossible. For the European consulates, they are a “migratory risk”
if not a “security threat.” How does this system of (im)mobility shape the representations of
Europe in Tunisian and Algerian cultural productions?

To answer this question, we looked at several pieces of art and at the artistic production
published on various Facebook pages. The first of these cultural productions is a work by
Zineddine Bessaï, a graphic designer and a visual artist born in Algiers in 1985. He graduated
from the Graduate School of Fine Arts in Algiers in 2010 and his work is often tinged with
humour. In this piece, he takes inspiration from the urban environment of Algeria, notably from
daily life in popular neighbourhoods and the language used on the street. One of his pieces
about harga is entitled “H-Out: the guide to immigration. The “H” stands for harragas and the
title implies that harragas are kept out of Europe. Moreover, “Hût” is a transliteration of the
plural of the word “fish” into dialect. This play on words allows the artist to reference to a
popular expression among the harragas who say they would rather be eaten by fish than by
worms\textsuperscript{3}. This expression emphasizes the fact that these individuals are ready to die trying to leave, and see this fate as preferable to rotting in Algeria.

Figure 1: Zineddine Bessaï, H-out: le guide de l’immigration (2010)

This work is composed of two pieces. One of the two pieces is a map of the world that represents the migratory imagination of young Algerians. The map’s key is written in both the Algerian dialect (using the Latin alphabet) and in French. The French version offers more-or-less accurate translations of dialect. In addition to this map, there is a collage in which the artist depicts three harragas. The work, with the full title of “H-out: the guide of immigration,” is supplemented by a leaflet in which the artist explains his approach, including the centrality of the popular expressions. Bessaï’s work has been exhibited at the Museum of Modern and

\textsuperscript{3} Yakûlni el-hût wa ma yakûlnich ad-dûd.
Contemporary Art in Algiers and at the Museum of European and Mediterranean Civilizations

in Marseille. It was also shown at Corner House gallery in Manchester. Ironically, Zineddine Bessaï could not go to England for the opening of the exhibition because his visa was denied (Sheerin 2011). Unsurprisingly, perhaps, Bessaï deals extensively with the topic of visas. He links the restrictive visa policy to harga. In “H-out,” the body of the three harragas is made of a Schengen short stay visa application form - those applications that often lead to a visa refusal or which are never even completed by the would-be migrants who are convinced that getting a visa is impossible.

In this depiction, the artist has drawn a cross in the place where the harragas heart would be. This pictogram usually indicates something that is harmful or irritating. In Bessaï’s work, this image is associated with the need to obtain a visa. It is also present in the map that composes “The Immigration Guide H-out.” This map represents space as it is experienced by harragas. For example, Europe is called “Schengen Oropa.” In Europe and North America, there are numerous white crosses on a red background. The green places - indicating that Algerians can travel to the country without a visa application - are rare on this map. The artist also chooses to physically represent the boundaries by a double barbed wire that cuts the map in half and separates the South from the North. The border runs to the south of the United States, Spain, France of Italy and Australia. Yet in order to indicate that the boundary remains porous, and to express his opposition to the limits placed on mobility, the artist draws pairs of scissors at various points near the border to indicate that it could be “cut off”, in other words, crossed.

Another body of work that deals with harga is found in Algerian and Tunisian literature. In his novel, “He Will Have Mercy on Us” (Il aura pitié de nous), published in 2004, Roshd Djigouadi, evokes the visa issue and mobility constraints in a very subtle manner. The story is
set in the early 2000s. The hero narrator, Adel, is an Algerian *hittiste*\(^4\) who lives on petty crimes and small jobs. He recounts his boredom, his unhappiness, his sexual frustration and his desire to leave Algeria. The novel opens when Adel meets Omarou, a Malian migrant who is travelling through Algeria to try to reach Europe. The reader follows a few months of the life of Omarou, Adel and his friends in a popular neighbourhood (*houma*), of Algiers. Adel dreams of migrating, but does not take any action to leave Algeria, while Omarou works hard, mainly doing construction work to collect the money he needs to get to Europe. Adel wishes he was born a few years earlier, when it was still possible to migrate. In fact, he is able to use the mobility system as a means of income; at dawn he wakes, gets in line at the French consulate in Algiers, and charges those who are applying for a visa in order to take his place in line. When one of his friends asks why Adel why he never bothers to ask for a visa himself despite his frequent visits to the consulate he answers: “I am a free man; I don’t need a visa. A little bit of salty water is not going to bother me” (Djigouadi 2004: 31). However, despite these flippant comments, the narrator compares Europe to a fortress and the Mediterranean Sea to a cemetery. Here, he expressed a vision vision of Europe similar to that found in Bessaï’s work. Yet the notable difference is that Adel clearly decides to ignore the reconstruction of borderlines and the introduction of visa (which was not foreseen in the French-Algerian Evian treaty of 1962 and which was introduced in 1986 by the French government).

Algerian (Souiah 2011) and Tunisian (Salzbrunn, Souiah & Mastrangelo 2015a) music both invoke the theme of constraints on mobility. In terms of musical genre, this phenomenon is seem mainly in Algerian *raï*\(^5\) and Tunisian *mizwed*\(^6\), while both countries have a tradition of

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\(^4\) “Untranslatable term, a mix of French and Arabic, connotes the young Algerians who hang out, leaning against the walls (*heit*), whose ‘task’ is to support the walls. Because schools are overcrowded and unemployment runs high, many young Algerians are forced into the street” (‘Abd al-Haq, Verges and Hiltermann 1995: 14).

\(^5\) *Raï* (the word literally means “opinion” in North African dialects) is an Algerian popular musical genre that originally arose in the city of Oran (Virolle-Soubiès, 1993). Because of its topics - among which feature alcohol, love and sex - and the music scene that it emerged in - cabarets, raï has a subversive dimension. Raï is also known internationally as part of the “word music” genre (Nooshin, 2016).

\(^6\) *Mizwed* “is a type of popular ‘folk’ song which takes its name from the main instrument used to accompany
politicized rap. For example, the Algerian rapper Lotfi Double Kanon describes a world where borders are closed. Cheb Belkheir sings that he is tired of “regrets” and begs for “Schengen”. In Algerian street language “regrets” refers to visa denials (in reference to the formula of politeness “We regret to inform you…”) while “Schengen” refers to the short-stay visa common to the Schengen Area. Abdelkader Boukabouss repeats that he has neither a passport nor visa. He accuses European countries (that he does not name) of “cherishing” visas while harragas risk their lives. For the singer Reda Taliani, if young Algerians risk their lives while trying to reach Europe, it is because they cannot get a visa to travel legally.

The representation of passports and visas are a recurring theme on the Facebook pages about harga. The administrators and the members post pictures of EU passports, often with euros, highlighting the resources they embody. The administrator posted a picture of two passports laying on coins. On the image, it is written in dialect, using a mix of Arabic and Latin alphabet, “Give me a visa and leave me”. Few weeks later, the administrator posted a collage made of several images among which many refer to the mobility constraints, notably passports with the inscription “denied” in French, Arabic and English and migrants in detention centers. It is interesting to note that this collage does not focus only on the Mediterranean but evokes the Mexican-US border case —testifying to the existence of a global space where people endure similar circumstances. The road to “Paradise” or to “Italy” is also a common image used by artists on Facebook, even though the authors are aware of the fact that the living conditions are extremely difficult on the other shore of the Mediterranean Sea.

Cultural productions and Facebook pages about harga reflect the frustration of those who are marginalised by the visa system. They are both a reflection of migratory imaginaries even while they also influence these expectations. Therefore, it is not surprising that we found the singing, a type of bagpipe(…). Mizwid is a music which looks to rural, ‘popular’ song types for its roots, yet developed in Tunisia’s capital city. Thus it is an urban ‘popular’ music, which uses rural instruments, rhythms and musical modes, in complete contrast to its ‘classical’ counterpart” (Stapley, 2006, p. 244). This genre of music has long been associated with marginalized groups.
a very similar discourse among the *harragas* that were interviewed and observed as part of our fieldwork. For example, Sofiane was 30 years old in 2011, when he tried to leave Algeria on a small boat that was arrested at the Spanish shores, near Almeria. When asked about visas he said “I did not ask for a visa. They will not give me a visa. They give visas to people with money, merchants and businessmen. They give visas to old people, married people and retired people. They don’t give visas to people like me. Why would I bother asking for a visa?” (Sofiane, 30 years old, Oran, 2011). Ali, who tried to leave Tunisia in 2011 when he was 17 years old, considers visa constraints to be inhuman. He implicitly evokes mobility as a right and denounces this regime inequality: “Explain something to me. You are a human being and I am a human being. You are French and I am Tunisian. You can come here and have a coffee with me with only your ID card (…). Why do I need a visa if I want to visit you? Are you better than me? Why can you come to my country and visit it with your ID card? (…) How are you better than me? It took 9 months to conceive you and it took 9 months to conceive me” (Ali, 21, Tunis, 2015). The argument of social (in)justice is frequently expressed by Tunisians who desire equal treatment between themselves and the Europeans who visit their country.

Mobility is a discriminating factor both at an international level (between the Global North and the Global South) as well as within Algeria and Tunisia where those who have economic and cultural resources have facilitated access to obtaining a visa. In cultural productions and online forums “Burning” the borders and discrediting the visa system is a form of resistance to the unequal access to international mobility. It is a form of agency. Especially since migration is also a way to escape the hardship of daily life and experience a land where one may encounter new opportunities.

**Europe as a Land of Opportunity**
Media and political discourses about migration, especially undocumented migration, often emphasize the naïveté of the migrants, pointing to their gullibility and belief in an “Eldorado”. Originally, this expression referred to a legendary lost city with abundant wealth, and it has been a persistent myth since the 16th-17th century and the conquest of the New World. Today, the Eldorado is a metaphor for a place where one can become wealthy quickly, notably in a migratory context. The belief that migrants are misled by their own imaginaries is so strong that the International Organization for Migration (IOM) set up a program named Salemm (Solidarity with Children of the Maghreb and the Mashreq) in Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt. The goal of the program is to depict the lives of undocumented migrants in Europe. The IOM finances cultural activities, notably plays, music and film workshops to try to contradict the depiction of Europe as an Eldorado.\footnote{IOM, Salemm project, http://www.salemm.org/fr/fr-projet (accessed on 22 December 2016).}

Cultural productions about harga often evoke Europe as an abstraction, a place that is “over there,” or a region that is beyond the Mediterranean Sea. Some North Africans also use colloquial expressions such “Bled el-ghir” which means the country of the others, or “Bled el-gaouri” and “Bled el-roum” (Western country) to refer to European countries. The places that are the most depicted in cultural production by Algerians and Tunisians are: France (especially Paris), Italy (either as a country, in terms of specific cities such Milan and Rome, or islands such as Lampedusa), and Spain (particularly Barcelona, Malaga and Almeria). Artists depict these locations as picturesque, invoking monuments, landmarks, sunrises and sunsets. As Noel Salazar has argued (2011), the use of these symbols suggests a link between touristic imaginaries and migratory imaginaries. One of the few differences between Algerian and Tunisian cultural production is found in which countries the artists choose to invoke. While France is a common reference in both bodies of work, Tunisian cultural production tends to
focus mainly on Italy, whereas Algerian representations often look to Spain. This point can be easily explained by an analysis of the migratory flows. Algerian and Tunisian migrations are postcolonial migrations (Nair, 2013) and France remains the main country of residence for the Algerians and Tunisians living abroad (MPC Team, 2013). Italy and Spain have become coveted destinations—largely but not exclusively—for undocumented migrants. For obvious geographical reasons these countries are also transit countries for migrants who come by boat. Migrants leaving from the western Algerian shores go to Spain, whereas Migrants leaving from East Algeria and Tunisia tend to have Italy as their destination, or at least a transit country in their migratory journey. The other European locations that are often depicted—though less as a destination than a space of transit—is Lampedusa. This island is features most prominently in Tunisian cultural production. In his song “Harka”, Mr Mustapha describes the itinerary of young man who wants to leave Tunisia, he sings about him:

“He has only one thing on his mind, it’s the sea
His brain is tired. He wants to rest
He has only one way on his mind, it’s Lampedusa’s way”.

Lampedusa is seen as the door to Europe. Many Facebook pages names mention the island in their title and many collages and photographs explicitly mention Lampedusa. In his very stimulating work on Lampedusa, Paolo Cuttita documents the “borderization” of the island and defines it as the “theatre of the border play” (Cuttitta 2007).

One of the most recurring images in music videos and Facebook posts about harga stages a young man who is looking away at the sea. A sentence is often written on the picture in order to explain the hopes of the young man who embodies all harraga. For example, in the picture below, we can see a shirtless young man wearing a cap who looks at the sea. Over the image, in red capital letters is written, “L’avenir ray mor Lebhooor”. This sentence, which is a
mix of French and North African dialect means “Future is only behind the sea.”

The belief in an Eldorado also represents the possibility of dreaming. Djigouadi’s novel, *He Will Have Mercy on Us* (Il aura pité de nous), also evokes this Eldorado. Adel and his two friends, Kamel and Ali, tell stories about emigrants. Although those stories are not plausible, the three young men allow themselves to believe in certain tall tales about migration. Ali tells his two friends a story so implausible that they initially doubt him. However, Adel and Kamel end up being carried away by the story: “But, without daring to confess to each other, one wants to believe in it; We end up believing. It is such a pleasant ‘hope of elsewhere’” (Djigouadi 2004: 109). Adel compares these tales to a kind of addiction. The same representation can also be found in popular music, always in link to this state of waiting. In the song “Ya babor” (Oh boat) by Liberta, the singer who embodies a migrant says:

“I sit by the sea.
Lost in my thoughts.
I look at the boats.
The image of Paris comes to me (x3)”

The posture of this young man, sitting in front of the sea, allowing himself to dream of
emigration resonates with one of the images mentioned earlier.

The notion of an Eldorado is omnipresent in the Bessaï’s artwork discussed earlier. His map is an anamorphic map or a cartogram; in other words, it is not an accurate depiction of geographical space, but rather corresponds to the imaginary cartographies of the harragas. As such, the size and location of the countries are distorted. For example, sub-Saharan Africa conspicuously absent while Spain and Italy (especially Sardinia and Sicily) occupy most of the map. France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States also appear prominently. In addition, this map evokes the notion of an Eldorado through two main elements: first, images of women’s silhouettes and second, the inscription of western currencies. The legend of the map indicates that the silhouettes of young women correspond to “E’zels/Blondates,” which the artist translates as “Western beauty/blondes” in the French version of map key. “E’zels” actually means “gazelle,” the animal, which also designates a woman in Arabic dialect and is used to emphasizes her beauty and her grace. According to the map key in the dialect version, the monetary signs (dollars, euros and pounds) correspond to “El Khedma w’deviz”, which literally means “Work and foreign currencies.” In the map key in French, the artist chooses to translate this by “Zone de puissance économique” which is roughly equivalent to the English phrase, “Zone of Economic Influence.” In any case, Bessaï’s imagined geography reflects the image of the Western Eldorado, a place where one can meet women and earn money.

The focus on women is related to the fact that most harragas are young men⁸. Gender norms in their home country also play a role. As argued by Benjamin Davis and Paul Winters in the case of Mexico, social and cultural norms influence the decision to migrate:

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⁸ Even though the current share of women in the world’s international migrant population is close to one half (GEMMA Gender and Migration, European Commission, FP7), some types of migration remain predominantly masculine and others feminine.
Social norms regarding gender roles play an important role in promoting or hindering migration by females and males. The patriarchal family system accepts and foments male migration, but hinders female migration. Fathers are more likely to resist the migration of daughters, and husbands the accompaniment of their wives and children, even years after first leaving home (Davis & Winters 2001: 10).

The predominance of young men among harragas are also due to the specific obstacles women face in embarking for Europe. The ways in which potential harragas obtain information on migratory strategies and the fact that they meet with one another (and with smugglers) in places of specifically male sociality also explain the small proportion of females. Women also face specific risks when departing from an isolated beach, in the middle of the night, in a group that is mostly comprised of men. In addition, if their attempt at crossing the Mediterranean fails, it is often difficult for them to go back and live under the family roof because of the social stigma of female undocumented migrants.  

In cultural productions about harga, femininity is mainly represented through the two symbolic figures of the mother and the western woman. In Merzak Allouache’s film Harragas (2009), the expectations of migrants are closely associated with freedom and women. While their boat is drifting, Rachid, one of the main characters has a vision and sees a party that is taking place on a yacht. At the back of the boat, looking at Rachid, is a beautiful young woman who is wearing an evening dress and raises her glass. Later on, when they arrive in Spain, Rachid calls one of his friends to inform him that they made it and asks him to tell Agnès—whom the spectator of the film has not yet met— that he arrived and to put a beer in the fridge for him. Pictures of women soccer fans are often posted on the Facebook pages about harga.

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9 During our fieldwork in Algeria and Tunisia, it was very challenging to identify and contact female harragas. There were rumors about Mrs So-and-so having left on a boat. However this data was always very difficult to verify and female harragas were impossible to meet. Analyzing the obstacles we faced during fieldwork is informative: It is hard to contact female harragas not only because there are fewer of them, but also because they encounter specific obstacles and a social stigma.
In one picture below, we see the colours of the Italian flag in the background. In the foreground is a collage of women supporters and three sentences written in different languages. In the Tunisian dialect, one can read, “I will leave and not come back. Sailor do a good deed,” referring directly to *harga*. In French, the phrase seems addressed to a loved one: “You are my life. I will cross the sea just to spend my life with you.” The last sentence, in Italian, is a message of love directed at a European country “I love you Italy”.

It is important, however, to put these pictures of women posted on Facebook in perspective. It is probable that other pages where mainly young men post—even if they have different interests and origins—will also have their fair share of pictures of attractive young women.

Western women are more rarely mentioned in the songs about *harga* where these individuals are often portrayed as chasing after material success. This points to the second feature of Europe indicated in Bessaï’s map (“*El Khedma w’deviz*”) since being able to afford a car is a reoccurring theme. In their song “*Mchaou*” (“They are gone”), the Tunisian rapper Balti says:

“He wanted to try his luck
He wanted to bring back [money] as the others did

Figure 3: Facebook page “7ar9a”, posted on 10 December 2014
He wanted to make his mother happy
He wanted to stuff his pockets.”

To better understand the representations of Europe, one must also study how these cultural productions portray the countries from which migrants are departing. These texts and songs deal with the daily lives of harragas in Tunisia and Algeria, and they focus on hardships rather than the possibility of finding an Eldorado. In this respect Tunisia and Algeria, despite their different political itineraries and economies, are depicted in a similar fashion. YouTube videos and on Facebook pages portray Algeria and Tunisia as countries where hogra is highly present and almost overwhelming. In dialect, the word “hogra”, a word which literally means “contempt” or “disdain”. It also has a broader meaning, designating an abuse of power that creates frustration and the feeling of being powerless. Harragas are portrayed as feeling trapped at the margins of a corrupt and unequal socio-economic system that offers them no prospects of improvement. Therefore the positive representations of Europe often serve as a foil to Tunisia and Algeria; unlike North Africa, Europe appears as a place where it is possible to achieve one’s dreams through work and resilience. Fantasizing about Europe is also way to escape the hardships of their daily lives. This is why Djigouadi’s characters allow themselves to believe the tall tales about migration. It also explains one of the main representations of harraga found online, which is the image of a young man turning his back and looking at Europe. We imagine that he is dreaming of economic accomplishments, but also individual and emotional freedom.

These representations resonate with the discourses of the harragas that we met during our fieldwork. Talking about his perspectives in Europe, Ali, whom we met earlier, argued that “Out there in Europe, you can find a job. Their lives are better than ours. I swear, their lives are better than ours” (Ali, 21, Tunis, 2015). He goes so far as to say that being jailed in Europe is better than being free in Tunisia. We interviewed Mohammed, a 23 year-old Algerian from
Mostaganem who worked as a street vendor, in 2011. At that time, he had already tried to leave Algeria by boat. Although he did not succeed the first time\(^\text{10}\), he was still determined to migrate. When we asked him about how he imagined his life in Europe, he replied:

> “I cannot tell you. I will see when I get there. It is not easy there either. It’s hard but I have friends, *harraga*, who made it, they are accomplished now: they are married, they have kids, they are no longer undocumented, they have a car … They are doing well and they left by boat. I have seen them leave” (Mohammed, Mostaganem, 2011).

Mohammed’s position allows us to nuance the representation of Europe as an Eldorado. While he communicated his belief that it was possible to succeed in Europe, he clearly did not want to appear naive or gullible. Consequently, he distanced himself from the myth of Eldorado and acknowledged that it might be hard to make it on the other side of the Mediterranean.

Cultural productions about *harga*, especially songs, deal with the life’s of those who want to migrate and what they hope to leave behind in North Africa such as their marginality, their boredom and their lack of prospects, more than they focus on with what Europe has to offer (Salzbrunn, Souiah and Mastrangelo 2015a; Souiah 2011). Even when they do evoke the European Eldorado it seems to be in opposition to their country. Cultural production in North Africa is full of actors who seek to transcend borders in order to physically or psychologically escape their social condition.

\(^{10}\) Two small boats left that day full of young men from the same neighborhood in Mostaganem. Mohammed was maneuvering one of the two boats. He had the skills to do so because his father was a fisherman and he had worked with him for a few years. The other boat was steered by one of his neighbors, Hicham. Hicham’s boat overturned and the Algerian coast guard intervened and rescued the *harraga*, but one of them died. During this rescue mission, the coast guards arrested the migrants on Mohammed’s boat and the survivors on Hicham’s boat. They were convicted for attempting to “exit the country illegally” (Algerian Penal Code, Article 175bis), for which they were dealt a six-month suspended prison terms and a fine of 60,000.
Along with these positive representations of Europe as an Eldorado or at least as a place where one can become accomplished, there are also negative representations of Europe that circulate in cultural production about harga. Many of these works highlight the economic difficulties and racism that undocumented migrants may face in Europe, giving them a sober tone. The disillusion seems to strike the migrants as soon as they step foot in Europe or even earlier, when Europe remains a distant hope. In his political cartoons about harga, Dilem highlights humorously the difficult economic situation of some European countries. In his cartoon “Greece; a new destination for harragas” he goes against the myth of the Eldorado. The drawing represents a group of harragas on a boat that is close to reaching its destination. On the horizon, the migrants can already see Greece, including an archaeological site and a sign that reads “ruins” The caricaturist associates Greece’s archaeological sites—the ruins—with the catastrophic situation of Greek economy. Moreover, confronted with the social and economic situation of Greece, the harragas are under the impression that they never left Algeria. One of them says, “Damn… We went back to Algeria” Humorously, this caricature deals with the economic crises that shook Europe through the emblematic example of Greece.

The island of Lampedusa serves as a gateway to Europe that portends ambiguous or even tragic consequences. In his song “El-harga,” DJ Danger asks: “Oh Lampedusa, are you the problem or the solution?” In his mizwed song Ahmed El-Amri blames the island directly as he sings, “I was not expecting that, oh Lampedusa, you made us wanderers and you made our mothers cry.” He says that the island turned them into a spectacle, a sinister joke for the Italians. On Facebook pages about harga, the internet users do not only share music videos and collages, they also share documentaries or television coverage of the issue of harga. One clip that is most frequently shared is an extract of report broadcasted in 2011 on the French TV
channel France 2 from the show called *Envoyé spécial*\(^{11}\). The ten minutes extract (taken from a longer, 45 minute report) deals with the migrants’ living conditions in Lampedusa. It shows that some prefer to sleep outside rather than in the crowded facilities that are supposed to welcome the migrants. In an interview with a reporter, one of the young man simply says “Lampedusa sucks.” The reporter asks him: “Are you disappointed”? His answer is again to the point: “Yes.” The images of migrants trapped in poorly managed and crowded “reception” centres have durably marked the imaginaries of migration. Indeed, Lampedusa has become the symbol of Europe’s failed migration policy.

In Algerian popular music, the songs depicting Europe negatively are mainly written from the perspective of a parent or someone who tries to persuade a loved one not to leave. For example, the raï singer El Hindi tries to dissuade young people from migrating by boat, insisting on the economic precariousness that they will find in Europe. He warns the *harragas*: “You pay 150,000 dinars in order to sleep on card boxes in the street.” In the same vein, Houari Benchenet embodies an undocumented migrant who bitterly regrets leaving Algeria. He is homeless, works on the black market, and is mistreated by his employer. Moreover, he lives in constant fear that the authorities will ask to see his papers. A second song by Houari Benchenet aims to destroy the myth of the Eldorado and is written from the perspective of someone who wants to dissuade young people from leaving by boat. The narrator recounts: “Rome, London, Paris and Malaga are not a paradise”. This theme is not limited to Algerian songs but can also be found in Tunisian music.

Sabrina, the only female rapper we studied, writes songs from the perspective of someone who migrated and then returned. She explains that she left full of hope but did not find anything positive on the other side of the Mediterranean Sea. She raps: “It’s not true. *Ghorba* is not a good life. Open your eyes. It’s not paradise. Lose your illusions.” Some

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passages in Djigouadi’s novel, *He Will Have Mercy on Us (Il aura pitié de nous)*, also refute the Eldorado myth. He points out to the racism that the *harragas* confront. When Omarou attacks Adel’s passivity and the fact that he does not do anything to try to leave Algeria, Adel responds by mocking the young Malian’s desire for Europe: “You’re annoying me Omarou, I am already fed up with you. If God is willing, I will get married here, I will live here, and I will die here. I leave this shitty West and it’s consumerist society to them.”

For him, the West is contemptuous and unreachable. Mocking Omarou’s expectations, he asks, “Do you think that they will be waiting for you with a coffee and a residence permit?” Migrants potentially face not only economic hardship, but also the loneliness that results from the absence of their families and their friends. Thus, many works evoke those left behind, especially their mothers, and how they have suffered due to their son’s absence. In the songs written from the perspective of the *harraga* who left, the singers often directly address their mothers, apologizing and telling them how much they miss them.

Migrants who have not yet left North Africa, such as Brahim, express their awareness that it can be very difficult to find a job in Europe and that newcomers can face precarious living conditions. He says: “There is misery. There is despair. You can end up sleeping outside” (Brahim, 24, Oran, 2011). Malek even mentions racism as a violence that he is ready to face: “I would rather be called ‘filthy Arab’. I would rather live abroad, anywhere, not only in France and I will let them insult me: ‘filthy Arab’” (Malek, 23, Oran, 2011). Hadj, another young man that we interviewed, sarcastically jokes that undocumented migrants are a godsend for European employers because they accept low salaries free of charge (Hadj, 26, Oran, 2011). This last representation of Europe as a place of suffering and loneliness resonates with Abdelmalek Sayad’s work, which nevertheless recognizes the agency of migrants (Sayad, 2004). Indeed, if they are ready to endure the hardships of migration, this is because it still

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12 “Tu m’emmerdes Omarou, tu me fatigues d’avance. Si Dieu veut, je me marierai ici, je vivrai ici et je crèverai ici. Je leur laisse leur Occident de merde avec leur société de consommation (…).”
seems to be a better outcome than suffocating back home, where there are no no prospects. The focus on the hardships undocumented migrants face in Europe reflects the power structure and the rejection of migration in Europe. This rejection is even stronger when the migrants are undocumented young men without a university degree, and who are perceived as Muslims. The negative representations of Europe thus do not dissuade migrants from crossing the Mediterranean. This should perhaps lead us to re-evaluate programs such as IOM’s Salemm, as well as policies that aim to deter migrations by reducing so-called “incentives” and making the conditions of migration even more difficult\(^\text{13}\).

**Conclusion: Europe, at the crossroads of hope and disillusion**

This chapter has analysed the varied representations of Europe in the art and digital images relating to *harragas*. Indeed, these works point to the agency of migrants who continue to search for Eldorado or land of opportunities. Europe appears as the promise for a normal life with employment, marriage and material security (which would allow for the migrant to help family members left behind). Yet Europe is also depicted as a destructive destination since the *harragas* realise that they may pay a high price and risk their lives only to arrive on a no-man’s land like Lampedusa. The spectre of bad living conditions, loneliness and racism are always present. Nevertheless, *harragas* who are aware of these possible consequences still pursue their emigration plans so that cultural production in North Africa is replete with examples of actors who cross borders and seek to escape their social conditions. The ways in which individuals navigate the tension between hope and disillusion underscores their agency and their capacity to search for a “good life” (Salzbrunn & Friese 2013). Thus, focusing on the representations

\[^{13}\text{For example, in March 2017, the mayor of Calais in France forbade the distribution of free meals in his city because he thought that it was an incentive for migrants to come.}\]
by individuals offered us a vision of undocumented migration that is considerably more nuanced than the mechanistic models prevailing in Europe, that are based on the figure of homo oeconomicus and a narrow form of economic determinism.
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Practices of Imperial Identity:

Patterns and paradoxes in EU trade and energy policies towards the
Maghreb region

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Abstract

Despite the radical shifts that continue to characterise both Maghreb and Europe, the
rhetoric surrounding the EU’s ‘Neighbourhood’ policies have proven largely resilient to
change. This chapter grapples with this policy persistence through the perspective of ‘imperial
identity practices’, and argues that short of being an Empire in the traditional sense, an implicit
imperial identity motivates EU policies. This can be illustrated by scrutinizing the Union’s
approach to Maghreb countries across two key policy areas, Energy and Trade.

Conceptualising these policies as constitutive practices provides analyses of the implicit power,
rationality, and discourses that practices reify. Imperial identity practices capture this well: in
a changing world, where what lays outside the boundaries of empire pose both opportunities
and threats, there is significant ontological security in sticking to the same practice of
expanding its reach through rule ‘convergence’.

Keywords: EU, Maghreb, empire, identity, trade, energy
The burgeoning field of Euro-Mediterranean studies has focused on the reaction of the European Union to the Arab Uprisings, and the democratisation processes that are hoped to follow from them (e.g. Balfour, 2012; Dennison, 2013; Tömmel, 2013). Attention has specifically focused on the so-called renewed European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), and whether there is a shift towards more conditionality and ‘more for more’ approaches to the transitioning region, or whether there is “nothing new at all” (Schumacher, 2011: 4). This chapter contributes to this literature by noting that despite the radical shifts that have taken place in the region, the rhetoric surrounding EU’s policies have actually changed very little. Subsequently, what we observe are durable, constitutive discursive structures, which persist regardless of even the most dramatic human suffering at the EU’s doorstep: indeed, the Syrian and Libyan war, the humanitarian catastrophes they produce, drowning people in the Mediterranean, violent crackdown of opposition in Egypt and Turkey, and international disengagement with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict make up a region that looks dramatically different from the ‘Southern Neighbourhood’ of five years ago. Nevertheless, the EU’s focus on normative, rule-based change as the pinnacle of its ‘Neighbourhood’ policy continues unabated. This chapter grapples with this persistence through the perspective of ‘imperial identity practices’.

It argues that, short of being an Empire in the traditional sense, an implicit imperial identity motivates EU policies, and this can best be seen by scrutinising the Union’s approach to Maghreb countries across two key policy areas: energy and trade. These two fields indicate that EU policies in the framework of the regional Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) and the bilateral ENP are based on extending the body of law governing the European Community (the *acquis communautaire*), often at the expense of other options that would better facilitate trade and energy flows between the two shores of the Mediterranean. These policies are codifications of the EU’s *modus operandi*, which is based on a continuous extension of EU
norms, rules, practices and interests – and is pursued even vis-à-vis states with no membership prospects.

This chapter connects with debates on the unprecedented processes of rule transfer taking place between the EU and third parties. This has been described in terms of ‘Europeanization’, i.e. the process of constructing, diffusing and implementing formal and informal norms, which are first defined within the EU and then incorporated in domestic discourse, identity and political structures (Radaelli, 2003). The literature on ‘external governance’, i.e. the transfer of EU rules and policies to third countries, often at a level below the threshold of membership (Lavenex, 2004; Lavenex and Schimmelfennig, 2009), observes that the EU is in fact engaged in Europeanization processes as a part of its foreign policy. This body of research has illustrated the way in which the EU exports its laws and regulations to the Neighbourhood, but also how these countries contest and negotiate aspects of European norms, both through formal negotiations and adaptation, and above all through varying application of formally adopted norms (Freyburg et al., 2009; Gänzle, 2009; Youngs, 2009a). Here, theories of Europeanization are applied to the ENP framework, and studied with the aim of evaluating the effect of EU influence on formal rule adoption. But the literature has two primary limits: firstly, it often fails to look at the effects of transposed EU norms in the local context, and secondly it often overlooks the motivations behind seeking Europeanization outside the realm of formal representation. The optic of ‘imperial identity practices’ addresses these limitations, and provides a framework for analysing underlying power relations in the context of durable policies.

The perspective builds on the literature on EU as Empire, inasmuch as it captures the political nature of Europeanization processes. Zielonka (2006) describes the EU as a neo-medieval Empire, characterised by its fuzzy borders and networked governance model, but also by its cultivation of peripheral borderlands into which the empire gradually extends. It is
engaged in the construction of a ‘ring of friends’ around its centre, which creates marches or fluid buffer zones along the frontier of its empire (Browning and Joenniemi, 2008; Del Sarto and Schumacher, 2005). Subsequently, the ENP might be seen as an attempt to transform the external EU borders from areas of demarcation and division to areas of exchange and interaction (Comelli et al., 2007), while the general approach to the regions adjacent to Europe can be described as creating interconnected ‘borderlands’ that serve as buffer zones to the EU (Del Sarto, 2009).

Yet, while the ‘EU as Empire’ debate is fruitful in understanding the political nature of regulatory expansion, it does not connect specific practices in EU-Neighbourhood relations with constitutive ideas of the Union, i.e. the identity properties germane to the nature of the EU. It tends to focus on the question of whether the EU actually is an empire or not, and provides prefixes that would justify various labels (neo-medieval, post-modern, regulatory, non-imperial and in denial). In contrast, when this chapter explores the approach taken by the EU to establish a Euro-Mediterranean Energy Community, and Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements (DCFTAs) with selected Maghreb states as practices, it invites an analysis of the implicit power, rationality, and discourses that specific and habitual practices reify. The assumption is that EU’s activities vis-à-vis its Southern Neighbourhood are practices that demonstrate both the ambitions and the identity of the Union, and not only action: while action is behaviour with meaning, and is a specific behaviour located in time, a practice is, according to Adler and Pouliot, “socially meaningful patterns of action which, in being performed more or less competently, simultaneously embody, act out, and possibly reify background knowledge and discourse in and on the material world” (Adler and Pouliot, 2011a: 6). The chapter seeks not only to describe the processes of external governance taking place in bilateral relationships, but also to explain what motivates this relationship. Inspired by Hansen (2011), ‘practices of imperial identity’ exposes the underlying ‘background knowledge’ that justify specific
practices in EU foreign policy making towards the Maghreb region, while preventing the possibility of other types of practices. This approach is novel in that it combines a study of practices with explanations grounded in constitutive frameworks. It thereby focuses its attention on showing that many of the activities that comprise the EU-Neighbourhood relationship are driven by a default adherence to regulatory expansion – even where the chances of success are rather chimeric.

The chapter first discusses recent work that studies the EU as a form of empire, and offers a framework for understanding ‘practices of an imperial identity’. The practices observed should be understood as instances of discourses and institutions governing EU external relations, which the chapter claims have ‘imperial’ inclinations, i.e. a core expanding its sphere of influence into its periphery through asymmetric relationships. The subsequent sections illustrate this argument by two case studies of the practice of promoting an Energy Community, on the one hand, and DCFTAs on the other.

**Conceptualising EU Foreign Policy as Practices of Imperial Identity**

The framework of ‘practices of imperial identity’ depicts the EU as an ‘informal empire’, whereby the mode of expansion results from economic forces and normative values. This stands in contrast to ‘formal empire’, which connotes the annexation of overseas/external territory (cf. Gallagher and Robinson, 1953; see also Gravier, 2009 and Zielonka, 2006). These practices are external manifestations of the EU’s mode of governing ‘inwards’; whereas the early European project was intent on governing that which laid within its borders, including however overseas (colonial) territories, the Union has gradually developed the willingness,
capacity and above all the habits of influencing the peripheries beyond its borders, leading to a common feature of empires: the EU simultaneously is an empire and has an empire (Gravier, 2014). Rather than describing the EU as an empire per se, this chapter connects specific EU foreign policy practices to a broader understanding of the construction of a certain EU identity. In turn, constitutive discourses permit some practices, and prevent others, thus locking in a consistent ‘actorness’ of the Union – where the EU promotes imperial discourses and accompanying practices, capacity for autonomous action is enhanced (see Niemann and Bretherton 2013 for a recent discussion on EU ‘actorness’).

Building on this notion of the EU as an informal empire, which engages in imperial governance beyond its borders, three commonly agreed general practices of empires are useful to survey in order to understand the specific practices of everyday EU Neighbourhood politics (cf. Gravier, 2011): First, the asymmetry of relations between the core and the periphery, whereby the EU and the sovereign states in the Southern Neighbourhood are not engaged in an equal ‘partnership’, but are characterised by a strong and imposing core and a weaker ‘partner country’. This is a truth with modifications: both thick (in principle) and thin (in practice) contestation can be discerned across the ENP countries (see Del Sarto and Tholens, forthcoming). Yet, as a system, it is designed to impose non-negotiable ‘core’ principles in a designated ‘periphery’, thereby establishing asymmetric relations at a formal level. The second element is expansion of spheres of influence, whether by territorial expansion through enlargement, or through regulatory and network-based expansion as seen in the EMP and ENP frameworks. Again, contestatory practices abound, but that does not change the fact that the system is designed to reproduce expansion in a unidirectional modality. Finally, imperial governance is characterised by the core being connected to its peripheries in a ‘hub and spoke’ system, i.e. dealing with the individual country directly and bilaterally, largely preventing a region to region type negotiation situation which would strengthen peripheries vis-à-vis the
core. Whereas there are clear European interests in dealing with MENA states on a bilateral level, it is also partly a necessity, given the divided nature of the MENA region. It is not entirely clear whether it is the MENA region itself or the nature of EU initiatives that may explain the lack of regional cohesion: EU initiatives such as the Barcelona process (1995), and the Union for the Mediterranean (2008) have sought to provide the region with regional umbrella platforms, yet have had little traction, and remains marginal to actual interaction practices in the EU-MENA relationship. The three elements identifying imperial practices are constitutive elements of a EU foreign policy identity, this article argues, and serve as overarching general practices against which specific EU policy action vis-à-vis the Southern Neighbourhood should be understood.

Conceptualising the EU as an informal empire that engages in imperial governance practices beyond its borders solve some of the challenges in disassociating empires from imperialism, on the one hand, and hegemony, on the other. Others have written extensively on these differences from various perspectives (Hardt and Negri, 2001; Münkler, 2007), but in this chapter it is pertinent to clarify how these concepts differ in the case of Europe-Maghreb relations: first, imperialism connotes a type of aggressive imposition of order in domestic societies that we do not easily see the EU overtly engaging in, contrary to the US’ presence on the ground in many hotspots. Second, hegemony intends supremacy within a group of formally equal actors (Münkler, 2007), and despite Diez’ argument that hegemony ought to substitute the Normative Power Europe label (2013), it is apparent that the EU is not in a hegemonic relationship towards many of the rich, energy-producing countries of the Southern Mediterranean, and does not possess the material capabilities to impose any imperial order in those countries.

And yet the EU is still seen to craft its policies towards the MENA region on the basis of rule export, non-equal negotiation patterns, and insistence on an “all but institutions”
approach. This amounts to a puzzling foreign policy practice. As this chapter argues, it is shaped by an imperial identity, which is proving durable and persistent exactly because it is based on constitutive beliefs rather than optimised solutions to a given foreign policy challenge. A non-imperial identity would aim solely at the increase of its functional interests, and henceforth be less concerned with exporting internal rules – much similar to value-free foreign policy as promoted by neorealist perspectives in International Relations. But the EU, despite profound changes both to the Maghreb region and to the EU itself, continues to make rule export the pinnacle of its foreign policy, indicating the significance of understanding foreign policy as more than ‘utility maximising’ behaviour.

Key to the practice of foreign policy based on rule convergence is the ‘background knowledge’ of the EU as an imperial actor, which gradually extends into its periphery in a modality of rule expansion. The successful ‘conquest’ of Central and Eastern Europe provided the rationality behind the rule convergence approach, and the specific EU trade and energy policies we now see in place – or out of place – embody, enact and reify the implicit knowledge that rule convergence is intrinsic to the EU’s being in the world. EU Delegations in Maghreb countries, as well as Maghreb actors, engage with these policy discourses by implicit reference to what they already know, i.e. that this is the ‘identity’ of the EU, and hence cannot be changed to any significant extent.

A practice-based approach assumes that specific practices are patterned and habitual; socially recognised as competent; and weave together the discursive and material worlds (Adler and Pouliot, 2011a). The world is presented in specific ways through practices, and gives way to manifestations of how things are. Practices seeking to establish an Energy Community and DCFTAs are crucial in connecting the broader discourses of Euro-Mediterranean integration with the material world, a process which is primarily discursive, while supported by fragments of (EU-financed) institutions. Euro-Mediterranean integration emerged in the context of the
1990s optimism, and has produced an impressive number of formal agreements and cooperation activities.\textsuperscript{1} Certainly, the two shores of the Mediterranean have moved closer across diverse policy fields. But in many of these fields – certainly in Energy and also to some extent in Trade – the actual integration is rather minimal. The EU might be a more significant actor than before in this region, but the breakdown of physical and economic borders is still a very slow process. This observation highlights why practices manifesting the discourse of integration are so important: without a persistent pressure towards the establishment of an EU model of integration in the Southern Neighbourhood, the discursive world of an integrated Euro-Mediterranean area characterised by “prosperity, stability and security” (European Commission, 2011a: 14) will evaporate. Trade and Energy are very different sectors, as the EU has sole competence in negotiating trade agreements, while energy cooperation runs at a primarily bilateral and private level. We should then expect that the EU would formulate different policies in the Energy domain, but as we shall see, it does not. Rule convergence continues to constitute the prime discourse, arguably because the EU is seen as competent for this purpose – by its own cadre in Brussels, by the EU member states, and by the Maghreb countries. Rule-based foreign policy is socially recognised as ‘the EU way’.

Within the discipline of International Relations, a focus on practices “transcends the dichotomy between political practices, as representations of the material balance of resources, and ideas” (Adler and Pouliot, 2011b: 3). Identity, moreover, is the intersubjective understanding of who an actor is, and upon which social structure of norms and ideas actors base their preference and formulate their interests: identities constrain actors’ behaviour, but also constitute their world-views and preferences (Sjursen, 2002; Wendt, 1999). Identity conceptualised as constitutive practices is thus able to explain long-term trends in policy making; the range of options available to EU policy makers; and the way specific practices

\textsuperscript{1} See BORDERLANDS project website for data and maps on EU-MENA integration from 1995 until today, available here: http://borderlands-project.eu/home.aspx/
contribute to reify a given identity – or a set of identities. This echoes Mitzen’s work on how habits and routines anchor identity in a way that makes actors attached to and invested in those routines, due to the need for ontological security and the interest in ensuring the stability of their identity as a particular kind of actor (Mitzen, 2006: 271–272). The EU has an interest in furthering its identity, but is also bound by it in inexplicit ways. This is not limited to the debate on the EU as a Civilian or Normative Power (Manners, 2002), which is focused on depicting the EU’s *sui generis* characteristics as different from those of other, traditional, interest-seeking actors.² *Practices of an imperial identity*, instead, refer to a modality of foreign policy that enacts and reifies aspects associated with the EU’s identity as an expanding actor on the world’s stage. Constructed over years of horizontal and vertical extension, enlargement and, eventually, Neighbourhood Europeanization, the habit of expansion constitutes a patterned and competent performance that must be held as evidence of a shared understanding of what the EU is.

The next section traces the practices of creating a DCFTAs and Energy Community with the Southern Mediterranean ‘partner countries’ in more detail.

**Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements**

Formalised trade cooperation with MENA countries goes back to the Global Mediterranean Policy (1973-1992), which covered trade preferences and financial protocols through bilateral agreements. In the early 1990s, a renewed Mediterranean policy extended to also cover issues of human rights, environment and democracy promotion (El-Agraa, 2011: 407). In 1995, the Barcelona process ignited new forms of cooperation, and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership

² For convincing critiques see Hyde-Price (2006) and Pace (2007), as well as Del Sarto (2013)
sought, among other goals, to establish free trade between the EU and the partner countries, and between the partners themselves. The ambition was to create a Euro-Mediterranean FTA by 2010 (Euro-Mediterranean Conference, 1995). However, intra-regional MENA trade in general remains one of the lowest in the world (Rouis and Tabor, 2013). After WTO negotiations stalled in the mid-2000s, the EU began redirecting its approach to Neighbouring countries by launching bilateral FTAs, spelled out in the 2006 *Global Europe: Competing in the World* communication (European Commission, 2006). Avoiding the difficult multilateral negotiations characterising WTO rounds, the EU saw bilateral FTAs as a way of including regulatory and ‘tough’ issues in their negotiations with third countries, and as such, FTAs are a subway for the EU to implement its deep trade agenda (Liargovas, 2013: 2).

The Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) is a specific type of Free Trade Agreement (FTA) that was first launched in 2007, but which has seen a revival in the MENA region after the 2011 Arab Uprisings. In the EEAS and European Commission’s communication *A New Response to a Changing Neighbourhood: A Review of the Neighbourhood Policy*, of 25 May 2011, the DCFTA is presented as “a free trade agreement covering a wide array of trade-related issues (“comprehensive”) and aiming at eliminating ‘behind the border’ obstacles to trade through processes of regulatory approximation, thus partially opening/extend[ing] the EU internal market to the other party” (EEAS and European Commission, 2011: 14). Moreover, “beyond the mere elimination of import duties, these agreements should foster, in a progressive manner, closer integration between the economies of our Southern Mediterranean partners and the EU single market and would include actions such as regulatory convergence” (EEAS and European Commission, 2011: 9). DCFTAs are thus the latest attempts at liberalising markets and exporting the *acquis communautaire*. Negotiations have been opened with Morocco (2013) and Tunisia (2016). Yet they have proven difficult. For instance, negotiations with Morocco were suspended by Rabat in 2016
after the European Court of Justice invalidated a farm trade agreement between the EU and Morocco which it claimed unlawfully included the disputed Western Sahara territory.

DCFTA negotiations take place in the framework of the ENP, which is based on a principle of differentiation (rather than the strict application of the Copenhagen criteria), as was the case in the enlargement process with Eastern Europe. Indeed, differentiation has been highlighted as a fundamental principle of the ENP (Schimmelfennig, 2009: 17), and observed as the working modality of the EU towards the Southern Mediterranean (Barbé and Herranz-Surrallés, 2012; Escribano, 2010). Differentiation indicates a ‘hub and spoke’ approach, in which third countries are connected to the EU but not with one another. DCFTAs represent a possibility of scaling up the level of trade integration, albeit in an ‘all but institutions’ formula. It is a way of “moving from a process of negative integration (i.e., gradual dismantling of trade barriers) towards a process of positive integration (i.e., regulatory convergence in areas that have an impact on trade, in particular sanitary and phytosanitary rules, customs and border procedures, competition and public procurement)” (Montalbano and Nenci, 2012: 3). In offering the DCFTAs to ENP countries, the EU practice of exporting its own rules – even to countries without membership prospects – continues unabated.

DCFTAs are a relatively new feature of EU external trade policy, and analyses are largely based on future economic projections and evaluations of intentions rather than actual agreements. In other words, we do not know what effects they might produce, but a number of critiques as to the purpose of such trade agreements have emerged. Some see a ‘capabilities-expectation gap’ between ENP demands and rewards, and argue that the misfit between the demands of complying with the _acquis_ without the prospects of membership renders the DCFTAs dependent on its ability to create increased trade flows. It is thus interesting to note that the same study finds that while the EU is currently the biggest trading partner for ENP countries, it is gradually loosing markets to BRIC countries, both in import and export terms
In addition, even if most of Maghreb export goes to Europe, they are not considered major trading partners of the EU. This picture gives some indication that there is more at stake here than merely seeking to facilitate trade when endowing the DCFTAs with a strong rule convergence component. Other analysts see DCFTAs as a carrot and stick approach that reproduces the core-periphery spatial pattern of development, and further emphasises the ‘hub-and-spoke’ system of the ENP. The system, according to this view, thus reproduces the uneven trade patterns between the two regions, and connects the core to the periphery not through regional arrangements and not by creating income convergence, but through a type of integration that is primarily intended to bring neighbours gradually closer to the Single Market (Kallioras, 2013). Others again point to the fact that the idea of deep and comprehensive FTAs was launched already in 2007, and as such is a repackaged concept. This is especially true in light of the agenda of negotiating liberalisation of trade in services, as well as initiating negotiations in the areas of investment, government procurement, and competition policy is particularly stressful for transition countries (Mohamadieh, 2012).

Taken together, the EU’s latest trade overture in the Southern Neighbourhood is arguably not driven exclusively by economic interest. The EU does not have major trade interest in the region, and studies point to the increased relevance of the BRIC countries over European countries in future trade projections. There might be a deeper belief that restructuring Maghreb markets will be beneficial for European producers, but negotiators are not explicitly engaging with this idea. In the absence of membership prospects, and bearing the lack of any real trade benefits in mind, one might ask: Why would there be a major focus on ‘Neighbourhood Europeanization’ in the DCFTAs?

DCFTA intends a process of positive integration based on regulatory convergence, as
opposed to negative integration, which classic FTAs address through the dismantling of trade barriers. But convergence remains a fuzzy concept in EU policy: whereas a literal understanding of convergence indicates a process of gradually changing so as to become similar or develop something in common, convergence in EU external trade relations means that third parties adopt the relevant set of rules codified in the *acquis communautaire* of the European Union. Indeed, *integration*, in the area of trade, means aligning the legislation with the *acquis*, which means that products are treated as internal products. This would imply Agreements on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance (ACCA), which would align legislation but also harmonise the conformity process, for example in laboratories. Integration is thus more than ‘equivalents’, which is applied in case of the EU-US free trade agreement (the now stalled Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, TTIP), where it is clear that agreements will be based on comparable equal standards in the two countries, but will not be seeking regulatory convergence.

Clearly, the EU will not adopt US legislation, and the US will not adopt EU legislation. Instead, they will come to an agreement over which rules to consider as equivalent in the two countries’ legislation. And this is the difference between a DCFTA and an FTA: while an FTA, and also the latest versions of the FTAs, such as with Korea and the ones under negotiation with Japan and the US, seeks to be based on *equivalence* in standards and regulations, DCFTA means trade integration based on the Community *acquis*. In other words, the DCFTAs seek to align regulations of the Maghreb countries with EU regulations, not converge legislation in the literal sense, or find negotiated equivalents. Maghreb states generally see the EU’s insistence on rule convergence, and the apparatus of aid and training that comes with it, simultaneously as neo-colonialism and as providing opportunities: we know for example that in notoriously protectionist Algeria (Serres, 2016) and Egypt (Roccu, 2015) elites successfully exploited

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4 Interview with senior official in DG Trade and negotiator of DCFTA with Morocco, Brussels April 2013
systems of EU regulatory reform and ‘capacity building’ to their advantage, while the official discourse of ‘interference’ remained. Maghreb elites are co-opted by EU foreign policy while official domestic discourse might be more inclined to emphasise their strength and independence.

“One could say that it is not deep trade per se that the EU has been seeking in its (European) neighbourhood; it has rather been seeking its own expansion, in the form of the export of the EU *acquis communautaire*, with access to its Single Market as the key attraction point for its partners” (Dreyer, 2012: 22). And indeed, seeking its own expansion appears to be the *modus operandi* of EU trade policy in its ‘periphery’: the priorities are clearly different from bilateral negotiations with major trade partners such as the US, and the way in which the EU approaches the neighbourhood with a predefined set of rules and a liberal trade agenda that may or may not be beneficial to the conditions in the given country, appears to be primarily aimed at expansion for the sake of expansion. In leading negotiations towards a DCFTA with Morocco, for example, it is clear that the EU intends not only, or even primarily, to produce an outcome (an agreement), but to send signals to the Neighbourhood as to what it means to be a favoured partner of Brussels. This practice is coupled with what is often called a ‘carrot and stick approach’, using positive incentives and negative conditionality to induce ‘change’. It is also an instance of enlargement logics that continue to characterise external Neighbourhood relations, and which so perfectly captures the essence of the Union’s imperial governance modality. The DCFTAs, moreover, invoke the pattern of enlargement, in which candidate countries adopt EU rules in sectorial policy areas, in return for gradual inclusion in the Community. Reproducing this practice gives a regularised or habitual meaning to the imperial paradigm, deepening the Union’s ontological security.

DCFTAs can be described as a ‘practice of imperial identity’: the EU engages in Europeanization towards external parties not primarily because it sees it as in its immediate
interest, but because it is a constitutive feature reifying its identity as an actor that expands and governs outward. The practice of extending its own rules and braking down economic borders through non-negotiable adherence to the *acquis* is part and parcel of EU being in the world, and connects its preferences and beliefs with the discourses of a joint partnership based on liberal conceptions of peace and prosperity.

**A EU-South Mediterranean Energy Community**

Energy reappeared on the agenda of EU policy makers during the early 2000s, after decades in the shadow of European affairs. Increased consumption and decreased production of energy on the European continent has created a situation whereby Europe’s energy independence dropped from 66% in 2000 to 56% in 2010, and continues to drop (Abdallah et al., 2013). Awareness of the vulnerability of European energy markets increased after the 2006 Gasprom crisis, in which gas was withheld from Russia to Europe via Ukraine, and subsequent EU communications addressed the need for Europeanization of energy policy as well as for a rapid completion of the internal market in energy across Europe (Youngs, 2009b). The Lisbon Treaty of 2009 included for the first time a chapter on energy, and thus transferred competencies in the field of energy from the Member States to the European Community, evident in the establishment of a Directorate General for Energy – DG ENER (Braun, 2011). While member states still retain sovereignty over the security of supply and the composition of their energy mix, managing the nascent internal market in energy, as well as the somewhat vague principle of energy solidarity, is now under the competencies of the EU.

In parallel to completing the internal market in energy, the EU’s external energy
relations have accelerated over the last decade. Recognising the international dimension of the energy market, as well as the need for a coherent approach to energy import, the EU has increasingly taken charge of external energy affairs, and issued in 2011 the Communication *EU Energy Policy: Engaging with Partners beyond Our Borders*, in which the EU’s interest in “secure, sustainable and competitive” energy was spelled out (European Commission, 2011b).

The European approach to the Southern Mediterranean in the field of energy is often associated with a need for Energy Security (Andoura, 2013), with liberalisation through unbundling of the ownership structures in domestic markets (Eikeland, 2011), and a focus on the creation of renewable energy (Mason, 2009). This goal is to be sought in parallel with private sector infrastructure projects, such as gas and oil pipelines and electricity interconnectors.

In their Joint Communication on *A Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity* of 8 March 2011, the European Commission and the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy announced their commitment to “establish[ing] a EU-South Mediterranean Energy Community” (European Commission, 2011a: 9). Recognising the strategic relevance of supplies from and transit through the Mediterranean region, and referring to the possibility of extending the Energy Community Treaty currently in place with Eastern and South-Eastern neighbours, the document states that “this community should cover relevant parts of the EU’s energy legislation with a view to promoting a real and reliable convergence of South Mediterranean partners’ energy policies with EU policy” (European Commission, 2011a: 10).

Also in the December 2013 Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) Ministerial Meeting on Energy, which was supposed to confirm support to Euro-Med energy initiatives, a topic on the agenda was “Political Discussion on a Mediterranean Energy Community” (Union for the Mediterranean, 2013), confirming the continued existence of the idea in high level policy circles. After the unexpected failure of this 2013 UfM Ministerial Meeting on Energy to commit to the Mediterranean Solar Plan, new and conspicuously similar initiatives emerged as...
UfM Energy Platforms: on Electricity Markets, on Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency, and Gas. Observers of EU external energy policy have noted that this approach is rooted in rule-based governance reform, and that the new energy partnerships with third countries represent a familiar EU-style approach of contractual agreements to attain adherence to rule-based behaviour on market, regulations, transport and safety (Youngs, 2009b: 44). It has also been noted that the convergence approach serves to hedge markets and geopolitics in an attempt to secure energy supplies from the Southern Mediterranean (Escribano, 2010). Moreover, while the EU does not speak with one voice in the field of energy, it does speak with one rule, and does attempt to engage in rule export, both through top-down convergence and bottom-up learning processes (Carafà, 2013).

The policy of approaching energy integration as rule convergence has proven resilient, even if there is very little indication of a real integration of the energy systems across the Mediterranean: while there is a frenzy of activity in Euro-Mediterranean energy area compared to 10 years ago, there is little evidence that the Northern and Southern rim of the Mediterranean are actually harmonising rules and regionally integrating energy markets. Moreover, both the EMP and ENP frameworks have so far both largely failed to institutionalise Euro-Mediterranean energy integration (Darbouche, 2011). It is therefore somewhat surprising that the European Commission and the High Representative in the Communication of 8 March 2011 on Democracy and Shared Prosperity announced their commitment to “establish a EU-South Mediterranean Energy Community”, which “should cover relevant parts of the EU’s energy legislation with a view to promoting a real and reliable convergence of South Mediterranean partners’ energy policies with EU policy” (European Commission, 2011a: 9–10). The European Commission thus spelled out its policy ambition for the EU’s energy cooperation with the Southern Mediterranean based on the construction of an ‘Energy Community’.

5 Confirmed through author interviews with DG Energy officials, Brussels 2013. As one official in the International Relations and Enlargement Unit working on the MENA region said: “We are still at point zero”.
According to this and similar statements, an Energy Community should be based on regulatory convergence with the EU *acquis communautaire*, much in the same vein as the existing institution carrying the same name - the Energy Community (EnC) with South-East Europe.

The EnC is a highly institutionalised and ‘top-down’ instrument aimed predominantly at pre-accession countries or countries with such ambitions. The Contracting Parties of the Treaty governing the EnC sign up to “the creation of a pre-accession mechanism with the implementation of the Community *acquis* in this field; the establishment of an effective regulatory framework; and the creation of an internal energy market between the countries in the region” (Council of the European Union and Contracting Parties, 2006). The fact that the same name is now applied to future energy cooperation in the Southern Mediterranean is hardly coincidental, and a source of tension already prior to any tangible deliverable. It is initially puzzling why the Commission insists on repackaging this enlargement concept in a region with very different types of relationships vis-à-vis the EU, especially when considering the lukewarm position of key stakeholders in the Maghreb region as well as among many private sector actors. It is well known that Algeria, as a net exporter of oil and gas to Europe, is deeply opposed to integration according to an EU style model based on market principles and rule convergence. Also in Euro-Med energy events, Algeria let that be made clear. Morocco and Tunisia, as net importers, are perhaps more inclined to discursively adhere to EU language on energy integration, yet also their energy markets are based on protectionism, subsidies, and state ownership over energy production and transmission processes – directly at odds with EU rules. Libya, moreover, is engulfed in an internal war that prevents any realistic participation in Euro-Med energy events. With the persistent policy of energy integration based on an EU style energy community, the Commission appears to superimpose a political integration model.

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6 Author interviews with private sector stakeholders to Euro-Mediterranean energy processes in Rome, Venice and Florence, 2013.
7 Author participatory observation, Venice June 2013.
onto a highly sensitive issue area in a politically fragmented region that might even hurt the incremental technical integration process that has slowly emerged over the past years, notably through the establishment of the Association of Mediterranean Energy Regulators (MEDREG). So why does the EU keep on promoting rule-based integration, knowing it is not only unrealistic, but actually potentially detrimental to existing patterns of energy integration?

The Energy Community might be a carefully selected, rational policy choice developed as a response to the challenge at hand, as seen for example in some of the bilateral strategic energy partnerships (currently in place with Egypt and Algeria), following different tracks of timing and priority of the processes. But bringing in the political level, i.e. formal state representation at the highest level, to an issue area like energy, and in a region as politically divided as the MENA region, might very well risk blocking emerging bottom-up cooperation initiatives and raise the stakes of cooperation to unacceptable levels. The competition between European institutions in the field of energy might also have shaped the Commission’s insistence on the policy. Youngs finds that the so-called ‘European approach’ of extending internal market networks is far from being a rationalised philosophy of energy security, but is rather the area in which the Commission enjoys energy-related competence and thus a policy space to manifest its agency (Youngs, 2009b: 40). In the case of the EU-South Mediterranean Energy Community individuals in the field clearly have the impression that this is an attempt by the Commission to ‘repackage’ an old concept, and thus regain some of the control over the cooperation processes.8

A perspective that views the Energy Community as an automated policy making response, based on the EU’s previous experiences with enlargement in Eastern Europe, or its own experiences with developing the internal energy market, is however even more convincing. Indeed, it seems that despite the obvious lack of membership prospects, much of

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8 Author observations in Euro-Mediterranean energy events in Venice, Florence and Rome during 2013.
the repertoire of action towards the Southern Mediterranean is informed by similar logics to those that were applied to enlargement in the East (Del Sarto and Schumacher 2005; Kelley 2006). The fact that the entire approach to the Southern Neighbourhood is mired in enlargement logics and repackaged concepts is indicative of the EU attempting to construct its relationship as one of centre versus periphery. This helps explain why the European Commission seems to be independently pushing for an approach to energy integration – with very little enthusiasm from its partners and stakeholders.

Automated policy responses, moreover, are patterned practices that manifest certain constitutive features of the actors engaged in them. The EU’s distinct approach to external energy policy in the Southern Neighbourhood is an example of the ‘practice of identity’, inasmuch as it is, perhaps primarily, aimed at enacting the ‘expanding community’ modality that defines the Union’s existence. Protagonists of the Energy Community repeatedly stress that it would not be based on the acquis, and that common rules will be agreed upon between the parties. Yet, there is inevitably an impression that the acquis is the basis for any EU-led energy integration in the region, and that it is indeed more important to export its rules than to foster real energy exchange (Tholens 2014).

The practice of structuring energy relations according to a rules-based form of integration links the material and discursive worlds in ways that ensure ontological security for the EU as an expansive project. The material world of energy integration is often showed on maps during Euro-Mediterranean energy events: the interconnectedness of the Mediterranean, with its subterranean electricity cables and gas and oil pipelines and liquefied natural gas terminals are usually displayed during the opening speech of an event. As an example, at one event in Florence, Italy, in May 2013, a speaker from a European consortium presented the map of the Roman Empire, saying: “if they could do it, so can we”. The discursive world of an enlarged zone of integration, where European rules will prevail, is manifested in Euro-
Mediterranean energy policies, events, and statements, which follows a set of unwritten and mutually agreed codes, i.e. ‘micro-practices’. A diversity of European actors and Maghreb state actors engage with these codes, which structure interaction between them but also make them part of a ritual process that is regularised and seen as competent. The EU’s financing of Euro-Mediterranean energy events, as well as UfM Platforms, MEDREG and a host of other initiatives over the last 10-15 years, is a way of steering energy relations in a direction that is consistent with its imperial identity. Most European and North African actors know very well that an Energy Community based on European rules is entirely unrealistic. Yet, by establishing repeated practices of interaction that supports the expanding rule modality, the practices assume a key role in determining how power is defined in the Euro-Mediterranean relationship.

**Conclusion: EU imperial identity practice in the Maghreb**

This chapter has analysed two specific overtures in the Southern Mediterranean through a focus on imperial practices that express and reify an EU identity based on expansion and extension. Trade and Energy are dissimilar EU policy areas, but the policies of seeking an EU-South Mediterranean Energy Community and the launching of negotiations for DCFTAs have something fundamental in common: they are both aimed at exporting the *acquis communautaire*, and connecting North African countries to the EU core in a network of rules. Regardless of their bilateral or regional character, such unilateral ‘integration’ aims at rule convergence, which manifests the idea of an imperial Union that connects to its periphery through regulatory expansion.

While observers of Euro-Mediterranean relations recognise that EU policy is essentially
about a projection of the external governance of the EU (Cardwell, 2011: 237), this chapter has presented the optic of ‘imperial identity practices’ in order to refocus the attention on those habitual practices that the Union deploys in its relationship with the Neighbourhood. This is first of all a critique of the External Governance literature’s lack of attention to the political motivation behind the phenomenon of rule extension, and subsequently an attempt to take the EU as Empire literature to a constitutive level which re-politicises a legalist, technical and assumed unpolitical approach. The chapter has moved beyond a demonstration of whether the EU is or has an empire, and argues that that the EU repeatedly engages in practices that are consistent with imperial governance, i.e. they seek extension and expansion of EU rules and norms, even where this is the less optimal path to enhanced cooperation. Subsequently, EU Neighbourhood policies must be seen as made up of practices driven by, predominantly, a non-explicit identity of an expanding power, which links with its ‘periphery’ through hub-and-spoke systems based on exporting the Union’s internal rules in a wholesale manner. These policies, and the host of micro-practices accompanying them, reify the discourses and background knowledge that pertain to the EU’s properties as an informal empire, in denial of its power projection but for all intents and purposes fundamentally imperial in its dealing with Maghreb counties located in designed ‘Neighbourhoods’, or ‘borderlands’. It is remarkable how little has changed in the EU’s foreign policy towards this region, even as conditions both North and South of the Mediterranean have changed dramatically. Imperial identity practices capture this well: in a changing world, where what lays outside the boundaries of empire pose both opportunities and threats (a “ring of friends” or a “ring of fire”?), and where fragmentation threatens the cohesion of the Union, there is significant ontological security in sticking to the same practice of expanding its reach through rule imposition.
Bibliography


PART THREE

STATES OF CRISIS AND EXCEPTION
A European Delegation in Algeria: Human Rights and Democracy in the Midst of Civil War

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Abstract

This chapter analyzes the intervention of the EU in Algerian politics at the end of the 1990s. More precisely, it studies the visit of a European parliamentary delegation at the height of the wave of massacres experienced by Algeria during the civil war (1992-1999). By focusing on the consequences of this visit on both sides of the Mediterranean, the chapter shows that it fuelled internal debates among European and Algerian actors. Contradictory European discourses and normative approaches interacted echoed political struggles in Algeria. In return, the Algerian civil war influenced the debates on democracy and human rights in Brussels. This article thus sheds light on how Algerian actors, in the government and in opposition parties, contributed to the re-interpretation of European “founding values”. The meanings of core notion such as human rights or democracy were negotiated and reinterpreted by various actors according to their own agendas. This case study highlights the specific political and historical dynamics that shape the Mediterranean dialogue, which is at the crossroads of the globalized paradigms of exception and democratization.

Keywords: Algeria, European values, civil war, exception, democratization
The construction of a European identity has, at least in part, occurred around the notion of shared values. Among the founding myths of the European Union (EU), notions such as democracy, peace, human rights and the rule of law appear to be key features (Bottici & Challand 2013). Since the 1990s, these themes have been appropriated and publicized as key components of the EU's international mission. Nevertheless, after the launching of the Barcelona Process in 1995, the promotion of these so-called European “core values” in the frame of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) has been widely debated. Indeed, the repressive nature of political regimes in the Southern Mediterranean was readily apparent, despite the implementation of various forms of cooperation and reforms. Eventually, the 2010-2011 Arab uprisings were as a brutal reminder: while the signing of association agreements was supposed to lead to a gradual democratization through cooperation, partnership and discussion, the Commission itself admitted that the ENP had never achieved its political goals. For its reason, in seeking to understand the political dynamics of the EMP, it is necessary to look at this tension between the EU’s proclaimed virtuous intentions and the reality of its intervention in the Southern Mediterranean.

Many authors have underscored the contradiction between the EU’s founding principles and the its support for authoritarian regimes in the Southern Mediterranean. The European focus on security issues is often understood as the main reason for this contradiction, as the obsession with counter-terrorism and migration is said to explain the realpolitik strategy vis-à-vis North African regimes (Eder 2011; Benantar 2013; Youngs 2014). These authors demonstrate convincingly that, beyond the promotion of its so-called core values, the true

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1 According to the articles 1 and 2 of the Treaty on European Union modified by the Treaty of Lisbon, the founding values of the EU are: human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and the respect of human rights. In its relationship with “the rest of the world”, the EU “shall uphold and promote its values.”
pillars of the European foreign policy in this part of the world remained “stability, security and prosperity” (Cassarino 2012). Yet this approach risks dismissing out of hand notions such as democracy or human rights, which are often viewed as mere forms of instrumentalization and cynicism. Indeed, one should not overlook the ways in which these normative concepts impact the EU’s policy in the Southern Mediterranean, for example in terms of beliefs, normative claims and financial aid.

Conversely, a second category of scholarship looks at the Euro-Mediterranean partnership through the lens of economic and administrative cooperation rather than focusing on security. This approach has offered a welcome critique of the effects of the EU’s intervention in the reform of governance in North-African countries, through the management of economy, the upgrading of the state apparatus or the organization (and co-optation) of civil society. Scholars have pointed out that these reforms have resulted in an increased bureaucratization of the cooperation, the development of the inequalities and a growing complicity with local ruling elites (Hibou 2003; Roccu 2015). While this literature is essential to understand the entanglements between the transnational and national scales of governance and to break with the exceptionalist myth of “Arab authoritarianism,” it also echoes a well-known trend in development studies that highlights the anti-political nature of bureaucracy-driven foreign interventions and the so-called “rule of experts” (Ferguson 1990; Mitchell 2002). The notion of anti-politics reveals the neutralization of political debates thanks to the imposition of techno-managerial tools and objectives. Nevertheless, the idea of an anti-politics machine should not lead us to focus solely on the bureaucratic aspects of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership and overlook the inherently political dynamics that shape these transnational exchanges.

2 Indeed, the Euro-Mediterranean partnership also takes the form of an “incremental technical-bureaucratic cooperation” that appears to be in tension with the development of more politically driven approaches (Tholens 2014: 46)
Following, this chapter looks at the intervention of the EU in Algerian politics at the end of the 1990s. It will focus on the visit of a European parliamentary delegation led by the head of the sub-committee on human rights, André Soulier, in February 1998, at the height of the wave of massacres experienced in Algeria during the civil war (1992-1999). In studying the consequences of this visit on both sides of the Mediterranean, this chapter shows that EU intervention was far from neutral or anti-political, and actually fuelled internal debates among European and Algerian actors. Despite its attempts to appear as a neutral international entity, the EU was seen as a partisan actor in local Algerian politics. Moreover, European discourses and normative views contributed to the shaping of public discourses on the political good in Algeria. At the same time, the Algerian civil war influenced the debates on democracy and human rights in Brussels. European “founding values” were relevant in this conflictual relationship, as their meanings were negotiated and reinterpreted by various actors according to their own agendas. This case study highlights the specific political and historical dynamics that define the Euro-Algerian dialogue and reveals the contradictory nature of European and Algerian strategies during the years leading up to the outbreak of the so-called war on terror.

Context

The Algerian civil war resulted from the constant weakening of the economic, social and political equilibrium in the country during the 1980s. After a series of urban uprisings at the end of 1988, the reformist government allowed a political liberalization that benefited to the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS for Front Islamique du Salut), the main Islamist party. In a context of increased tensions, the FIS drew on the strategy of “Islamization from below,” implemented by various associations during the previous decades and won the following
legislative elections at the end of 1991. In reaction, the Army led a coup in order to interrupt the electoral process and forbid the FIS from gaining the majority in the People's National Assembly (APN). After the putsch and the forced resignation of the President Chadli Bendjedid, the new military-led regime launched a crackdown against the Islamists who retaliated with the assassination of the transitory head of the State, Mohamed Boudiaf.\textsuperscript{3} The rising violence on both sides and its hybridization with economic interests and banditry degenerated in an open-conflict and resulted in increased social fragmentation (Martinez 1998).

Despite the war, some long-standing specialists remained hopeful that the erosion of the authoritarian model could give birth to a genuine democratic transition (Quandt 1998). De facto, the Algerian authorities never fully abandoned the globalized narrative of “democratization.” In the context of mass violence and constant abuse of civilians, they organized a presidential election that pitted a former general, Liamine Zeroual, against a moderate Islamist, Mahfoud Nahnah. Despite the limits inherent to any electoral process held during a civil war, these elections were relatively successful in re-establishing popular legitimacy at the top level of the Algerian state. Another round of legislative elections followed two years later, which saw the triumph of a newly created secular party that backed the military (the RND for \textit{Rassemblement National Démocratique}). Meanwhile, given the military superiority of the Algerian army and the increased competition of more radical jihadi groups, the Islamic Salvation Army (AIS), the military branch of the FIS, declared a unilateral cease-fire at the end of September 1997. Therefore, as the main Islamist challenger was defeated and the political institutions of the country regained legitimacy, some observers posited that the country was finally witnessing the end of this bloody conflict. At the same time, contacts with international partners resumed, notably with a visit of the Speaker of the French National Assembly in 1995. Yet, despite the apparent improvement of the political situation, local and

\textsuperscript{3} Many political actors questioned the official version and accused the secret services of being involved in Boudiaf's assassination, among which his wife and son. More than 20 years later, the mystery remains.

Indeed, during the second half of 1997, Algeria experienced an unprecedented wave of violent massacres. These atrocities reached a peak in the wilaya (department) of Ghelizane, where hundreds were brutally slaughtered during the winter. At this point, Algeria came under the scrutiny of the international community, as the latter debated the “humanitarian responses” that could address this tragic wave of violence (Mundy 2015). While the abuses perpetrated by radical takfiri groups such as the Islamic Armed Group (or GIA)\(^4\) were the main concern, the violence perpetrated by the Army and its auxiliaries, in accordance with a doctrine of counterinsurgency based on the “eradication” of the rebels, was also widely criticized by NGOs and international organizations.\(^5\)

The EU was not absent from these debates: it had a role to play, both as the most important commercial partner of the country and as a promoter of the globalized discourse on human rights. In 1994, the EU recalled its permanent delegation in Algiers. As the discussions regarding the signing of an association agreement resumed in 1997, the negotiations were interrupted the same year. Consequently, a first visit from a troïka composed of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the past, present and future rotating presidency of the EU was organized in January 1998, despite many hesitations from the Algerian authorities. Indeed, the visit was approved on January 9\(^{th}\) only to be cancelled on the 15\(^{th}\). It was finally authorized on the 16\(^{th}\), just a few days before the European delegates were supposed to land in Algiers. The uncertainty surrounding this first visit and the pessimistic confessions of the diplomats—which were related by the French press—showed the persistent difficulty of negotiating with the Algerian government and the uncomfortable position of the EU, as the conflict had long been a sensitive,

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\(^{4}\) For Groupe Islamique Armé, an extremely violent and radical insurgent group that targeted the Algerian authorities, but also the civilian population and competing Jihadi forces whom they accused to be apostates.

\(^{5}\) On this subject, see for example the reports from various organizations such as Reports without Borders (RSF), the International Federation for the Defence of Human Rights (FIDDH) or the International Crisis Group.
if not taboo, subject in Brussels. After the visit, the British minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Derek Fatchett, expressed the will of the EU to cooperate with Algiers as well as its disappointment given the lack of transparency of its interlocutors. His position was subsequently echoed by the Parliament and the Council.

**A delegation in order to rebuild trust**

In this context, the following visit of a parliamentary delegation of the European Parliament in Algiers was expected to follow the same script: polite offers to improve dialogue and subsequent expressions of frustration given the autistic responses of the Algerian government. Yet, this second mission spectacularly revealed the internal contradictions that were tearing apart the European Union and their echoes in Algerian politics.

Led by André Soulier, a member of the European's People Party (EPP), the visit took place in Algiers from the 8th to the 11th of February. The head of the sub-committee on human rights had a long personal history with the country since he had served as a lawyer in defending Algerian nationalist militants during the war of Independence (1954-1962). Since then, he remained interested in the country's evolution even after he became a member of the European parliament in 1992. While Soulier acknowledged the anti-democratic nature of the military coup, he also maintained that the interruption of the electoral process was necessary in order to prevent the risks associated with the establishment of an Islamist government in Algeria. His position was exemplary of a view that sees Islamism as inherently opposed to democracy,

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6 *Libération*, 20 January 1998. André Soulier confirmed that during the 1990s, the Algerian civil war was rarely discussed in the meetings of the committee on Foreign Affairs and the sub-committee on human rights of the European Parliament. Interview with André Soulier, lawyer, former president of the sub-committee on human rights, Lyon, February 2016.


8 Interview with André Soulier, Lyon, February 2016.
an opinion that was already vigorously debated during the 1990s (Roy 1994).

The idea of sending a delegation to Algeria had been voted by the Parliament in mid-September 1997, that is to say just after the beginning of the intensification of the massacres. Given the reluctance of his colleagues to address the issues raised by the conflict, André Soulier emphasized the importance of his personal commitment and his connection with the Algerian ambassador in Brussels. For him, it was indispensable to build trust with the Algerian authorities and he considered that this privileged relationship would permit him to reach an agreement. At the end of November 1997, the principle of an “Ad Hoc delegation” was formally accepted by Ahmed Attaf, the Algerian minister of Foreign Affairs, in the name of promoting “inter-parliamentary dialogue.”

Both sides still had to discuss the actual program of the visit. The negotiations resulted in a compromise allowing the European parliamentarians to discuss also with members of the opposition. The Algerian authorities also accepted the presence of a group of journalists along with the delegation. Indeed, the government seems to have viewed Soulier's prominent role as a valuable guarantee. Proof of the importance of this interpersonal dimension, the former human rights lawyer was welcomed by the president of the Algerian Council of the Nation, Bachir Boumaaza, who declared that the Algerian people still remembered his work to defend the insurgents during the war of Independence. It worth noting that Boumaaza himself was a former militant of the National Liberation Front (FLN for *Front de Libération Nationale*) and had been arrested and incarcerated in France in 1958.

The importance of these interpersonal relationships and historical ties in re-establishing a dialogue between the EU and its Mediterranean neighbour reveals the persistent post-colonial nature of North-South diplomatic exchanges (Dimier 2004). Yet, one could consider that such an interpersonal and historical dimension was somehow anachronistic in 1998, as the bureaucratization of the EU's foreign policy was already well advanced. Soulier’s testimony is
surely not immune from a heroic narrative that is characteristic of an a posteriori autobiographical account. Yet, one can also explain the importance of this interpersonal dynamic by looking at the specificity of Algeria's situation in 1998: the regime was diplomatically isolated, under the scrutiny of the international community, and hostile to any kind of foreign intervention. In this context, interpersonal ties were crucial in order to restore confidence. The fact that André Soulier was French must also be mentioned, since the discrete support of the former colonial power for the Algerian regime has often been denounced by the most virulent adversaries of the strategy of “eradication” (Gèze 2002). In 1995, observers claimed that the visit of Philippe Séguin, who was the speaker of the French National Assembly, was the first important state in the “normalization” of the country's international standing. In the case of the Euro-Algerian relationship, the influence of Paris on the EU’s strategy was certain: among the nine members of the parliamentary delegation sent in February 1998, four of them were French.

**Limitations and tensions**

Despite the relative efforts on both side to restore trust, two major political limitations remained. First, the Algerian government was absolutely clear that the European delegation should not meet with any member of the FIS. Second, the group of European parliamentarians was far from being homogeneous politically, especially given the presence of Daniel Cohn-Bendit. While less direct, the Franco-German ecologist also had a personal connection to Algeria, for his brother, a former Troskyist activist, had supported the Algerian insurgents during the war of Independence, a connection that was underlined by Bachir Boumaaza when

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he arrived in Algiers.\textsuperscript{10} Yet, in the 1990s, Cohn-Bendit had already publicly denounced what he considered to be repeated violations of human rights by the Algerian regime.\textsuperscript{11}

The personal commitment of Cohn-Bendit was soon to cause a first polemic, as the European delegation had just arrived in Algiers. On February 9\textsuperscript{th}, while discussing with a group of journalists, the Green Euro-deputy expressed his opinion. “If there is one person in Algeria who could have an influence on the GIA, it's Ali Belhadj,” he said, before adding: “If there is only one chance in 10,000 that he can do it, the risk must be taken.” Though it was not clear if Cohn-Bendit was actually evoking the possibility of meeting directly with the radical leader of the FIS, this public declaration was met with great discomfort among his colleagues in the delegation. André Soulier recalls offering his colleague a one-way ticket for any place he wanted in Europe should he repeat his inappropriate behaviour. Moreover, this statement was instantly echoed by the Algerian press, sparking outrage among secular newspapers such as Liberté, L'Authentique or Le Matin who denounced the interference and the alleged racism of foreign actors (Cazi 2010).

Yet, the most dramatic moment of this visit was still to come, when the nine members of the European parliament began meetings with various representatives of the Algerian authorities and “civil society.” On February 10\textsuperscript{th}, the delegation met with the human rights activist and lawyer Abdennour Ali Yahia, a long-standing opponent to the Algerian regime and a defender of a negotiated solution to the crisis. Ali Yahia was also under hostile scrutiny by the secular press, as he had agreed to discussions with members of the FIS during the Sant'Egidio platform in 1995, a reconciliation initiative that was boycotted by the regime and its supporters.\textsuperscript{12} The regime forbade the president of the Algerian League for the Defense of

\textsuperscript{10} Libération, 16 November 1998.  
\textsuperscript{11} La Croix, 22 September 1997.  
\textsuperscript{12} The Sant'Egidio platform was a peace conference brokered by the catholic community of San't Egidio, near Rome. It brought together the main Algerian political parties and associations opposed to the eradication strategy implemented by the military. Among them were the representatives of the three “fronts,” the FIS, the FLN and the FFS. The document released after the meeting is available here:
Human Right (LADDH) from speaking to the delegation in an official capacity. Instead, he decided to come to the meeting as an individual without affiliation, responding to the solicitations of a few parliamentarians. He used this meeting as an opportunity to deliver a letter from the FIS to the European delegation and then promptly left. According to Ali Yahia, members of the dissolved Islamist party – among them Abdelkader Hachani, one of its main pragmatic figures - had decided to answer to Cohn-Bendit's proposal and to present a peace offer to the delegation.\footnote{https://www.santegidio.org/archivio/pace/algeria_19950113_FR.htm (Accessed on 10 March 2016)}

This strategic move from the reconciliation camp (réconciliateurs) put the Europeans in a very uncomfortable position, as they were supposed to avoid any contact with the FIS. While Soulier remembers going against the wishes of the Algerian authorities and meeting with representatives of families of victims of the war, he insists that the clause regarding the “absence of contact with members of the FIS under any circumstances” was a question of personal honor since he had given his word. (“une parole donnée d’homme à homme”). Consequently, the head of the delegation decided to destroy the letter before it was read. This gesture reaffirmed the commitment of the European parliamentarians to respect their promise to avoid all contact with the Islamist party.\footnote{Le Soir, 18 February 1998.} \footnote{According to Soulier, he threw the letter down the toilets under the scrutiny of two members of the delegation. Some accounts of this episode suggest that he tore up the letter in public.}

After this episode, debates regarding Soulier’s stance raged in both Algeria and Europe. French and Belgian newspapers echoed criticisms of Soulier’s gesture. On 12 February, the Algerian authorities forbade a protest in favour of peace and reconciliation organized by the Socialist Forces Front (FFS for \textit{Front des Forces Socialistes} ) in Algiers. The same day, a statement released by the political leadership of the FIS denounced Soulier’s “mediatic buffoonery.” Meanwhile, a member of the non-violent Islamist party \textit{Ennahda} -also represented at Sant'Egidio- welcomed the fact that, despite the discomfort of the Europeans, a
taboo had been broken and that the contradictions of the delegation had fostered debates in Algerian society.¹⁵

The European side was overtly divided. A couple days after the European deputies left Algiers, a French newspaper described the relationship between Soulier and Cohn-Bendit as a “media guerrilla” (maquis médiatique).¹⁶ The tensions surrounding the visit of the parliamentary delegation in Algiers did not end when its members returned to Europe. The head of the sub-committee on human rights presented a diplomatic official report in the name of the delegation on March 2nd, only to have the Green parliamentarian and his assistant, Mychelle Rieu, release an opposing report the following day. In this latter account of the visit, Cohn-Bendit and Rieu detailed their uncompromising critiques of the undemocratic nature of the Algerian regime. Far from being united, the parliamentary delegation exposed persistent competing understandings of so-called European core values.

**Compelling views of democracy after the “Third-Wave”**

It is often said that during the 1990s, the EU put its commitment to democracy aside in order to protect the Algerian regime in the name of stability. After the delegation’s return to Europe, the Brussels-based newspaper *Le Soir* ran a series of articles giving voice to prominent Algerian actors who expressed their discontent with the official report and denounced what they saw as “European hypocrisy.” These figures included Abdennour Ali Yahia, who accused Soulier of having dishonoured himself.¹⁷ In the following years, various activists and political opponents claimed that the Europeans, “through their conciliatory attitude, provided a blank

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check to the Algerian regime,” as did Salima Mellah in the name of the Committee Justice for Algeria (2004: 52). It is true that the official report congratulated the Algerian authorities for their progress on the path to democratization and expressed its opposition to any international commission of inquiry at the sites of the massacres. Moreover, it insisted that the theme of the “who is killing whom,” notoriously echoed by western media, was widely rejected by its Algerian interlocutors who saw it as particularly indecent. According to the report, the vast majority of the Algerian people considered that the sole perpetrators of atrocities and political assassination were “sectarian groups with a fanatical and distorted understanding of the Qur’an.” (European Parliament 1998)

Here, two elements should give us pause in supporting the thesis that a commitment to realpolitik trumped the defence of democracy. First, it appears that the European Parliament was not a space where a unilateral decision could be taken in the name of a superior interest. Neither was it a space where the norms of democratic behaviour were unanimously understood. Indeed, a few months before the arrival of the delegation in Algiers, the Algerian journalist Salima Ghezzali was awarded the Sakharov price by the parliamentarians, with the support of the left and the liberals (PSE, ELDR, GUE/NGL) (Centre Archivistique et Documentaire 2013 :92-93). A feminist activist and former director of the newspaper La Nation, which was shut down in 1996 at the instigation of the government, Ghezali was also known for her denunciation of the Army's violence. In her speech, the journalist delivered a strong critique of the Algerian regime, which earned her a warm round of applause. This episode was later described as the “worst day in the history of the Parliament” by the Italian radical Euro-deputy Olivier Dupuis. According to him, the European MPs were treating the “vast majority of the citizens who are building democracy by participating to the elections” and the “security forces

18 The theme of the “who is killing whom” relates to a series of testimonies and books, often published in Europe, denouncing the instrumentalization of massacres and political assassinations by the Algerian army and intelligence services.
who fight the terrorist monster” with the same respect as the Jihadi insurgents who were responsible for “the most horrible and blind violence.”\(^{19}\)

This polemic demonstrates that the tension between Soulier and Cohn-Bendit was not merely an interpersonal issue. Indeed, it is clear that competing visions of democratic legitimacy existed in the European parliament. The legitimacy of the 1992 coup and the subsequent elections (in 1995 and 1997) were also debated. While some justified the violence perpetrated against the Islamists in the name of saving democracy, others criticized these actions as a denial of democratic values. In other terms, defending democracy could imply the strict respect for the electoral process, or mandate a crack-down against “non-loyal” opposition parties. In the Algerian context, these choices were debated because they implied diametrically opposed approaches.

The second argument that contests the idea that the European strategy in Algeria merely reflected a realist strategy lies in the belief in democratization that was characteristic of the 1990s. Indeed, the report presented by André Soulier was certainly important in that it granted the newly elected Algerian institutions a welcome external legitimacy. At the same time, it would be extremely simplistic to present it as a mere form of geopolitical cynicism. For example, the excerpt below expresses a genuine belief in the process of democratization:

“The delegation returned from Algiers convinced that it had met an active player in this change of direction. We have already said "The Algerian Parliament is a reality - we have met it" and we still maintain this. The fact that we were able to identify the People's National Assembly as a participant in this movement of renewal was one of the most positive findings of our mission. The official record of the debates on security issues held recently over a two-day period in the Assembly, sometimes with sharp

\(^{19}\) Available at : http://www.radicalparty.org/it/node/5054070 (Accessed on 10 March 2016).
criticism of the government, constitutes proof of this.” (European Parliament 1998)

This excerpt from the report demonstrates the head of the delegation’s belief in the possibility of a democratic transition. It worth noting that, at this time, the criticism expressed by the Algerian representatives was indeed virulent, especially after the significant fraud that took place during the 1997 local elections. When interviewed by the author a decade later, former Algerian deputies claimed that the legislature was more free and democratic at this time than at any other moment in the country’s history. They also expressed their regrets that the promises of political opening were never fulfilled. Surely this belief in the eventuality of a democratic transition was far from being exceptional. During Bouteflika's first term, the directorate-general of studies (linked to the European Parliament's Secretary General) produced several informational publications directed at the parliamentarians in which it presented the transition toward a new political regime as one of the main goals of the new President (General Directorate of Studies 2002, 2003). Moreover, observers in academia were not strangers to this type of wishful thinking, as it was characteristic of the period of the so-called “third-wave” (Huntington 1991), and was even echoed by some of the most respected specialists of the region (Leveau 2000). It was only a few years later that the dominant transition paradigm started to be systematically questioned (Carothers 2002).

Consequently, Soulier's description of the Algerian evolution toward a more democratic system is characteristic of the historical context, when the gradual establishment of liberal democracy was viewed as a normal and almost inevitable political process. From this perspective, one can see more generally that the so-called core values of the EU should not be understood as a-historical or apolitical as their meaning has been constantly influenced by international debates and reformulated by competing actors.

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20 Series of interviews in Algeria with members of the HMS (2008) and the RCD (2011).
Reinterpreting human rights in the name of necessity

This applies not only to the notion of democracy, but also to the concept of human rights. The fact that one of the key moments of the European delegation's visit opposed two human rights lawyers, Abdennour Ali Yahia and André Soulier, illustrates the existence of different understandings of this notion. In his book, Jacob Mundy demonstrates the contradictions that undermined the social construction of an humanitarian impulse in the Algerian case, as the international actors were unable to adapt their criteria to the specificities of this civil war (2015: 135). The same idea of “pre-conceived foreign models” appeared in the delegation's official report, as an implicit critique against a “minority of its members” who tried to establish contact with the FIS (European Parliament 1998).

Humanitarian concerns and foreign interference are often at the centre of heated political debates. The official European position regarding the defence of human rights has evolved considerably over the past 30 years. During the 1990s, EU member states considered that the respect of individual rights should be prioritized and refused to send Islamist militants established on their territory back in Algeria. After 2001, this position changed and matters of security started to play a more important role in shaping the limits of human rights. In short, the struggle against terrorism was now emphasized, and it even became an integral chapter in the association agreement with Algeria (Aghrout & Bouguerira 2004: 171). This evolution illustrates the historical and political construction of human rights norms, and the resulting process of inclusion and exclusion. Despite its universalist claims, the humanitarian impulse is at the same time based and limited by a certain form of empathy (Hunt 2007). This empathy is often selectively invoked or expressed. Consequently, divergent understandings of the Algerian
conflict offered different interpretations of which actors or populations possessed these “human rights.” This relativity was especially clear in the case of Islamist militants, which led to the redefinition of the protection granted by European law. Indeed, according to the Delegation's report, “the subject of terrorist bases in Europe [should] be examined with a view to devising practical measures to deal with the problem” (European Parliament 1998).

During the 1990s, the French government played an especially important role in setting new European standards for the expulsion of Islamist militants in the name of national security. After being targeted by a series of terrorist attacks perpetrated by GIA cells in 1994 and 1995, the country saw the mass arrests of suspected terrorists, many of them of Algerian origin. The head of the network of support for the GIA in France, Mohamed Chalabi, was sentenced to eight years in prison in 1999. While born in France, he was ultimately deported to Algeria at the end of 2001, sparking protests from Human Rights organizations.21 During the same period, France was widely seen as the leading force in conceptualizing a European plan of action against terrorism and violent radicalization. These discussions continued during the following decade, both at the community and intergovernmental levels, resulting in a series of decisions that aimed to set standardized procedures for the deportation of suspected terrorists without questioning the discretionary power of member states.22

Human rights have been historically promoted, framed and discussed according to certain philosophical interpretations, moral views and political necessities (Moyn 2010). After the war of Independence studied by Darcie Fontaine in this volume, the Black decade directly impacted these debates in Europe and outside. During the 1990s the Algerian government actively participated in these discussions, and its representatives abroad expressed their will to modify the content of the international law in accordance with the necessities of the struggle

22 On these discussions between member states, see for example a series of decisions taken by the European Council (2003, 2005, 2006, 2007).
against terrorism. After the beginning of the “global war on terror,” the spokespersons of the Algerian regime repeatedly advocated their strategy of eradication and -then- amnesty, going so far as to label it as a “reference according to the United Nations.” Domestically, Algiers created its own “National Human Rights Monitoring Unit” (ONDH), whose members met with the European parliamentary delegation in order to promote the government’s vision regarding what measures were legitimate to ensure security. The European deputies who visited the country in 1998 certainly gave credence to this institution that was directly related to the presidency, for they even declared that they were waiting for its conclusions in order to make their own official recommendations. In fine, Algerian officials were active in promoting their own understanding of the necessities that legitimated state violence in the name of the “war on terror.”

Nonetheless, Soulier's report underlined the fact that the army's “counter-measures [had] so far often been ineffective and involved human rights abuses” (European Parliament 1998). It appears that, despite both sides' desire to overcome their differences and find common ground, they still could not agree on a single definition of what kind of violence counted as a violation of human rights. This persistent disagreement justified even more intense conflicting visions of human rights inside the Algerian regime. As the government appropriated the notion in a way that would fit its strategy of “eradication,” many influential actors reacted with much stronger hostility. Indeed, the international scrutiny of the massacres, and calls for a humanitarian response, were seen as an aggression directed against the army (Martinez 2001). In Algeria, the term “droit-de-l'homnistes” was used to accuse activists and journalists who publicly denounced the abuses of the armed forces. In some public discourses, the memory of

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the visit of the parliamentary delegation was equated with this threat of foreign interference. Stated differently, human rights in Algeria indicated both an international norm that should be respected (but redefined), and a neocolonial undertaking that threatened the independence of the nation. Here again we can see how this so-called European core value was relative, as it could be molded to fit various political agendas and understandings of geopolitics.

**Conclusion: paradigms of democratization and exception**

After 2003, the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) saw the development of a benchmarking approach coupled with a focus on bilateral relationships (Del Sarto & Schumacher 2005). The increased importance attributed to political conditionality came with the establishment of “key benchmarks” fixed “in close cooperation with partner countries” to ensure not only the respect of European core values but also their appropriation (European Commission 2003). Surely, once subjected to a standardized assessment, human rights and democracy would finally become an actual part of the European development policy. In order to create of common culture of humanitarianism, the EU went so far as to sponsor the revision of textbooks in Algeria to incorporate teaching about human rights (General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union 2005).

Nevertheless, despite these attempts to overcome the disagreements and ambiguities that surrounded the promotion of these so-called European core values, the debates never really

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25 In 1999, the head of the committee on Foreign Affairs of the Algerian parliament, Abdelkader Hadjar released an open letter directed at Bouteflika. While presented by Soulier as a warm host open to discussion, Hadjar described himself as a defender of the country against the “ferocious attacks launched by Americans and Europeans”. Mentioning the European parliamentary delegation, he congratulated himself for bringing “victory” to Algeria and having avoided the risk of an international inquiry. *La Tribune*, 17 October 1999.

26 The notion of conditionality relates to the use of prerequisite attached to the provision of benefits such as international aid. Since the beginning of the 1990s, it has become an important issue in the discussions among specialists of the EU's cooperation policies. On these discussions and on the different patterns of aid conditionality see for example (Stokke 2005).
came to an end. In 2014, a group of NGOs released an open letter to the leaders of the EU, urging them to increase the pressure on their Algerian counterparts to promote human rights.\(^\text{27}\)

In the European institutions, the influence of a moral and universalist approach to human rights and democracy remained widespread. For example, Mychelle Rieu, who was once the assistant of Cohn-Bendit, continued to advocate for the end of double-standards and denounced the opposition of political forces in the European Parliament (2009). Later, she became a political advisor for the first EU Special Representative for Human Rights, Stavros Lambrinis.

Similarly, in Algeria, the meanings attached to these notions remained equally ambiguous. While the term “droit-de-l'hommiste” is still commonly used to denounce foreign interference, especially those that criticize the army and therefore allegedly threaten national sovereignty, the supporters of the regime in the media never miss a chance to celebrate its commitment to democratization and human rights.\(^\text{28}\)

Surely, the relativity of European founding values remains the rule.

The meanings of European “core values” are strongly debated, inside and outside of the Union, and it was especially the case at the end of the 1990s. The image of the EU as a “normative power” is questionable from a political perspective, as the meanings of the “values” allegedly promoted is always subjected to negotiation and reinterpretation (contra Manners 2003). The influence of the EU on its Southern neighbourhood should be understood in the context of a growing fragmentation and competition between actors on both sides (Del Sarto & Steindler 2015), rather than viewed as a unilateral and homogeneous process. What emerges from the Euro-Algerian case is that these rules and patterns promoted internationally in the name of “good governance” can also be contested and redefined according to the interests and representations of those involved. Far from being synonymous with universal progress, values

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\(^\text{28}\) See for example the editorial of the governmental newspaper El Moudjahid after the last presidential election: El Moudjahid, 18 April 2014.
such as democracy and human rights are constantly challenged by European and North African officials, as well as non-governmental actors whose networks often cross the Mediterranean. These transnational discussions allow for the constant adaptation of local political orders.

In fact, these struggles over European core values are inherently tied to two globalized paradigms that have become crucial to the transformation of political orders over the last thirty years. The first one is the paradigm of democratization. Even if the liberal teleology that was once associated with this notion has been largely undermined, there is undoubtedly an internationally-shared glossary of democracy. While it might seem counter-intuitive, this democratic globalization is compatible with the persistence of authoritarian regimes (Camau 2006). In countries such as Algeria, this narrative has served to increase the plurality of political representation and the international legitimacy of the regime, as well as to broaden its social basis. At the same time, it also fuelled conflicting counter-narratives expressed in local and international arenas, for example when Salima Ghezali denounced a “buffoon democracy” in her speech to the European Parliament in 1997.29

The second paradigm apparent in this chapter is the generalization of exception as a driving logic for government. Indeed, the Algerian civil war and its consequences in Europe highlight the confrontation between the universalist claims associated with human rights and a pragmatic approach that supported the generalization of exception as a new paradigm of government in the name of necessity (Agamben 2005). In the Euro-Mediterranean context, this transformation of the political and juridical orders has been historically tied to the securitization of migration and the management of allegedly “at risk” Muslim populations. Over the past twenty years, the externalization of European migration policies and the related restriction of the right to asylum have been conceptualized in relation to the question of antiterrorism (Gabrielli 2014). Stated more briefly, the visit of the delegation led by André Soulier was

29 The speech is available here: http://rabahnaceri.unblog.fr/lettres-a-lire/discours-de-mme-salima-ghezali/ (Accessed on 10 December 2016)
inherently tied to a global process of reinterpretation of fundamental rights depending on the “security status” and origin of the subject. This episode illustrates the seminal role of the Algerian civil war in the current debates regarding the threat posed by migrants coming from Muslim countries.

Finally, this chapter has exposed some of the heated debates that contributed to the redefinition of the meanings and legal tools associated with notions such as human rights and democracy. It appears that the Euro-Algerian relationship in particular, and the Euro-Mediterranean relationship in general, are influenced by transnational dynamics linked to the paradigms of democratization and exception. In this arena marked by a colonial legacy, competing geopolitical interests, and an increased fragmentation, local and international actors are actively participating in the construction and transformation of the plastic norms that shape local systems of domination.
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Conflict and Peace in the Mediterranean Space:

Europe’s response to the Libyan crisis

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Abstract

Situated at the centre of the Mediterranean, Libya is a crucial piece for the definition of an area of peace and stability between Europe and North Africa. After regime-change, Europe’s response to the Libyan crisis has been oriented towards a security-oriented and technical approach to stability that has neglected the political dimensions of achieving peace. Controlling migrants’ flows, maintaining a stable energy market, and containing the terrorist threat posed by the Islamic State have become the top European priorities in dealing with the Libyan crisis. Europe’s response to the Libyan crisis has been determined, the chapter argues, by two elements: on the one hand, the tensions that exist between a European common security and defence policy and its member states’ prerogatives. On the other hand, Libya’s proximity to Europe has decisively influenced the way in which the Libyan crisis has been interpreted in Brussels, as well as in Rome, Paris and London.

Keywords: regime-change, conflict, stability, Europe, Libya

Following the wave of upheavals in Tunisia and Egypt, demonstrations erupted in the streets of Libya in early February 2011. Initial popular protests demanding political, economic and
social reforms soon transformed into an armed confrontation between the regime of Muammar Qadhafi and its loyalists—azlam al-nidham—and a loose and diverse group of revolutionaries—thuwwar. The NATO-led military campaign in Libya tipped the balance against the regime’s forces, which eventually capitulated. The fall of the Qadhafi regime in 2011, initially cheered by most of the Libyan population as well as by intervening actors, soon gave way to a downturn of spiralling violence and renewed conflict in Libya. After the initial enthusiasm for a rapid political and economic recovery, the transition in the country was engulfed by multiple groups—political, criminal, and extremist—that filled the vacuum left by the sudden collapse of the old regime and claimed a new role in the country. Five years after the ousting of Qadhafi, Libya is yet to find a political solution able to address the multiple fissures that resurfaced during the transition.

At conflict’s end, the first elected parliamentary body, the General National Council (GNC), had the arduous task of rewriting the institutional and political framework of the country anew after years of deliberate “avoidance of creating a modern state” (Vandewalle 2012: 1). This condition of statelessness can be ascribed to a number of factors, including the colonial experience under the Italian rule, the enduring role of tribes and families as organised entities in the Libyan society, the effects of an over reliance on oil resources and Qadhafi’s experimentation with the “rule of the masses” (Jamahiryyah), a deformed and contradictory implementation of direct democracy. It soon appeared clear, however, that the GNC could not isolate itself from the ongoing struggle for authority in the country as it became a battlefield among warring parties and their affiliated militias. In December 2013, the GNC’s decision to unilaterally extend its mandate caused the reaction of General Khalifa Haftar who, after accusing the Council of being dominated by Islamist forces, called it to dissolve.¹ Elections

¹ Elections for the formation of the General National Council were held in July 2012. The electoral competition was dominated by two political forces: the National Forces Alliance, a nationalist and non-ideological coalition formed by different forces, and the Muslim Brotherhood’s Justice and Construction Party. While the National Forces Alliance won 39 out of the 80 seats allocated to political parties, it was later unable to include the 120
were held in June 2014: Islamist forces were defeated and a new parliamentary body, the House of Representatives (HoR) formed.\(^2\) Yet, members of the GNC rejected the elections and reinstated the legitimate role of the GNC as the sole legislative body in the country. Violence escalated when the confrontation exited the competing bodies and took to the street, with the opposition between Fajr Libya (a military coalition formed mainly by Tripoli-based Islamist groups and militias from Misrata) and Operation Karamah (a military coalition led by General Khalifa Haftar).

The events in 2014 led to the formation of two competing governments and legislative bodies in the country. If the two governments sitting respectively in Tripoli and al-Bayda (the latter backed by the HoR in Tobruk) were not enough, the UN-led negotiation established the roadmap for the formation of a Government of National Accord. The Libyan Political Agreement, brokered by the UN and signed in Skhirat (Morocco) in December 2015, created a Presidential Council headed by Prime Minister Fayez al-Sarraj, which, however, has not yet been able to appoint a Government of National Accord and replace the existing governments (International Crisis Group 2016). The Presidential Council stands, at the time of writing, in competition with the governments sitting in Tripoli and al-Bayda. With three governments, a shattered economy with a GDP per capita two-thirds lower than its pre-revolutionary level (World Bank 2016) and around 1.33 million people (out of 6.4 million) in need of assistance (OCHA 2017), Libya has become a key concern for Europe.

Situated at the centre of the Mediterranean, Libya is a crucial piece for the definition of an area of peace and stability between Europe and North Africa. Yet, the country has historically been at the margin of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation initiatives, due to Qadhafi’s...
hostile stance towards the West. Controlling migrants’ flows, maintaining a stable energy market, and containing the terrorist threat posed by the Islamic State have become the top European priorities in dealing with the Libyan crisis. While these elements are part of the continuation of the conflict in Libya, they are symptoms rather than causes of the yet unresolved conflict in Libya. A narrow security-oriented approach, rather than a peace-oriented one has neglected two key aspects of the Libyan crisis: first, Libya is currently lacking the institutional structures to absorb international assistance and still functioning institutions are under great pressure from warring parties. Second, whether it is borders’ control, the restoration of oil production, or the fight against the Islamic State, Europe has privileged a technical approach, which has disregarded the political drivers behind these dynamics and, thus, their potential political solutions.³

Europe’s response to the Libyan crisis has been determined, the chapter argues, by two elements: on the one hand, the tensions that exist between a European common security and defence policy and its member states’ prerogatives is a trait that, far from being new, has for long characterized Euro-Mediterranean relations. On the other hand, Libya’s proximity to Europe has decisively influenced the way in which the Libyan crisis has been interpreted in Brussels, as well as in Rome, Paris and London. Despite Europe’s assertion of its role in conflict resolution and post-conflict management, peace-building and state-building, reiterated recently in the Global Strategy for the European Union’s Foreign and Security Policy (European Union 2016), the response to the Libyan crisis shows important gaps in the instruments that Europe has at its disposal and questions Europe’s role in creating an area of peace and stability in the Mediterranean in light of the challenges posed by conflicts in the 21st century.

³ Throughout the chapter, Europe is used interchangeably with the European Union (EU) to indicate the political body rather than the continent.
Libya has had a troubled relationship with Europe that dates back to the Italian colonial rule, the administrative partition between the United Kingdom (Tripolitania and Cyrenaica) and France (Fezzan) during the Allied Occupation, and the subsequent formation of the Kingdom of Libya in 1951 under the auspices of the United Nations. This heritage of external dominance in the country has influenced its more recent history, and in particular, the 42 years of Qadhafi’s regime. The revolutionary coup in 1969 was based on a resolute anti-imperialist agenda, following the example of Jamal Abd al-Nasser and the Free Officers in Egypt. As in other countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, this agenda led to a vast programme of reforms aimed at liberating the country from foreign interests. In economic terms, Qadhafi’s agenda was formalised in the second volume of the Green Book “The Solution of the Economic Problem: Socialism”. While early on the revolutionary regime proceeded cautiously especially in the oil sector, the consolidation of the regime led to a vast nationalisation of all private activities in the country (Vandewalle 2006).

At the political level, after having consolidated his internal position, Qadhafi turned to pan-Arabism, which at least until the 1970s was the predominant ideology influencing Arab politics. The failed attempts by Muammar Qadhafi to create a unified state with Egypt and Tunisia marked the last initiatives of the type in the region. These projects were, by then, already anachronistic, due to the slow decline of pan-Arabist appeals after the defeat in the Six Day War against Israel and the death of al-Nasser, who was widely recognised as the Arab leader across the region. Disappointed by the failure of pan-Arabism and by Arab leaders, Qadhafi shifted his attention toward the African continent, especially after the imposition of the UN sanction regime at the beginning of the 1990s. A strong supporter of the African Union,
he strengthened his ties with African leaders also by using revenues accruing from the oil economy to finance projects throughout the continent.

Europe, and the West in general, never represented a key political partner for Libya, but rather a political antagonist. Qadhafi’s support for various terrorist or separatist movements including the Irish Republican Army, the Red Army Faction, the Red Brigades or the Colombian FARC across the globe severed Libya’s relationship with the West. In particular, the Fletcher accident in 1984, 4 the bombing of a disco in Berlin in 1986, the Pan Am Flight 103 explosion over Lockerbie (Scotland) in 1988, and the French UTA flight 772 explosion over Niger in 1989 froze diplomatic relationships between Libya, Europe and the US. Qadhafi’s support for anti-imperialist terrorism through a vast network of training, arms supply and financial assistance led to a growing isolation of the regime, which culminated in the imposition of sanctions between 1992 and 1999.

A rapprochement between Libya and the West began in the late 1990s but was accelerated after 2001. After 9/11 and, more vigorously after the US-led military invasion of Iraq in 2003, Qadhafi opened a window of opportunity to the normalisation of its international relations. Libya renounced its programme of weapons of mass destruction and offered its collaboration in the global war against terror, as it was facing itself threats from al-Qaeda-linked groups. With Europe and the US lifting their sanctions over the country, what follows was a period of growing negotiations between Libya and Western countries targeting the economy, security, and migration. The first decade of the 2000s marked a restoration of Qadhafi’s exposure internationally: he chaired the African Union in 2009 and that same year he gave a long and provocative speech at the UN General Assembly for the first time.5

The 2000s represented a key momentum for Libya’s rapprochement to Europe as well.

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4 This refers to the killing of a British police woman as a result of shoot-out in front of the Libya’s London Embassy in 1984.
Despite its central position in the Mediterranean, Libya has never been part of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, the ambitious but largely deficient attempt to create a “common area of peace, stability and security” between the two shores of the Mediterranean as established in the Barcelona declaration (Euro-Mediterranean Conference 1995). A step towards this direction was reached when on 27 April 2004 Qadhafi visited Brussels, the first visit to Europe in 15 years. In his speech at the European Commission, Qadhafi emphatically declared: “I would like to seize the opportunity today and declare before you... that Libya is determined and committed to play a leading role in achieving world peace”. But Qadhafi, well-known for his erratic character, was later to send mixed messages on the opportunity to join the Euro-Med Partnership, saying, for instance in 2008, that the “Barcelona Process mean[t] annexing a part of Africa to Europe. This is the map of the Roman Empire, which we need to disregard”.

The new, yet ambiguous, opening of Qadhafi towards Europe was welcomed as a key step for the definition of Europe’s Southern Neighborhood policy. However, any potential results in this direction were halted in 2011. The end of the Qadhafi’s regime initially revived the idea of extending Europe’s partnership to Libya, but the rapid derailing of the Libyan transition posed serious challenges to the realization of this goal.

**After the Arab Spring: the European and the Libyan Crisis**

Following the events in Tunisia and Egypt, anti-regime demonstrations erupted in Benghazi on 15 February 2011. By the end of that month, a significant part of the country, including

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Benghazi and Misrata, was no longer under Qadhafi’s control. In reaction to the unfolding events on the ground, in March 2011 the Arab League called for the imposition of a “no-fly zone”. The proposal was followed by the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973 in March 2011, which extended the reference to a “no-fly zone” to include the use of “all necessary measures” to prevent attacks on civilians. UNSC resolution 1973 translated into NATO-led military Operation Unified Protection, which began on 31 March 2011. The initial justification of protecting Libyan people from the attacks of the regime, as clearly stated in the text of the Resolution, soon “morphed almost ineluctably into” regime change (House of Commons 2016, 17). NATO extended air operations across Libya, thus arguably crossing the boundaries of its mandate. “Our duty”, wrote Barack Obama, David Cameron and Nicolas Sarkozy (2011), “[…] is to protect civilians and we are doing it. It is not to remove Qaddafi by force. But it is impossible to imagine a future for Libya with Qaddafi in power”.

Once the regime was ousted, a new chapter began. While the countries sustaining the NATO-led military operation were essential for the capitulation of Muammar Qadhafi, what followed was marked by a general reluctance to become involved in the Libyan post-conflict transition. This reluctance translated into a limited international engagement in terms of political and financial assistance. The objective was stabilisation to be pursued in the framework of a Libya-owned process under the assistance of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL). In financial terms, the EU pledged € 80,5 million in humanitarian assistance and € 130 million in technical assistance targeting public administration, civil society, education, security sector reforms and democratic transition (Boeke and de Roy van Zuijdewijn 2016: 46). Compared to previous trends in conflict-affected

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contexts, Libya received significantly less aid contributions during its transition.

The “light footprint” approach in Libya was in part justified by the idea that Libya could financially and politically sustain its own transition—an idea that was simultaneously strengthened by the evident failures in other conflict-affected countries in MENA (i.e., Iraq) and elsewhere (i.e., Afghanistan). In addition, it was influenced by the constraints that the financial crisis of 2007/2008 imposed on most European countries and by the seismic shifts that the Arab Spring brought about in the region. At the same time, however, the Libyan case also shows an evolution, or perhaps a reaction to previous approaches in dealing with conflict-affected countries. Indeed, in both political and financial terms, Europe’s role in Libya has been molded around the abandonment of Western responsibility and transformative narratives (Chandler 2012) that have driven peacebuilding and state-building intervention in the 1990s and beginning of 2000s. Accordingly (and contradictorily), by de-linking the responsibility of the intervention from its outcome, Europe has fulfilled its “responsibility to protect”, without taking up the “responsibility to rebuild”. In the absence of the grand objectives of building peace or states, then, Europe has privileged a technical approach over a political one. Within this framework, two factors further determined the orientation of Europe in dealing with the Libyan crisis: tensions between a European agenda and its member states’ prerogatives and the proximity of the country to Europe.

EU vis-à-vis EU Member States: the response to the Libyan crisis

The events in 2011 caused different reactions in Europe, which calls into question (once again) the notion of EU actorness in foreign policy. The notion of actorness questions whether the EU can be treated as a unitary actor in relation to its foreign policy. Authority, autonomy, cohesion, capabilities and external recognition are considered fundamental

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10 The notion of actorness questions whether the EU can be treated as a unitary actor in relation to its foreign policy. Authority, autonomy, cohesion, capabilities and external recognition are considered fundamental
and, from outside Europe, the recognition of the EU as an actor in itself (Jupille and Caporaso 1998; Börzel, Dandashly and Risse 2015). The Libyan crisis did not result in the deep divide that occurred over the intervention in Iraq eight years before (Crowe 2003; Buzan and Gonzalez-Pelaez 2005). Nevertheless, the case of Libya testifies to a yet persistent inadequacy of its common foreign policy. Arguably, the EU showed its limitations in terms of authority, autonomy, cohesion, and capabilities and it was rarely treated as an actor in itself. Although the Lisbon Treaty has provided Europe with additional instruments for managing international crisis, the response to the Libyan crisis did not translate into a EU initiative under the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and was mainly dictated by member states’ prerogatives.

The predominance of member states’ agendas over a EU common approach was evident even prior to the ousting of Qadhafi regime. Indeed, France is accredited with creating the momentum for the resolution authorizing the NATO-led interventions. While the United Kingdom followed suit, Italy had a cautious approach due to its long-lasting relationship with the regime. The US, although not leading the intervention, was, instead, pivotal in including “all necessary means” in the text of the Resolution (House of Commons 2016). The decision to intervene was supported by the EU that, in the words of former Commission President Barroso, recognized that “the problem [in Libya] has a name: Ghadafi. He must go and this was the unanimous decision of the European Council supporting this approach” (European Commission 2011). Similar dynamics were later found during the military intervention when countries like the United Kingdom and France, in addition to Turkey, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates directly supported the rebels by providing intelligence and assistance on the criteria to determine actorness. See: Jupille and Caporaso 1998; Börzel, Dandashly & Risse 2015.

The UK Parliamentary investigation notes that France’s push towards the intervention in Libya has been determined by various factors, including the influence of Libyan exiles in France, France’s interests in expanding their influence in North Africa and having access to Libyan oil resources, as well as internal political concerns (Foreign Affairs Committee 2016). France was the first country to recognise the National Transitional Council only one week after its creation followed by Qatar one months later.
Whether by breaching the nature of the UN mandate or not, NATO-led military operation tipped the balance of forces against the regime, which finally succumbed on 20 October 2011, with the capture and assassination of Muammar Qadhafi.

The tensions between member states’ agendas and a EU common approach also characterised the response to the rapid establishment of the Islamic State amid the vacuum left by the absence of a dominant political authority in Libya. Since late 2014, the Islamic State has grown to play a destabilizing effect in Libya, too. It initially took control of Derna, a city that has historically presented strong ties with Islamist groups, and later established its stronghold in Sirte, the home-town of Muammar Qadhafi. To counter the threat posed by the Islamic State, the UNSC resolution 2259 states that military assistance should only occur at the request of a legitimate Libyan government. However, the US and some European countries, including the United Kingdom, France and Italy have been operating in the country through the deployment of Special Forces, but siding on different sides of the political spectrum in Libya (Toaldo 2016: 2). These low-scale military interventions have often relied on informal cooperation with existing militias on the ground to eradicate the Islamic State from the country. While the end goal of combating the Islamic State may have served as a justification for these operations, they are likely to produce further complications. Indeed, a military intervention has occurred, but not within the framework of, or invited by a Government of National Accord as foreseen in the Libyan Political Agreement. This may further undermine the establishment of such a government as “each group involved in these bilateral relations is working on the assumption that they will become the equivalent of the Iraqi Peshmergas. That is, in exchange for fighting (or pretending to fight) ISIS, they expect to receive weapons and political support – even a de

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12 There are two reported case of external actors providing weapons to the rebels: France airdropping weapons in Western Libya (Jolly, D. and K. Fahim, “France says it gave arms to the rebel in Libya”, The New York Times, 29 June 2011) and a Qatari shipment (Al Jazeera, Gaddafi forces “intercept arms from Qatar”, 5 July 2011. Available at: http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2011/07/201175223504921.html -accessed on 8 October 2016-). This is despite UNSC Resolution 1970 imposing an arm embargo in the country.
facto recognition of their autonomous control of territory” (Toaldo 2016: 2).

The European approach to Libya has been strongly influenced by the determinants of European security and its securitized sectors (Buzan et al. 1998). According to the European Union, terrorism is “[challenging] European values and the European way of life” (European Union 2016). A security-first approach is, however, compromising the capacity of the EU to act as a political mediator in Libya. In the absence of an Association Agreement with Libya, major power is left in the hands of member states, each one pursuing a security strategy according to their own priorities and modalities. This has resulted in a weaker leverage on dynamics occurring on the ground, with for instance, France on the one hand, and the United Kingdom and Italy, on the other hand, siding with different alliances in the fight against the Islamic State and, thus, undermining their role in the political negotiation. On the other side, Libyan actors have taken advantage of this fragmentation to pursue their agendas on the ground. The weak leverage of the EU domestically is then reflected in a similarly weak leverage on other actors with whom the EU shares its role with in Libya, foremost the UN, who had been in charge of leading the political discussion in the country (Colombo and Huber 2016: 27). In all, the EU has renounced its political role in favor of its member states, which, in turn, by acting individually have less political power to influence the outcome of the Libyan crisis.

Proximity as the Lens for Interpreting the Libyan Crisis

Libya’s proximity to Europe is determined by its geographical and economic position. In economic terms, Libya’s crude oil reserves, estimated at 48 billion barrels at the end of 2014 (US Energy Information Administration 2015: 2) cannot be excluded from the discussion on the intervention in Libya and its aftermath. With the largest endowment in Africa, Qadhafi’s
regime resorted to oil revenues to maintain its control over Libya for 42 years. Oil revenues were therefore key to guarantee stability, which Qadhafi achieved almost entirely through repression rather than persuasion. The events of 2011 have drastically shaken this degree of stability, letting tensions and contradictions for long simmering under the surface of Libyan societies to erupt (Costantini, 2016).

The oil economy is dependent on global markets, making changes in the producing countries relevant for importing (consuming) countries. Energy politics is therefore an arena in which the national interests of producing and importing countries are tightly tied together. In the absence of a strong horizontal (among North African countries) economic integration, the EU is a key trading partner for Libya, although it is, with the exception of Syria, the only Mediterranean country that does not have a Free Trade Agreement with Europe. Negotiations towards this end started in 2008, were later suspended in 2011, and after 2011 they were mainly conducted outside the bilateral legal framework of the EU. Libya is not the primary energy exporter to Europe, but it is a key one to diversify energy provision in the continent. In addition, Libya represents a key exporter for some EU member states, such as Italy, France and Spain that in 2010 “relied on Libya for as much as 25%, 16%, and 13% of total crude oil consumption (Prontera 2011).

Energy policy is an area in which EU common framework and geopolitical interests collide: “while the EU represents a quite integrated energy community internally, its member states merely coordinate their external energy policy” (Methais 2013, 21). Energy cooperation in the Mediterranean was among the objectives of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership; it was reiterated in the Union for the Mediterranean launched in 2008; and is contemplated in the European Neighborhood Policy, the bilateral cooperation instrument between the EU and single Mediterranean countries. However, efforts at promoting a regional (Mediterranean) and European energy cooperation framework have been frustrated by “the privileged bilateral
country-to-country ties developed in the last decade” (Colombo and Sartori 2014: 8), of which the Italy-Libya is a notable example.

In the period 2013-2015 EU imports decreased from 23.2 per cent in 2013 to 7.5 per cent in 2015 (EU Commission 2016). Oil disruption in the country has alarmed Europe and not only. An example of this was the US navy intervention following the attempt by Ibrahim Jadhran—a former revolutionary that kept a great portion of Libya’s wealth hostage for more than two years—to illegally export oil in March 2014.13 Again, in September 2016 the EU condemned the attacks on oil fields perpetuated by General Khalifa Haftar, who eventually took control of these key sites in the east of the country. Tellingly, the statement linked the issue of oil production to stability of the country.14 Nevertheless, access to the Libyan oil sector is a profitable opportunity to such an extent that in the first years following the ousting of the Qadhafi regime “a large number of exploration and production companies, both those already established in the country and many potential new entrants, are making their presence felt in Tripoli as they attempt to position themselves to take advantage of future opportunities” (Hamilton 2012: 5).

Major economic actors have argued in favour of restoring oil production in Libya since “without oil there are no jobs. Without oil there is no food. Without no oil there is potentially no Libya”.15 However, the ways in which international oil companies operate in the country can arguably have unintended consequences for the resolution of the Libyan conflict. Indeed, oil companies have navigated a murky terrain, in which various groups have resorted to the “oil weapon” to make their claims heard. The case of Ibrahim Jadhran is exemplary (see note

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13 In summer 2013, Ibrahim Jadhran, head of the Petroleum Facility Guard for Central Libya seized power over the major oil terminals of Ras Lanuf, Zueitina, Sidra and Brega and proclaimed the establishment of a separate government in the east of the country. To financially sustain its project, he attempted to export crude oil through the oil tank Morning Glory.
12). Under his leadership and sustained by an anti-Tripoli narrative, the Political Bureau of Cyrenaica proclaimed in 2013 the establishment of a separate government in the east of the country ‘with a council of ministers, an oil company, and a defence force’ (Pack et al. 2014: 35). Similarly, Oil Facilities Guards—the bodies established after the ousting of Muammar Qadhafi to ensure the continuation of oil production across the country—are reported to have engaged in negotiated payment directly from the companies operating in the fields (Lacher and Cole 2014: 57).

Reliance on non-institutional channels is detrimental for the restoration of authority in the country while the existing institutions are under greater pressure. For instance, the creation of two competing governments led to an intensified struggle over key state institutions, including the National Oil Company (NOC) and its leadership. Attempts to control oil revenues and distribution led the HoR in Tobruk to create a parallel NOC and to call international oil companies to operate through the eastern company and not through the Tripoli-based one. The international community’s attitude has been so far based on maintaining a distinction between the international recognition of the HoR’s legitimacy and the necessity to continue working with existing institutional bodies, such as the NOC and the Central Bank in Tripoli to keep the economy going (International Crisis Group 2015). However, this balance is difficult to maintain if calls for a restoration and increase in oil production is not matched by efforts at guaranteeing a comprehensive governance of Libya’s oil wealth, something that can occur only with a political agreement. Effort to this end are basically inexistent, being any reference to the economy excluded from the political negotiation, with the exception of the EU adherence to the UN resolution 2278 (2016) aimed at preventing the exports of illicit oil from Libya.

Geographical proximity has tied Libya to Europe in another domain: migration, another key securitized sector for the EU (Huysmans 2000). After 2011, Libya became a crucial transit route for illegal migration towards Europe, consisting of both economic migrants and refugees.
Libya’s 4,300 kilometres of borders, most of which traverse mere desert and sea, offered a lucrative opportunity to a network of smugglers profiteering from the lack of authority in the country (Shaw and Mangan 2014). The central Mediterranean route has hit worldwide news for its toll of human life lost during the sea journey and caused a heated debate in Europe around member states’ competences and institutional arrangements.\footnote{16} As a result, migration, or better the control of it, has been a primary concern of the EU response to Libya. As part of its “comprehensive approach to support the transition to a democratic, stable and prosperous Libya” (Council of the EU 2016), the EU committed € 20 million to projects linked to migration (Gaub 2016).\footnote{17} In particular, the EU launched the EU border management assistance mission in Libya (EUMAB) 2013-2015, whose mandate was extended in August 2016 with an additional budget of euro 17 million over the period August 2016 – August 2017.

Under the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDC), EUBAM has the objective of supporting Libyan authorities in developing borders’ security. The mission was a reaction to the recognition that the Libyan central authority for border security was “weak with local military or local political councils exerting control within their area of influence. The command structure did not comprise intermediary levels (operational/regional) between the politico-strategic governance and the tactical units” (Council of the European Union 2013: 13). In coordination with the UN, the mission was designed as to fill this capacity gap through training and support for Libyan authorities.

Since 2014 when violence erupted again in the country, EUBAM was downsized and had to operate from Tunisia. Most importantly, however, the mission suffered from other shortcomings, which were deeply related to its mandate. Indeed, EUBAM is part of a broader

\footnote{16} The number of illegal crossings through the Central Mediterranean Route increased from around 60,000 in 2012 to 170,000 in 2014, due mostly to Syrian refugees transiting from this route (Toaldo 2016: 7).
\footnote{17} Other areas in which EU assistance went are: training the newly elected General National Congress (GNC) members in late 2012 (€4.5 million); support to the parliament and the constitutionalisation process; strengthening internal security with a focus on risk detection and crime investigation (€2.2 million) (Gaub 2016: 47).
trend towards the externalization of immigration controls—the practice of shifting the responsibility of borders control outside of the national territory, often relying on countries of migration origin or transit (Nessel 2009). The practice has been criticized for devolving a delicate task—migration flows control including refugee assistance and protection—to developing countries that often lack the legal framework for protecting migrants. The case of Libya shows a further complication as the devolution of responsibility for migration control occurred amid the unfolding of an armed conflict. With the changing conditions on the ground it appeared clear that the:

“EU security-related contribution focusing only on border security is manifestly insufficient and inconsistent with both the country’s needs and the challenges for regional security, including that of the EU; [the EU Parliament] calls, therefore, on the High Representative to review the mandate of the European Union Border Assistance Mission with a view to designing a new mission within the CSDP which takes into account the changed situation in Libya, especially with regard to the urgent need for state-building, the strengthening of institutions and security sector reform.” (European Parliament 2014)

Indeed, border security is part of the state competences, but cannot be achieved in isolation from restoring political authority, achieving the monopoly over the coercive means of violence, and having in place those institutions that counterbalance such authority and monopoly—all conditions that are now missing in Libya. In addition, the mission required an effort on behalf of the Libyan population and its authorities that was simply unrealistic while the conflict was ongoing. In the vast borderlands of Libya, then, control over trade routes (mostly smuggling routes) overlaps with social and political dynamics (the changing position of tribes before and after 2011 as well as the tendency of dividing the new political order
between the revolutionaries and the loyalists to the previous regime). In the south of the country, the issue of controlling borders and thus having access to the informal economy generated by cross border trade has been also complicated by ethnic clashes (Cole 2012). The Tuareg and Tebu minorities, in particular, have actively established themselves across the Libyan southern border. Retaking control of these areas is unlikely to occur relying exclusively on technical solutions without an inclusive political process able to address the grievances of a segment of the Libyan population (Toaldo 2015: 69).

**Security or peace?**

Through the lens of proximity, what prevailed after the derailing of the expected transition is an interpretation of Libya as a crisis for Europe and not as a crisis in itself. The crisis then, has been interpreted mostly through its symptoms—migration, terrorism and energy provision—rather than its root causes—primarily a political authority struggle.

These symptoms are part of the continuation of conflict in Libya, as the case of the Islamic State clearly shows. With reference to the oil economy, the profit coming from the exploitation of oil resources is associated with the continuation of conflict, when resources are controlled by non-state actors with the capacity of producing and exporting oil resources (Le Billon 2011; Ross 2004). At the same time, and especially in an oil-dependent country such as Libya, oil revenues are necessary to make the state function and to guarantee the provision of basic services, salaries to the public administration and a general capacity of the state to recover from conflict. This dual role of natural resources in Libya became apparent after 2014, when the National Oil Company and the Central Bank leveraged the need of the government in Tripoli and al-Bayda to have access to the national budget in order to resume oil production in
the east of the country and thus keep oil revenues flowing into an exhausted public sector. At the same time, the distribution of oil revenues through the Central Bank has kept alive the numerous security units that existed before 2014 while waiting for a political settlement to be reached (International Crisis Group 2015; Eljarh 2014).

Within the migration domain, as the literature on the political economy of conflict shows, profit coming from the exploitation of illicit activities, including the smuggling of human beings, is often related to the continuation of war activities (Collier and Hoeffler 1998; Ballentine and Nitzschke 2003). Libya is no exception to the claim that post-conflict transitions entail the intermingling of political and criminal activities (Williams 2001). International measures to counter illegal migration through border control assistance are then designed to undermining the capacity of warring parties to sustain their belligerent agenda. But while these measures can undermine the socio-economic drivers of conflict in either their profit-making or coping forms—the “greed” logic of conflict, albeit only partially, they are not meant to address the “grievance”—socio-political—logic of it. The EU in Libya seems to have privileged the former approach over the latter, which has translated into preference for offering technical assistance rather than playing an overtly political role.

The interpretation of Libya as a crisis for Europe rather than a crisis in itself has then favoured the prevalence of member states’ agendas over a European one, with Italy, France and the UK playing a leading, but not always congruent role as shown by their involvement in fighting the Islamic State. This is also due to the fact that the EU still has to find a common strategy to address the unprecedented challenges posed by conflicts in the 21st century in its Southern Mediterranean Neighbourhood and beyond. Historically, the attempt to foster peace and stability in the Mediterranean has been both accelerated and hindered by inter-state conflict in the MENA region. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict, in particular, was both a push factor to create the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, when the Oslo process raised expectations about
its resolution, and a factor determining its failure when the Peace Agreement collapsed. But the regional context after 2011 is different from what Europe has faced so far. The challenging dynamics in the MENA region have not been matched by either an effective crisis management strategy nor a comprehensive conflict prevention strategy (Colombo and Huber 2012). Although the 2016 European Global Strategy identifies a multi-dimensional (addressing the multiple dimensions of conflict), multi-phased (acting at all stages of the conflict cycle), multi-level (acting at the local, national, regional and global levels), and multilateral (engaging all parties involved in conflict) approach to conflict and crisis, one can question its translation into practice in light of the Libyan case.

Indeed, Libya witnessed a weak process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, the absence of a peacekeeping mission, and an overall failure in reaching a political agreement between warring parties at the beginning of its transition. The initial rush to hold elections in July 2012 was, then, accompanied by a weak effort towards strengthening democracy and governance, promoting the respect of human rights and socio-economic development. By 2014, Libya presented unprecedented challenges that current EU instruments cannot (and could not) deal with.\textsuperscript{18} What emerged in the absence of mechanisms for dealing with the Libyan crisis coupled with the abandonment of Western responsibility and grand narratives is a focus on stability, which is, in turn, inherently linked to the shift from a political to a technical approach to conflict situations. Stabilisation has, then, conservative rather than transformative objectives in the attainment of security, but not necessarily peace. The latter in the current context of Libya, as everywhere else, raises issues of authority, legitimacy and power dynamics that a technical approach to the Libyan crisis cannot entirely grasp.

\textsuperscript{18} Although the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership had the objective of establishing an area of peace and stability, it did not include instruments or strategies on how to achieve this. The Union for the Mediterranean and the European Neighbourhood Policy equally lack a clear conflict management and conflict resolution strategy: the former favours cooperation on technical issues, and the latter, structural long-term transformation towards democracy, good governance, and economic development.
Conclusion

Back in 2004, commenting on Qadhafi’s visit to Brussels, Romano Prodi, former President of the EU Commission declared that “we need to work together on peace, stability, migration, security, economic reform, and cultural co-operation. This is the essence of our new neighbourhood policy, within which Libya must find its place” (BBC News 2004). Peace, stability, migration, security, economic reform, and cultural co-operation remain key but far from accomplished objectives of the European Union towards Libya. Contextual factors have not eased the attainment of these objectives and, in general, the role of Europe in Libya. A partial disengagement of the US from the MENA region, the seismic shift of the so-called “Arab Spring”, the regional implication of the conflict, with Egypt, the UAE, Qatar and Turkey being heavily involved, and the crisis that the European Union is undergoing did not facilitate a concerted stance towards Libya.

The chapter has provided a critical assessment of the European response to the Libyan crisis over the last five years. The international intervention in Libya resulted from evolving international practices during the 1990s and 2000s. At the same time, it can be assumed to be example of a rupture in the ways in which international actors have dealt with conflict and post-conflict contexts in the proceeding period. In Libya, the NATO-led military campaign launched in 2011, authorised by the Security Council Resolution 1973 (17 March 2011), and supported by the EU was justified by the necessity to protect the Libyan population from Qadhafi’s intentions, as stated in his televised address, to fight his opponents—which he called rats and hirelings—alley by alley, house by house and room by room. Once this threat was warded off, international actors were hesitant of intervening to pursue a transformative agenda, such as the
one that (misleadingly) guided the Iraqi experience.

This hesitancy can be interpreted as a general abandonment of Western responsibility and transformative narrative towards conflict-affected countries in favour of more realistic, and sometimes, conservative objectives in relation to which security prevails. This approach is also reflected in a prevalence of technical solutions addressing the symptoms of the conflict rather than political ones aimed at tackling its root causes. Within this framework, two factors—the tensions between a European agenda and its member states’ prerogatives and the proximity of the country to Europe—further determined the European orientation towards interpreting Libya as a crisis for Europe rather than as a crisis per se. The former hindered in many ways the capacity of Europe to exercise high-level political pressure aimed at restoring authority in the country. Not even its member states could exercise such pressure, as they pursued a European security strategy according to their own priorities and modalities. The latter, in the absence of a political role, have been dealt with a technical approach, for instance in the field of borders controls, that is however not designed to address the root causes of the Libyan crisis.

In all, the Libyan crisis shows that the priorities of the EU and its member states in the Mediterranean are controlling migrants’ flows, maintaining a stable energy market, and containing the terrorist threat posed by the Islamic State. While pursuing these priorities a political solution to the escalating conflict in the country became a secondary issue. At the same time, the Libyan crisis shows a key limit of the EU in pursuing an area of peace and stability between Europe and North Africa. The EU has not adjusted to the changing international and regional contexts, or to changing conflict dynamics in its southern neighbourhood. Its practice is still dominated by an interpretation of security as bounded by national borders that is at odds with the fact that the protracted ramifications of conflict (i.e., state failure, terrorism, criminality) in Libya is blurring “the boundary between hard- and soft-security issues as new actors (terrorists, smugglers, traffickers, militias, migrants and refugees)
have become increasingly assertive domestically and regionally” (Colombo and Huber 2016). This interpretation of security as bounded by national borders have prevailed over the attainment of peace laying the ground for Europe to integrate a potential condition of protracted conflict in its southern border.
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EU support for transitional justice in the aftermath of the Arab Spring: what has become of the promises of the fourth wave of transitional justice?

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Abstract
In 2015 the European Union (EU) published 'The EU's Framework on Support to Transitional Justice', which was the first EU policy document uniquely devoted to transitional justice (Council of the European Union 2015). This chapter examines the EU’s new transitional justice agenda within the context of the Arab Spring. The main question it seeks to answer is whether the notion of the Arab Spring being the starting point of a new wave of transitional justice, has been reflected in the EU’s approach towards transitional justice at a generic level and in the EU’s support for transitional justice in the MENA region specifically through the use of support for gender justice within the context of Tunisia’s transition as a case study. This chapter offers an original take on the role of transitional justice post Arab Spring as the Arab Spring has become the topic of a considerable amount of transitional justice scholarship, the EU’s role as a transitional justice actor in the region has – in line with its own long kept silence on the topic in general - received little scholarly attention. In line with more generic literature on EU support for Tunisia’s transition, this chapter finds that though the EU has invested in cooperation with local Islamist actors on matters of gender justice, it has not directed specific support to local
approaches towards gender justice including those which predominantly focus on structural social justice reforms through the use of transitional justice, but instead attempted to include Islamist gender justice advocates in projects that promote liberal conceptualizations of gender equality.

Keywords: transitional justice, women's rights, European Union, European Neighbourhood Policy, Tunisia

The Arab Spring has been envisioned as a pivotal moment in the history of transitional justice with the potential to shift international discourse in a more local direction rooted in socio-economic rights. Interestingly, the Arab spring and its aftermath have collided with the EU’s first attempts to shape a comprehensive transitional justice policy. Following, this chapter examines how the EU has integrated strategies to support local initiatives and demands for social justice through transitional justice.

Since the eruption of the Arab Spring, much academic debate has centred on the EU’s response (actual or desired) to the revolutionary developments in its backyard (Teti 2012; Dandashly 2014). The Arab Spring has been described as one of the most decisive factors in the EU’s relatively brief history as a foreign policy actor (Smith 2013). In response to the events of 2011, the European Commission and the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy completely revised the European Neighbourhood Policy. The results of this exercise have been described as a mea culpa on behalf of the EU with an eye on its past lenient stance on and cooperative approach towards the dictatorships which were ousted as a result of the popular uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt (Hollis 2012). It also included a commitment on
behalf of the EU to invest in ‘deep democracy’ in the Southern Mediterranean Neighbourhood (European Commission 2011).

Nevertheless, various experts agree that in spite of this impressive rhetoric, the European response to the Arab Spring has been neither consistent nor coherent (Dandashly 2014). Some even doubt whether the EU has changed its conceptual approach towards democracy promotion and development at all (Teti 2012). These findings are likely to be reflected in the EU’s approach towards transitional justice in the region. However, contrary to the large body of literature that has emerged on the EU and democratization after the Arab Spring, relatively little has been written on transitional justice. In order to fill this gap in the literature, this chapter examines whether the EU has lived up to the central prerogatives of the fourth wave of transitional justice both in policy as well as in practice by placing inclusive local approaches and social justice at the centre of its approach towards transitional justice through the use of Tunisia as a case study specifically focusing on EU support for gender justice. The conclusion combines the insights of both the policy analysis as well as the case study to answer the question if and how the expectations raised by the Arab spring have impacted the EU’s approach towards transitional justice.

**The Arab Spring and the fourth wave of transitional justice**

Transitional justice refers to those judicial and non-judicial strategies that deal with a legacy of human rights abuses and aim to introduce social reconstruction in the wake of widespread violence (UN 2004). Transitional justice has become a key component of the international peace building toolkit., but little consensus exists on what the concept exactly constitutes and what are and should be its primary goals. More specifically, in spite of a fixed definition of
transitional justice as a standard collection of mechanisms - trials and prosecutions, truth and reconciliation commissions, reparations, reparations, and guarantees of non-repetition, and institutional reform - opinions differ with regards to the question in which combination these should be utilized and which goals they are supposed to serve.

Perspectives on these issues have evolved and changed over the last three decades as transitional justice has been employed to deal with past human right abuses and atrocities in contexts as different as transitions from authoritarianism to democracy as from war to peace. Scholars have classified the different stages of transitional justice’s development using a waves paradigm. Within this waves paradigm, Teitel has situated the birth of modern transitional justice practice shortly after WWII when accountability was sought for war crimes through the Nuremberg Trial and the Tokyo War Crimes Trial. Many others, however, have identified the starting point of the first actual wave of transitional justice as the transitions from authoritarianism to democracy that took place in Latin America in the 1980s (Arthur 2009). The second wave of transitional justice kicked off after the fall of the Berlin Wall and has been situated in the former communist Central and Eastern European nations transitioning from communist authoritarian regimes to free market democracies.

Characteristic of both this and the first wave of transitional justice was the limited involvement of the international community in the design and implementation of the transitional justice mechanisms of choice. This changed during the third wave of transitional justice which came in response to the wars and genocides that took place in Rwanda and Bosnia and Herzegovina in the mid 1990s. Confronted with the large-scale atrocities that had swept both countries the international community decided to draw from the transitional justice toolbox in an attempt to bring some extent of justice and reconciliation to these sights of mass atrocities. In doing so the international community went back to the roots of transitional justice and put criminal justice at the forefront of the discussion by the establishment of the ICTY and
ICTR. This preference for criminal justice as a way to reckon with the past has been confirmed by the establishment of the ICC in 2000 and has determined international transitional justice practice ever since.

The appropriation of transitional justice by the international community through its integration into its default peace building toolkit, and especially the heavy international involvement in the transitional justice processes which have been set up in various African countries to come to terms with the large scale human rights abuses committed during past civil wars, have not come without criticism. Both critical scholars as well as African states themselves have questioned the consistency of international criminal justice with African values and denounced the legalist version of transitional justice promoted by major international donors as a new form of Western imperialism. This criticism on internationalized transitional justice has not been limited to the undesirability of the use of formal justice mechanisms. Many have also questioned transitional justice’s traditional focus on civil and political rights abuses, and its neglect of socio-economic rights violations (Schmid and Nolan 2014). Therefore, several academics have voiced the expectation that the fourth wave of transitional justice would create room to question the paradigmatic foundations of the field in order to address both its ‘imperialist’ character as well as its preoccupation with physical violence at the expense of structural violence (Sharp 2013). Sharp has described the fourth wave as a balancing exercise that will bring issues that have traditionally been peripheral to transitional justice efforts – such as local justice responses and socio-economic rights - to the centre of the enterprise. In 2011, when the MENA-region was swept by the Arab Spring, experts posited that this movement could become the catalyst for this new wave of transitional justice (Fisher and Stewart 2015). This belief was rooted in the idea that various factors in the region made it a viable context for both experiments with ‘localized’ transitional justice, as well as for transitional justice measures that would bring socio-economic rights violations to
the foreground.

With regards to the former idea, authors have pointed at North Africa’s distinctively Islamic background (Turner 2015), and argued that Islamic conceptualizations of justice differ from Western ideas in their prioritization of non-punitive, reconciliatory forms of justice. These priorities could heavily influence the Arab’s world quest for accountability after the Arab Spring, and generally deepen and broaden the transitional justice paradigm (Nickson and Braithwaite 2013). With regard to the inclusion of socio-economic rights, several experts have pointed out that though there has been a penchant, especially in the international community, for centralizing the popular demands for political change in the narrative of the popular uprisings that unleashed the Arab Spring, poverty, unemployment, corruption and lack of economic opportunities are equally crucial explanatory variables for the uprisings (Schraeder and Redissi 2012). What sets the Arab Spring apart from other contexts in which socio-economic concerns played an important role in inciting the revolution is that for the first time, these popular uprisings incited debates about the need to expand the scope of transitional justice to incorporate economic elements beyond the community of transitional justice academics and practitioners (Fisher and Stewart 2015: 7).

The important role that social justice plays in the transitions that have been put in motion by the Arab Spring has also been linked to the distinctively Islamic character of the region. Al-Momani and Renninck argue that though the conceptualization of social justice in the Arab region is not entirely different from the Western perspective, it does find ‘its origins in Arab-Islamic culture, and particularly in the Qur’an’s norms and rules for the construction of what can be termed the ‘moral economy’’: the Qu’ran requires believers and the community as a whole to protect and assist those most in need, which reflects ‘a communitarian ideal of redistributive social welfare’ (2013: 142). From a transitional justice perspective, this implies that there will be a relatively strong pressure on new post Arab Spring regimes to guarantee
social justice by addressing both issues of socio-economic abuse and corruption by the past regime, as well as by guaranteeing a higher position for social justice concerns on the political agenda in the future.

However, despite these high expectations, practices of transitional justice after the Arab Spring have proven to be obstinate not in the least due to the fact that many of the countries which were shook by the 2011 uprisings have been taken over by new but equally (or more) repressive regimes, ended up in full-fledged wars (Davis 2016). In the countries that did embark on transitional justice, security concerns spilling over from the rest of the region and elite compromises have created obstacles for the originally ambitious transformative transitional justice proposals as witnessed in Tunisia (Lamont and Pannwitz 2016). Before looking more closely at the Tunisian case, the next section first examines how the Arab Spring’s claims for social justice have been incorporated into EU transitional justice policy.

**The EU’s Framework on Support to Transitional Justice and the fourth wave of transitional justice**

The European Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy published ‘The EU’s Framework on Support to Transitional Justice’ in July 2015 (European Commission 2015). Despite the previous absence of a comprehensive EU approach towards transitional justice, the EU has *de facto* been a transitional justice actor to reckon with at the international stage for over two decades. This ongoing commitment to transitional justice is reflected in – amongst other things – the EU’s staunch support for the Rome Statute and the ICC, and in the EU’s status as the ‘largest donor in the area of democracy, rule of law, justice and security sector reform and good governance, gender equality and
support for vulnerable groups worldwide’ (Council of the European Union 2015: 13).

In 2014, in the most comprehensive analysis of the EU’s efforts in the field of transitional justice published to date, Davis concluded that the EU’s translation of the principles of peace and justice into policy was ‘piecemeal and fragmented’, as was most clearly reflected in the EU’s approach towards trials and prosecutions as a transitional justice effort distinct from and superior to other transitional justice endeavours. This prioritization of criminal justice and legalist approaches in general reflects the distinctive features of the third wave of transitional justice (heavy international involvement in local affairs, legalization of the transitional justice discourse both at the international as well as local level). Relying on Sharp’s conceptualization of transitional justice as a field consisting of peripheries and centres, one can examine how local justice and social justice have been situated in the EU’s transitional justice Framework. The strategy adopted in this analysis has therefore been to analyse all occurrences of the terms civil–political rights and socio-economic rights (or related terms), and the terms local and international justice (or related terms) in the EU’s Framework, and to subsequently examine how these are placed in relation to ‘transitional justice’, looking at whether they have been included or excluded, foregrounded or marginalized.

*The EU and support for local justice*

At first sight it seems that the EU has included support to local justice in the new Framework, which is confirmed by numerous references throughout the document to the importance of supporting locally-owned justice initiatives. In this regard the first guiding principle of the EU’s approach towards transitional justice is that ‘[it] can only reach its goals if the process of its design and implementation is nationally and locally-owned and inclusive, while respecting international norms and standards’ (Council of the European Union 2015: 22). The second guiding principle builds on this notion by prescribing context specific measures. The EU
acknowledges that there is no one-size-fits-all approach for transitional justice, and that specific trajectories should be designed through an assessment of the nature, role and impact of violations or abuses on the affected population without discrimination, and be accompanied by an identification of the needs of the respective victim groups. Moreover, the EU explicitly recognizes the importance of informal activities developed and implemented at the grassroots level for providing impetus to transitional justice in societies where there is no genuine political will to move forward with meaningful judicial processes exists.

However, as Teti (2012) has pointed out in her analysis of ENP strategies, though this type of rhetoric is standard EU practice and fits in well with the EU’s self-image of a normative power, it usually just functions as a progressive cover up for traditional neo-liberal approaches to countries which receive EU support in the field of democracy, justice and development. This tendency manifests itself in the recognition of the importance of certain issues in the introductory paragraphs (such as guidelines), but their neglect or separate treatment in more substantive paragraphs. In the Framework one can indeed still detect the EU’s foregrounding of international criminal justice – with the presence of more specific strategies to support criminal justice in contrast with the absence of possible strategies to support local justice initiatives - in spite of its said adherence to principles of localized and context-specific justice in societies in transition.

The EU and support for social justice

The importance of localized responses to transitional justice has been acknowledged in the EU’s Framework on Support to Transitional Justice even though adherence to international law and legalist international criminal justice responses are still at the centre of the EU’s approach. In this context it has to be remarked that what the EU understands as localized transitional justice mostly refers to the modality through which justice is sought such as informal grassroots
initiatives set up by NGOs, mediation practices, and tradition-based mechanisms. Thus, one must also examine to what extent the EU is also willing to take into account local demands for justice and specifically the demand for social justice, which was particularly strong in the context of the Arab Spring.

A first exploration of the Framework indicates that the EU is reluctant to include conceptualizations of social justice and socio-economic rights. From this perspective, the most important evolution in the text situates transitional justice in the 'security-development nexus paradigm', stating that:

As transitional justice mechanisms can significantly contribute to initiating post-conflict recovery and in preventing the emergence of new cycles of violence, the EU recognises the links between rule of law, peacebuilding, development and transitional justice … The EU therefore supports transitional justice processes that are forward-looking, with the aim to transform the society by identifying and dealing with root causes of conflict and violence that may reside in discrimination, marginalisation or violation of social, economic and cultural rights. (Council of the European Union, 2015: 31)

In order to operationalize this claim, the European External Action Service and Member States are urged to ensure that support to transitional justice processes is included when programming and implementing national and regional development aid programs.

However, the paragraph that discusses the type of support that the EU aims to provide to transitional justice in a development context indicates that the EU has no intention of taking into account transitional justice considerations when determining how development money should be spent in order to address social injustice. Instead, the link between development and
transitional justice is conceptualized as one in which development money is used to contribute to justice reform processes, which are understood to include constitutional and legislative reforms, informal and formal justice systems and security sector reforms. In addition to this the EU states that:

Given States’ primary duty to investigate serious international crimes, the EU is particularly engaged in promoting and contributing to strengthening the capacity of national judicial systems to investigate and prosecute serious international crimes.

(Council of the European Union 2015: 36)

While the call for more integration between transitional justice and development could be an important step in the quest for social justice, its focus on civil and political rights only functions to reinvigorate the EU’s support for international criminal justice.

A further examination of the Framework shows that the EU has not substantiated the claim that procedures can address socio-economic rights violations. In the paragraphs on criminal justice/persecutions and truth commissions the EU does not explicitly mention the incorporation of socio-economic rights violations in the mandates of these bodies, and even in the paragraph on reparations the Commission stipulates that these will only be granted to individuals which have suffered serious crimes under international law during the conflict. That means that, in spite of the Commission's recognition of the role socio-economic rights play in the development of conflicts, it employs a very narrow perspective on reparations, hampering its potential to contribute to social justice.

Lastly, we like to point out that the only paragraph in which the EU specifically mentions socio-economic rights violations is the one devoted to the gendered dimensions in transitional justice. The gender paragraph the EU acknowledges that:
Victims’ experiences of conflict include sexual violence but also wide-scale human rights and socio-economic violations and gender-differentiated impacts of forced disappearances, torture, loss of family members and other violations or abuses.

(Council of the European Union 2015: 23)

This further confirms the status of socio-economic rights as a marginalized category which is not necessarily considered to be relevant to all members of societies, but only to the group – women – that has historically been considered as one of the most vulnerable constituencies in transitional justice discourse.

The outcomes of this analysis of the EU’s approach towards localized approaches towards transitional justice and the integration of social justice concerns shows that though the EU is willing to adopt localized approaches towards transitional justice, this willingness predominantly concerns modalities instead of demands. It could be argued therefore, that though the main features of the fourth wave of transitional justice have been incorporated by the EU, the extent to which their importance has been acknowledged is marginal.

**The EU and gender justice in Tunisia after the Revolution**

This final section aims to examine to what extent our previous findings hold true for the EU’s support for transitional justice in the MENA region after the Arab Spring by focusing on Tunisia as a case study. Though it is not in the power of the EU to determine the agenda of a democratically elected neighbouring government, the EU has committed itself to the promotion of transitional justice within the context of its foreign policy. Moreover, it has financial and diplomatic tools to convince and support partner countries to dedicate more attention to certain issues. In this regard, the EU has indeed consistently devoted attention to Tunisia’s transitional
justice process in annual progress reports (European Commission 2014; 2015). In the 2013-2017 Tunisia Action Plan, support for transitional justice is mentioned as one of the new priorities in EU-Tunisia relations (European External Action Service 2013: 4). Examining to what extent Europeans have invested in cooperation with local actors, and shown willingness to invest in projects that advance localized conceptualizations of justice, allows us to understand the EU’s incorporation of fourth wave priorities.

After a historical overview of the post-revolutionary and transitional justice trajectory in Tunisia this paragraph examines how the EU has responded to these developments, by particularly focusing on its interaction with local demands for justice and demands for social justice. Subsequently, we study specifically the European approach towards women’s rights. The main reason for this focus on EU support for the gendered dimension of Tunisia’s transitional justice process is that the desirability of local approaches to gender justice and gendered social justice concerns have been central to Tunisia’s national debate on women’s rights in the wake of the Revolution.

_Tunisia in transition: national identity, transitional justice and women_

Besides being the birthplace of the Arab Spring, Tunisia is the only country that actually managed to secure a peaceful transition to democracy. In a broader context, Tunisia is the first country ever that has published a comprehensive transitional justice law with an eye on securing a holistic judicial process that includes trials, a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, reparations and institutional reform (Tunisia’s Transitional Justice Law). Moreover, Tunisia’s transitional justice law explicitly recognizes regions which were (economically) marginalized under the previous regime as victims. Tunisia’s revolution therefore has been heralded as the Arab Spring's singular success story, and its transitional justice process as potentially paradigmatic of the so-called ‘fourth wave of transitional justice’ (Fisher and Stewart, 2015).
However, five years after the revolution, the initial picture of Tunisia having made a successful transition from authoritarianism to democracy and of it being on the vanguard of a fourth wave of transitional justice which would both integrate the peculiarities of the political and cultural landscape of the country and the justice demands formulated during the Arab Spring has increasingly become subject to ambiguity. Lamont and Pannwitz (2016) argue that though the Arab Spring indeed raised new socio-economic demands which were initially picked up by the architects of Tunisia's transitional justice strategy, five years later these have disappeared from the political agenda. They blame this development on the composition of Tunisia’s new ruling class which despite its inclusion of diverse ideological perspectives. Moderate Islamism as embodied by Ennahda, and modernism/secularism as embodied by Nida Tounes, favour elite demands over broad participation of marginalized groups. The result has been the introduction of 'compromise justice' in which both the Islamist as well as the secular powers have shifted their gaze to a debate on reconciliation instead of prosecution.

This was best reflected in the introduction of the ‘National Reconciliation Act’ that called for the dropping of corruption charges against members of the former regime, including members of the new coalition government, in exchange for the return of an agreed amount of money that could be proven to have been obtained illegally. Though this Act has recently been abandoned by the government after widespread popular resistance, anti-corruption NGOs warn that the main aim of Tunisia’s government is still financial reconciliation.\(^1\) In addition, transitional justice experts have expressed concerns regarding the limited interest of the government in the work of the Truth and Dignity Commission (TDC) as was signified by the absence of Prime Minister Chahed and President Essebsi at the first historic hearings of this body.\(^2\) These findings are in line with the recent literature on Tunisia’s transition which claims

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that the new governing parties, in spite of their ideological differences, have joined forces to protect their own (and their constituencies’) middle class/elitist interests (Merone 2015).

In this context, the heated debate regarding Tunisia’s national identity as a secular or Islamist State that has been prevalent in Tunisian public discourses since the Revolution, has been conceived as a move to direct the population’s attention away from the neglect of social justice issues. The position of women in Tunisian society has been a central component of this debate. A progressive attitude towards women has traditionally been one of Tunisia’s defining characteristics in a region which is seen as patriarchal (Debuysere 2016). However, the coming into power of Islamists in the wake of the Revolution has raised persistent concerns amongst secular Tunisians regarding the survival of these achievements in face of the (perceived) Islamist threat. As a result, Tunisia’s traditional feminist women’s rights organizations – already dismissive of Islamists and Islamist women when they were part of State Feminism\(^3\) under Ben Ali’s reign - have adopted an even more hostile, defensive position towards Islamist elements in society, in most cases outwardly rejecting cooperation with emerging Islamist women’s (rights) actors and organizations.

The adjective “Islamist” refers to female advocates or supporters of the political movement that favours reordering government and society in accordance with laws/principles prescribed by Islam. In the Tunisian context this term largely coincides with the female supporters and politicians of the moderate Islamist party Ennahda. Though the Islamist women’s movement has just started to emerge in Tunisia after decades of oppression, its proponents have already organized in various ways. Islamist women’s rights activists have for

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\(^3\) State feminism refers to the close interaction between Tunisia’s autocratic regime and its feminist movement. In its attempt to build a modern state the government ardently supported women’s rights, most notably through the adoption of a – for regional standards – unseen progressive Personal Status Code, but also through discursive and monetary support for the women’s movement. However, in exchange for this support secular/feminist women’s movements were curbed in their opportunities to criticize the regime, and increasingly considered to be complicit in the regime’s oppression of the Islamist movement and particularly Islamist women (Gray 2012).
example gathered in associations such as Nisa Tounsiyat (Debuysere 2016). Others, such as social justice activist Ben Romdhane have conducted their advocacy for women’s rights mostly within the confines of Ennahda (Gray 2012). And prominent female Ennahda politicians such as Monia Brahim and Yusra Ghannouchi have incidentally used their platform to speak in favour of women’s (political) empowerment, for example through support for Tunisia’s parity law.4

What should be noted is that Tunisia’s emerging Islamist women’s movement is not homogeneous, and that even within Ennahda women have expressed various views in relation to women’s position in Tunisian society (Gray 2012). After years of imprisonment with the most marginalized women of Tunisian society, Islamist activist Ben Romdhane emphasizes the importance of compassion with those from socially disadvantaged backgrounds who had resorted to crimes due to poverty, lack of education or unfortunate family circumstances. This differs from the attitude of some of her more conservative Islamist peers who for instance condemn single motherhood (Gray 2012). In line with this, her activism is centred around social justice advocacy. These priorities are shared by some female Ennahda parliamentarians.5 Others, however, have expressed more conservative views and focused on protecting family values and women’s religious rights, such as their right to wear veils in universities, and women’s ‘complementarity’ rather than equality to men (Meziou 2013). However, these more conservative elements have also stressed the importance of women’s political participation, and rejected notions such as the re-introduction of polygamy. Generally, it has been argued that that Islamist-inspired activists enjoy wider local legitimacy and have less difficulty in reaching out to lower-class women (Pruzan-Jorgensen, 2012: 5). This is a consequence the proximity of

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religion and tradition in lower-class/rural women’s lives and also by the emphasis Islamist women’s rights activists put on women’s material gender interests, which is something that often resonates more with poor or lower-class women than middle class feminist concerns.

Under the reign of Ben Ali, Ennahda and its supporters were denounced as terrorists and enemies of the state, resulting in oppression of both Islamist politicians as well as their supporters by the security apparatus, resulting in intense surveillance as well as severe human rights violations such as abduction, torture, and murder (Andrieu 2016). Therefore, Islamist women’s activists and groups share a strong commitment to pursuing recognition and accountability for past injustices. Whereas under Ben Ali most of the prisoners were men, politically active Islamist women were also captured, and Islamist women had to bear the brunt of the regime's repression resulting in economic deprivation and psychological trauma (Gray 2012). Furthermore, Tunisia’s TDC has received thousands of testimonies in relation to sexual abuse in relation to a wide range of encounters with the state security apparatus by predominantly Islamist women6. These experiences have put Islamist gender justice advocates on the forefront of both the battle for gendered social justice as well as transitional justice in a more traditional sense (Debuysere 2016).

In this sense, the Islamist women’s movement finds itself in a unique position as it is advancing interests that have been ignored both by the Islamists in power, as well as the secularist/feminist women’s movement. As discussed above, the Ennahda party has mostly put aside its transitional justice agenda ignoring demands for both social justice as well as accountability for the egregious human rights abuses and endemic corruption under Ben Ali’s regime in a compromise with the secular parties that are currently governing Tunisia. For their part, the feminists – though highly critical of the Islamist movement – have also largely ignored social justice initiatives, and their main concern has been the protection of secular, middle-

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class women’s interests. Additionally, (traditional) transitional justice has not been high on the feminist agenda, as the feminist movement enjoyed a privileged status under Ben Ali’s regime. In some cases it was even complicit in his abuse of other constituencies, particularly Islamist women (Gray 2012). Studying the relationship between the EU and Islamist women’s groups could therefore give us a better understanding of the European adoption of the principles of the fourth wave of transitional justice.

The EU and support for gender justice in Tunisia

The EU values Tunisia highly as one of the few stable partners left in the southern neighbourhood since the outbreak of the Arab Spring. In its recently published Global Strategy, the EU praises Tunisia's success as a “prosperous, peaceful and stable [democracy]” (European Union, 2016: 25). The central question of this section is how the EU has responded to the unfolding of Tunisia's transitional justice trajectory. It specifically delves into the question whether, despite Tunisia’s own turn to an increasingly elite-dominated process, it has remained true to its own guiding principle of supporting ‘localized justice’ both through cooperation with local non-governmental actors and by listening to the widely shared demand for social justice and accountability for widespread corruption under the previous government.

An examination of the EU’s Tunisia Action Plan does not result in a particularly promising picture with regard to support for localized transitional justice processes, or transitional justice in general. The fifty-page document contains only three explicit references to transitional justice and the only substantive comment the EU makes in this context concerns Tunisia’s respect for international human rights norms, and specifically measures to implement Tunisia’s adherence to the ICC’s Rome Statute (European External Action Service 2013: 14). With regard to women’s rights the EU urges Tunisia to put into practice its obligations under CEDAW with a particular focus on preventing and prosecuting all forms of violence against
women. These priorities reflect a typically legalist and globalized focus on transitional justice, which do not reflect some of the allegedly guiding principles of the EU’s Framework on Support to Transitional Justice (such as support for locally owned transitional justice approaches).

On the other hand, the EU does indicate that it aims to cooperate with local civil society actors to advance Tunisia’s human rights agenda, which includes its transitional justice activities (European External Action Service 2013: 14). Therefore, we may ask to what extent the EU has put this goal into practice in terms of its support for Tunisia’s wide variety of local women’s organizations on matters of transitional justice and social justice. Between 2012 and 2016 the EU invested 7 million euros in activities that specifically targeted concerns of gender equality and justice in Tunisia through the Spring Forward for Women Programme, which is administered in cooperation with UN Women. These activities complement generic EU actions in areas such as human rights, and social justice, which often also contains a gender dimension.

Spring Forward for Women cooperates with three main Tunisian civil society partners: the Tunisian Association of Democratic Women (ATFD), the Tunisian Association for Management and Social Stability (TAMSS), and Aswat Nissa. Given the EU’s goals of intensifying its cooperation with local actors, it is remarkable that none of these partners have a distinctively Islamic background. The ATFD is Tunisia main secular feminist women’s group which was established in the 1970s and closely involved in the previous regime’s State Feminism. TAMSS was established in 1986; initially with the aim to increase women’s participation in Tunisia’s business community, but later it expanded its scope to support for economically marginalized groups as well. While the ATFD and TAMSS both have a strong secular character and represent Tunisia’s traditional civil society landscape – with its history of involvement with the previous regime - Aswat Nissa was established in 2011 after the uprisings. It is the first non-partisan Tunisian women’s rights organization that cooperates with
Tunisian female politicians in female leadership initiatives and trainings regardless of the ideological/political background of these politicians.

Even in the absence of direct links to Islamist women’s groups, the EU’s support for Aswat Nissa indicates that it is aware of the various ideologies which determine Tunisia’s new political and civil society landscape after the Revolution. Nevertheless, support for a non-partisan organization cannot be considered as a full acknowledgement of the significant presence of Islamist civil society in Tunisia’s public life. This is especially evident in the fact that Aswat Nissa has not shaped its agenda around the promotion of Islamist priorities or gendered justice demands, but instead aims to let Islamist women participate in what is an inherently progressive project focused on women’s participation in political life.

In this sense the EU follows a strategy shared by most Western international donors in Tunisia – it does not directly support Islamist (women’s) organizations, but instead incites traditional and new secular partners to cooperate with and enter into dialogue with Islamist partners on projects that encapsulate shared goals (Debuysere 2016). This tendency to intensify ties with political Islam within its own discursive frameworks, notably by urging Islamist actors to enshrine liberal rights and endorse established power relations is characteristic of European involvement with civil society post Arab Spring (Behr 2013). Through this approach the EU supports the emergence of ties between civil society actors who have traditionally regarded each other with hostility. This is important as secular civil society actors in Tunisia have proven to be reluctant to cooperate with Islamist women’s groups as was for instance captured in this statement by a prominent AFTD member quoted by Debuysere: “Many European countries encourage us to have a dialogue with Islamist women. But how can we have a dialogue with people who have as a frame of reference the Quran?” (2016: 226)

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Due to the (financial) leverage European countries have at their disposal, they can encourage secular women’s groups to enter into dialogue with their Islamist counterparts, in spite of their reservations. In some instances, these projects have eventually resulted in successes such as joint statements in which secular and Islamist women’s organizations have set out shared values and common grounds (facilitated by the international NGO In Search of Common Ground) as well as non-partisan trainings for female politicians organized by Aswat Nissa. However, these initiatives have also brought less positive outcomes such as the withdrawal of secular organizations from joint initiatives due to feuds incited by historical prejudice ideology, which has increased existing tensions within Tunisia’s contemporary women’s movement (Debuysere 2016).

Regardless of the successes which have been achieved through the integration of Islamist organizations in projects that have traditionally been considered the domain of secular civil society organizations, it is questionable whether integrating Islamist groups into traditional liberal-oriented projects is an actual contribution to more localized responses to transitional justice. In Tunisia’s context, a more localized response could also require more support for (gendered) social justice initiatives inspired by Islamic values, or more attention for the implementation of transitional justice measures to achieve accountability for the grave human rights abuses Islamist women have experienced under Ben Ali’s reign. With regard to both of these aspects, official European sources remain silent, and no activities carried out by women’s organizations that specifically focus on transitional justice have been supported so far.

More attention paid to social justice is one of the key components of the fourth wave of transitional justice, a key driver of the Tunisian revolution, a central value to Islamic conceptualizations of justice, and a priority in feminist transitional justice discourse. Therefore, it is not surprising that social justice – together with accountability for civil and political rights
violations inflicted on Islamists under Ben Ali – are priorities for the Islamist women’s movements. In this regard it is interesting that whereas the Islamist governing actors of the Ennahda party have abandoned an agenda that invokes social justice, female activists linked to the party remain strongly attached to this cause (Debuysere 2016). While there are currently no EU supported initiatives on (gendered) social justice that are rooted in Islamic values, neither are there EU-supported projects that focus on the advancement of social justice through transitional justice. This does not mean, however, that the EU has ignored gendered social justice projects in Tunisia in general. It has to be remarked that the EU-Tunisia Action Plan, which sets out the actions to support Tunisia’s transition between 2014 and 2017 with regard to gender, has stated that the EU will invest in strengthening the role of women in social and economic progress (Art. 71 of the Association Agreement). Moreover, consistent with this, the economic empowerment of women is one of the two pillars of the Spring Forward for Women program.

Concrete examples of projects that the EU has supported include an initiative that provides vocational training to single mothers and their children in rural areas in order to support access to stable employment or self-employment in cooperation with the local NGO Amal. In partnership with TAMSS Spring Forward for Women has supported a project named “Pole of Support to Employment and Citizenship” which aims at fostering the emergence of female citizens who are integrated in the social and economic life of the Ariana region through professional training and the provision of micro-credits (Spring Forward for Women). The EU Delegation in Tunisia has also supported a project to increase the social and economic protection of rural women in Tunisia in cooperation with the NGO Gruppo Volontariato Civile.

The focus of these projects on socio-economic empowerment of women, and particularly women in rural areas, shows that the EU has been seriously involved in the socio-economic empowerment of women at the local level. Moreover, the EU has also supported
multiple non gender-specific projects to improve the socio-economic situation of marginalized groups in Tunisia in general. Yet these projects are not likely to yield results in absence of broader socio-economic reforms, and seem mostly inspired by a desire to safeguard stability rather than to contribute to social justice. Indeed, the EU has not supported any projects that particularly focus on achieving accountability for corruption and socio-economic injustices committed under the previous regime, or projects that advocate for legal and institutional reform to create a more just society from a this perspective. The EU’s neglect of transitional justice as a tool to achieve structural socio-economic reforms is consistent with its unwillingness depart from its neoliberal perspective on socio-economic development (Teti 2012) and its reluctance/refusal to work with civil society actors that aim to advance more inclusive models of economic governance and growth, such as trade unions.

**Conclusion**

An analysis of the EU’s Framework on Support to Transitional Justice has found that the EU repeatedly emphasizes the importance of cooperating with local actors on matters of transitional justice and also explicitly considers the use of local, traditional justice mechanisms to pursue accountability for past human rights abuses. However, the EU’s key frame of reference remains international law; localized responses are only supported in so far as they are consistent with the dominant international conceptualization of justice. This situation is clearly reflected in the EU’s acknowledgement that Islamist women’s organizations should be engaged in projects on gender justice, without directly supporting Islamist women’s groups and their projects in the field of transitional justice/gender justice. Instead, in line with its prioritization of liberal conceptualizations of gender justice, the EU has mainly invested in the
integration of Islamist women and women’s groups in projects that promote its priorities in the field of gender justice such as the promotion of women’s political participation. Though the EU acknowledges that marginalization and socio-economic rights violations constitute some of the root causes of conflict and violence, it appears reluctant to use transitional justice as a tool to determine Tunisia’s future socio-economic agenda by taking into consideration which persons and communities have been marginalized in the past. Moreover, in the substantive paragraphs of the Framework in which the EU discusses the functioning of the various transitional justice mechanisms, socio-economic rights are not mentioned.

Nevertheless, the EU has significantly invested in the socio-economic empowerment of marginalized women in rural areas. This support has not been limited to projects that focus on women, but also include other marginalized groups and regions such as the youth and the historically disadvantaged communities in the south of Tunisia. However, none of the EU supported projects have a transitional justice dimension, nor do they contribute to structural changes or more inclusive economic development. Therefore, in spite of the increased demand for the use of transitional justice as a tool to advance local and social justice in the wake of the Arab Spring, the EU’s general approach towards transitional justice remains fairly traditional with a focus on international norms and liberal conceptualizations of justice. This puts into question both the transformative potential of transitional justice as a whole and the EU’s capacity to adjust its generic foreign policy strategies to answer to context specific demands.

This is in line with more generic findings regarding the EU’s role in North Africa in the wake of the Arab Spring, which indicate that though the EU has adjusted many of its policies to some extent, the ideological framework (neoliberal and realist/pragmatic) has overall remained the same. In the context of transitional justice support this has resulted in the idea that both socio-economic interventions, as well as cooperation with marginalized groups are more a question of stability than a question of social justice per se. The wisdom of these ‘new’
EU insights is questionable, as the EU has acknowledged itself that past experiences have shown that superficial commitments to democracy and justice in the Southern Neighbourhood are not sufficient to safeguard stability in the region (European Commission 2011).
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Writing Out of Europe

Europe is burning. On 25 March 2017, the 60th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome, which established the grounds for what would become the European Union, official festivities in the Italian capital were interrupted by fierce protests. Anarchists and far-left groups organizing through social media under the hashtag “#Eurostop” found themselves in an unwitting alliance with far-right political parties and militant neofascist groups. They had all taken to the streets to decry the European Union broadly and its economic and immigration policies specifically. Such strange pairings are becoming increasingly common. In the age of Brexit, the unraveling of European imaginaries has become the central narrative for an assemblage of politics and practices of dissent under the rubric of Euroscepticism. Eurosceptics, however, just like their illiberal cousins across the pond, come from all walks of life and all sides of the political spectrum, and they do not necessarily share agendas, visions, or even motivations. What has been mischaracterized, especially in the United States, as the straightforward rise of the right in Europe should be understood instead as a broader reconfiguration of political paradigms that rest on particular imaginaries of Europeanness and Occidentalism. As the curtain is lifted on those imaginaries, their attendant political systems are shifting as well, making for uncanny alliances and strange bedfellows indeed. I therefore suggest that the current “crisis” of Europe be read instead as a critical reconfiguration of European hegemonies, including chiefly among them liberalism, that has been a long time
coming.

The “crisis” of liberalism and, by extension, the crisis of an imaginary of Europe founded upon liberal values is one of the most common truisms of contemporary political discourse, heightened across the Atlantic by Donald Trump’s election to the Presidency of the United States of America. The essays in North Africa and the Making of Europe offer a timely intervention into contemporary debates about Europe and its supposed crisis of values by injecting a much needed dose of historicization into the discursive construction of both Europe and crisis. Challenging dominant paradigms of area studies that separate North Africa from Europe, the essays in this volume re-position Europe as a geopolitical byproduct, rather than an originator, of colonialism. Through rich and varied accounts, they reveal the colonial origins of Europe itself and the co-production of intellectual boundaries and of geopolitical sites across the Mediterranean through colonial relations of power. Viewed from the perspective of colonial and post-colonial North Africa, then, the crisis of Europe can assume a new shape: it can become legible as a Eurocentric construct, and one that is instrumental to the ideological formations that are the subject of this volume.

In their Introduction to this book, Muriam Haleh Davis and Thomas Serres have argued that to understand Europe’s crisis we must not only attend to strictly colonial histories but also to other social and political domains—from diplomacy to economics, migration, and religion—that since the Second World War have shaped postcolonial European imaginaries. As these imaginaries were instituted over the second half of the twentieth century in what is now the European Union, many of the preceding essays have focused specifically on the EU to show the flows and processes that have continued to link these European developments to North Africa. Through this important move, the volume has positioned a history of colonialism at the center of post-war European Union policies and institutions, while simultaneously demonstrating that more than neo-colonialism is at work in the late capitalist geopolitics of
crisis that give Europe its meaning.

As several of the contributors have shown, colonial histories have been written out of Europe. I mean this statement in a double sense. First, colonial narratives have been written from a European perspective, which has privileged self-absolving justifications and codified a unidirectional orientation of influence—from metropole to colony. Even when scholars of postcoloniality have theorized the reverse, suggesting that colonies were actually laboratories for ideas of modernity and techniques of governance that were then applied back in Europe (McClintock 1995; Stoler 1995), the directionality of influence presupposed in these important works still figures colonies as receivers or, at best, as testing grounds for what were all along European notions that ultimately returned to Europe refined and perfected. This volume attempts to go beyond the “boomerang effect” framework for understanding colonial relationships by offering cases where European policies and ideas were developed in response to events and practices taking place in post-colonial North Africa. Writing colonialism and postcolonialism out of North Africa allows this book to address the complexity of global and postcolonial spheres of influence that view Europe not always as an originator but rather, at times, as derivative.

Colonial histories have also been written out of Europe in a second sense. They have been eliminated from Europe’s own mythology through the intertwined operations of amnesia and revisionism. Colonialism is the dark stain on liberal European imaginaries of civilization, and its violent history is therefore often erased to make room for more complimentary accounts of European nation-states. At the same time, colonialism is also the necessary precondition for those Eurocentric imaginaries of civilization. In Cornel West’s phrasing, the “ignoble paradox” of modernity was the flourishing of liberal humanist ideals alongside the evils of slavery and colonialism (1999: 51-54). Colonialism was both constitutive of and antithetical to European modernity.
A decolonial critique such as this book proposes must therefore write colonialism back into Europe through a critical geography that neither reifies Europe’s location nor masks the complex and multidirectional flows of influence that produce “scattered hegemonies” and transnational forms of solidarity under late capitalism (Grewal and Kaplan 1994). In this conclusive chapter, I follow the intellectual path laid out by the preceding essays to formalize a critique of Europe that decenters its epistemological grounds and reconfigures its disciplinary place in relation to area studies and postcolonial studies. I focus here on the presentist “crisis” of European imaginaries of civilization, modernity, and liberalism as diagnostic of the colonial power relations that still sustain Occidentalist imaginaries. My aim is to dislodge the notion of “crisis” from its ahistorical and Eurocentric field of significance in order to enable a feminist decolonial critical theory of Europe to rise from the ashes of its colonial effigies.

Occidentalist Cosmologies

While the crisis of Europe is popularly taken as a self-evident fact, what is far less clear is what this crisis is supposedly about. For some, the European crisis is a crisis of values. The electoral victories of neofascist and other right-wing movements would appear to be signs of liberalism’s demise in a culture war waged against the ideals of democracy, liberty, and secularism. Not only does the European Union appear to have failed in its mission to engender a supranational imagined community capable of replacing nation-state allegiances, but the broader set of imaginaries of post-war European modernity—from which that mission emerged—seem to enjoy far less consensus than expected. Is the crisis, then, that the liberal ideals of European modernity have turned out to be not so universal after all, not even in Europe? Framed by the rhetoric of crisis, liberal values are construed as having already been there up until the sudden rise of right-wing political forces challenging them in the present. The
temporality of crisis, which is itself a modern concept, has the effect of reifying liberalism as a historical fact. In anthropological terms, however, liberalism and its attendant values, produced through the constitutive histories of colonialism, modernity, and capitalism, are “native categories” among Europeans. That is, they are organizing concepts and beliefs that structure the worldviews of their subscribers, and which make perfect sense in the social worlds in which they are produced. Despite how indisputable native categories might appear to the communities that generated them, however, they are not social facts.

Because of colonial histories, European native categories have to a large extent “gone global” both in academic terms and in political terms. Notions like liberalism, secularism, rationality or democracy structure not only local practices but also critical analyses and political interventions coming out of the global North. To use anthropological terms once again, the conceptual problem is that the *emic* or local categories of Europe are conflated with the *etic* or general categories of scholarly analysis. Since at least the late 1970s, the call to *decolonize* academic thought has therefore reverberated across disciplines concerned with the epistemological catch-22 of writing critical work about Europe, or about the rest of the world, while using Eurocentric critical tools (Anzaldúa 1987; Derrida and Spivak [1976] 2016; Harrison 1991; Lugones 2010; Said [1978] 2003; Spivak 1988). Indigenous, womanist, post-colonial and “Third World” feminist scholarship has been especially generative in providing the terms of a decolonial critique aimed not only at the colonial and its late capitalist legacies, but also at what passes for critical (Alexander and Mohanty 1997; Grewal and Kaplan 1994; Meese and Parker 1989; Mohanty 2003; Pérez 1999).

In anthropology—arguably the most colonialist of academic disciplines—the reflexive turn called for a radical reconceptualization of anthropological methods and frameworks to account for the power relations produced through the fieldwork encounter between primarily Euro-American ethnographers and their research subjects in the global South (Asad 1973;
Behar and Gordon 1995; Clifford and Marcus 1986; Hymes 1972; Rabinow 1977). Despite such fundamental critiques, the geopolitics of knowledge that produce Europeanness have remained evident and largely unchallenged in the ongoing marginalization of Europe from anthropology’s intellectual project. It was only in the 1970s that anthropologists began to “reverse the gaze” and study European sites at all. And yet, it is precisely Europeanist anthropology that has given us some of the most incisive critiques of Occidentalism by “provincializing” European common sense, beliefs, and cultural practices (Chakrabarty 2000). For instance, in his ground-breaking *Anthropology Through The Looking Glass*, Michael Herzfeld (1987) used his ethnography of Greece, a country that is marginal to the European Union and yet foundational to its imaginaries, as a mirror for an ethnography of anthropology itself, revealing the nationalist ideologies that are constitutive of both. A decade later, once the regionalist interest in Europe had been established more securely as a subfield of cultural anthropology—though one that still lacks the legitimacy and authority of fieldwork in other continents—Europeanists continued to dissect the common sense and cultural practices that fabricate Occidentalism as an imperial geohistorical category (Coronil 1996). In the Introduction to their influential edited volume, *The Anthropology of Europe*, Victoria Goddard, Josep Llobera and Cris Shore (1994) argued that Europe is the result of myth as much as political power, and that the growth of the European Union has at once mobilized and reinforced the ideal of Europe.

‘Europe’ might be considered an example of what Turner called a ‘master symbol’: an icon that embraces a whole spectrum of different referents and meanings. But ‘Europe’ is also a discourse of power: a configuration of knowledge shaped by political and economic institutions that are themselves embedded in the disciplines and practices of government.
Moreover, it is a discourse that has increasingly been appropriated by the European Community as a shorthand for itself (Goddard et al. 1994: 26).

The mutual reinforcement of Europe, as a “master symbol” and a power discourse, and of the European Union, as a sovereign institution, is made possible and plausible by the reification of native cultural categories, including liberalism, modernity, secularism, and democracy. These categories belong squarely at the top of what Michael Herzfeld (2004) has since referred to as a “global hierarchy of value,” stressing in this phrase both the transnational reach of a value system rooted in European constructs and its role in maintaining hierarchical power relations in the aftermath of colonialism. In our times, to be liberal or to subscribe to liberal values is to stake a claim to the most modern of all modernities on a global stage. That is because, as Herzfeld writes, the global hierarchy of values “betrays a European and colonialist origin, in that it springs from the massive preoccupation with the definition of spaces and concepts that characterized the emergence of the modern nation-state in the heyday and aftermath of colonialism” (2004: 3). In this sense, liberalism is not merely an Enlightenment-era philosophy, nor is it an ideology on the left or the right of the political spectrum. Rather, it is a regulatory ethics that sets the terms of engagement for the entirety of legitimate political discourse. It is by recognizing liberalism’s place on the global hierarchy of value that one can understand why its perceived decline can be experienced as a veritable crisis, and often one of apocalyptic proportions.

To explain liberalism’s hold on political and social imaginaries, I have suggested elsewhere that this native European category operates as a cosmology (Mahmud 2016). The concept of “cosmology” goes deeper than ideology in explaining the affective attachment to liberalism that frames contemporary discussions of its crisis. As a cosmology, liberalism provides a worldview and an origin story that defines political subjectivity and belonging—
indeed, that defines the very notion of humanity and its place in the world—for many Euro-American citizens. Like all cosmologies, liberalism too contains contradictions and paradoxes, which typically neither dissuade believers nor make them aware that what they subscribe to is in fact a cosmology. The suspension of disbelief that is characteristic of cosmological thinking allows one to reconcile far-fetched ideas and to categorize as exceptional any occurrences that defy the rule. Nationalism, for instance, which has also been theorized as a cosmology (Herzfeld 2001) because of the origin stories it spins, the ontological claims it makes, and the world-making boundaries it sets up internally and externally, has long baffled scholars asking how an idea so philosophically poor could enthrall, over a relatively short historical period, the hearts and minds of peoples all over the world (Anderson [1983] 1991; Chatterjee 1993).

Liberalism’s origin story, like that of the nation-state, is a teleological history of modernity founded on a rupture from previous forms of sovereignty. As Duncan Bell (2014) has shown, its point of origin is progressively pushed back (it is now commonly located in seventeenth-century Lockean thought) and its premises are extended, accordingly, to an all-inclusive, politically vague amalgam of individual liberties and an underspecified principle of democratic consent. Out of these premises, the cosmology of liberalism organizes a system of meaning in which the human is understood in relation to material objects and to communitarian formations through a universalizing discourse of individualism and abstract rights. Indeed the abstractness of liberalism, its decorporealization of political subjectivity, is one of the most characteristic and paradoxical signs of this cosmology, which figures the human as a generic and universal category precisely by de-materializing embodied differences (Kotef 2009; Mahmud 2014). While postcolonial scholars have shown extensively the limits, failures, and betrayals of liberal imaginations among non-white subjects, and while feminists have long decried liberalism’s masculine ontology, what I am interested in exploring here is the sense of crisis that has emerged in Europe and elsewhere in response to a perceived rejection of liberal
values by significant groups of *illiberal* European subjects.

It is a testament to the pervasiveness of the liberal cosmology that to be liberal—not in the colloquial American English sense of being leftist, but in the political philosophical sense of understanding the human as a holder of inalienable abstract rights—is seamlessly equated with being a full-fledged modern (European or Euro-American) person. Liberalism has alternately been tied with the advent of science, religious toleration, the expansion of voting rights, and variations on the theme of nominal and even substantive equality (Bell 2014). Despite its philosophical vagueness and its internal contradictions, liberalism defines the Occidentalist geopolitics of the global North to such a degree that illiberal European movements become a contradiction in terms. And yet, they are here.

#Eurostop

The rise of the right in Europe has been a source of great concern for many left-leaning and centrist political commentators since at least the early 1990s. That is when many far-right political parties began to enjoy significant electoral victories across Europe. Their political rhetoric, though obviously not homogeneous, has typically articulated anti-immigration positions in language far more explicitly racist and xenophobic than the language used by centrist parties sharing similarly restrictive policy positions. In proportional electoral systems, such as the Italian one, far-right parties have therefore found common ground with the moderate right and have joined coalitional governments in which their participation, if not majoritarian, was nonetheless indispensable. The *Lega Nord* (Northern League), for instance, one of the most notoriously xenophobic parties in Europe, was born as a secessionist movement in northern Italy against southerners and foreign immigrants. Thanks to its twenty-year uneasy alliance with Berlusconi’s *liberal* right-wing government, this fringe extremist movement
gained not just viability but also the respectability that comes from partaking of a liberal political imaginary.

For many right-wing groups such as Lega Nord, political dissent is rooted in nationalist, isolationist, and anti-immigration views that blame liberal ideals spearheaded by the EU for the perceived weakness of the nation-state and the suffering of its citizens. As John Borneman and Nick Fowler (1997) predicted two decades ago, “Europeanization” as an organizational process and a vision could not replace the power of the nation state. The imagination of a “Citizens’ Europe” architected by policy-makers in Brussels and capable of instilling love and allegiance has failed among significant sectors of the population across the political spectrum (Shore 1994). But if for many right-wingers Euroscepticism is intensified by EU immigration policies, which are viewed as too permissive and too favorable to multiculturalism, among some far-left groups Euroscepticism is fomented by an ethical stance against those very same policies, which fall short of the humanitarian ideals of European modernity. Both sets of criticisms draw from particular visions of the global and of the national that at times might sound similar, but which are in fact quite different. For instance, many left-wing Eurosceptics strongly oppose globalization, which they view as the neoliberal restructuring of public services and civil rights in the service of corporate capital. Right-wing Eurosceptics may also be critical of globalization, but because they view it as a gateway to terror, financial insecurity, undocumented migration, and a loss of national pride.

Scholarly studies of right-wing movements are still comparatively scarce, but the existing literature has offered important insights about the values, beliefs, and practices that structure this political subjectivity in different contexts. Feminist scholarship in particular has shown how significant gender and sexuality are, as regulatory systems, to the political imaginary of the right, even when its politics is expressed through racism or xenophobia (Bacchetta and Power 2002; Ginsburg 1998; Grewal 2006; Mahmud 2014). Moreover,
stubborn depictions of right-wing movements as masculine and militant have rendered right-wing women virtually invisible, despite prominent figures such as Marine Le Pen or Alessandra Mussolini.

In a rare ethnographic study of (then) burgeoning neofascist movements and parties in various European countries, Doug Holmes (2000) explored the rise of a European integralism that he foresaw as capable of transcending political distinctions. As he wrote, “‘integralism’ creates a space in which an entangled politics arises that is both right and left. Indeed, it is precisely the unsettling potential of this kind of politics to join, fuse, merge, and synthesize what might appear to be incompatible elements that is at the heart of its distinctive power” (Holmes 2000: 13). Holmes traces the history of integralism in Europe back to the Counter-Enlightenment to suggest that, rather than an aberration of Occidentalist values, integralism belongs to European modernity. In this sense, the internal paradoxes of the liberal cosmology could also be understood as the result of competing European visions of modernity and humanity articulated in a dialectical relationship ever since the Enlightenment.

The hashtag “#Eurostop” has become one symbol of the entangled politics that Holmes describes. It began to gain traction in social media in 2015, and it is attributed to the Italian communist-leaning “social platform” movement Eurostop, whose three core principles are summarized in the protest slogan: “No Euro, No EU, No NATO.” The group’s website includes critical blog posts against military interventions in the Middle East, the common currency, austerity measures, as well as information about protests and meetings taking place both in Italy and elsewhere in Europe. The group’s tagline is “an alternative Mediterranean area to break the cage of the European Union.” In a programmatic vision statement posted on their website, Eurostop is defined as an internationalist platform, but one whose long-term political goals require the temporary return to the nation-state form as a step toward building the internationalist community that neoliberal fortress Europe has irredeemably failed to create.
Eurostop, however, is a polyvalent sign, a symbol of that unsettling integralist politics that can fuse together seemingly incompatible elements. Neo-fascist groups have been using it too to express their dissent of the EU. On the 60th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome, which I alluded to in the opening of this chapter, #Eurostop was used in social media by far-ranging groups organizing rallies and marches to disrupt EU festivities. Because Euroscepticism crosses party lines, it has engendered a political field of a different order, one in which friends and foes may not be distinguished easily by the color of their shirts or by their social media hashtag. A few months before the anniversary of the Treaty of Rome, in December 2016, Italy’s Constitutional Referendum lost to a spectacular convergence of bizarre allies. Incorrectly dubbed a southern “Brexit” by foreign commentators, the rejection of the Constitutional Referendum through a majority “no” vote was the result of a poll-defying mix of interests among strangely configured populations: the national association of Italian partisans (anti-fascist freedom fighters from the Second World War) alongside most right-wing and neo-fascist parties, including Lega Nord; some, but not all, labor unions; the young, the unemployed, and the highly educated; southerners.

These novel political configurations are increasingly more frequent. While they defy existing political orders, they also carry the risk of confounding incommensurable critiques. Both left-wing and right-wing Eurosceptics target the EU, but for very different reasons. When #Eurostop is circulated in left-wing circles, it goes hand in hand with other contemporary slogans and hashtags, such as #RefugeesWelcome. On neo-fascist message boards and social media accounts, #Eurostop has a very different connotation. The danger of such a malleable symbol is not merely to find oneself unwittingly in cahoots with unsavory enemies. The danger of using Euroscepticism (or #Eurostop) as a shorthand for a complex critique of Europe is that it can become a synthetic, translatable, and resonant expression of wide-ranging dissent.
that resonance is also its source of power, it has potentially severe unintended consequences.

**Critical Geopolitics**

The Mediterranean features prominently in imaginaries of both left- and right-wing Eurosceptics. Marking the border between the North and the South of the world, the Mediterranean Sea has engendered a rich body of scholarship. Mediterranean studies have offered an especially appealing approach to scholars critical of area studies formations who saw in the Mediterranean the potential to disrupt regional boundaries between Europe and North Africa. Indeed, for both scholars and activists, the Mediterranean has been a potential “borderland,” in Gloria Anzaldúa’s (1987) counter-hegemonic sense of the term: an alternative geopolitics to break the cage of the European Union.

And yet, the shift in much of the literature from North Africa to the Mediterranean has left unfulfilled the latter’s potential to decolonize the project of area studies. Although exciting recent work has reframed the Mediterranean in relation to transnationalism (Ben-Yehoyada 2014), much of the anthropology of the Mediterranean has contributed to exoticizing this region through the dual tropes of “honor” and “shame.” Many researchers have since discredited these essentialist and highly gendered tropes for typifying the practices and beliefs of widely diverse societies (de Pina-Cabral 1989; Goddard 1994). Nonetheless, rather than emerging as a hybrid and counter-hegemonic region, the Mediterranean has largely been re-inscribed within dominant Occidentalist geopolitics. By joining a Mediterranean region, the histories and sociologies of North African countries have not been elevated in international status, nor have they significantly challenged definitions of Europe. On the contrary, the merging of Southern European countries—the backward internal “Orient”—with their counterparts in North Africa has mostly served to preserve the colonial logic of Northern
European superiority as the true modern Europe. Exoticized and written within dominant geopolitics, rather than against it, the Mediterranean has therefore turned out to be instrumental to the construction of hegemonic European imaginaries.

Current events make the centrality of the Mediterranean to definitions of both Europe and of the European Union unmistakable. The Mediterranean is the battle ground for territorial wars fought among member States over immigration policies. As the wretched of the Earth chance their lives in the water near the coasts of Italy and Greece (Cabot 2014), nationalisms and nationalist stereotypes resurface within the EU though a multifaceted blaming game: immigrants and refugees are blamed for not staying in their own home (never mind their homes were destroyed), Italians for being too incompetent to keep them out, Germans for being too cruel to allow humanitarian corridors, the French for being too racist to even notice, the British for being checked out and now gone. In the game of Europe, nation-states have not been replaced as much as suspended. This suspension is highly strategic and far from permanent, as it is nation-states, rather than a unified Europe, that forcefully affirm themselves against each other and against perceived threats to their political order.

The EU founding principles of free circulation of commodities, services, and people—a liberal dream if there ever was one—are in practice held together by nothing more than legal treaties signed by member States over time. For instance, in November 2015, within just a few hours of the Bataclan terrorist attacks in Paris, France unilaterally suspended the Schengen Convention, which had abolished all border controls among signatory nation-states. Overnight, there was no more free circulation of people. The border came back up and with it a harsh awakening to the fragility of the entire EU imaginary.

First signed as a treaty in 1985, and slowly implemented over time, in 1999 the Schengen Convention became official law of the European Union for all current and future member States (but with the notable “opt-out” of the United Kingdom). European airports re-
designed their “domestic” and “international” terminals as “Schengen” and “non-Schengen” travel areas. Land border check-points were dismantled. Trains no longer stopped for passport controls when crossing between States. Foreign visitors coming to the EU could receive “Schengen” visas applicable to all signatory states. At the risk of overly stressing the point, the Schengen agreements are what finally made the European Economic Community feel like the union it had aspired to be since 1957.

If we take seriously the EU project, then President Hollande’s decision to abrogate the Schengen Treaty in the aftermath of a terrorist attack, or under any other circumstances, should be shocking, not reasonable. After all, the whole point of nationalism (and, by extension, of EU supra-nationalism) is to depict the nation as indivisible. And yet the specter of foreign terrorism, tied as it is to anti-immigrant nationalist sentiments and Islamophobia, has conferred rationality to a practice that is antithetical to Europe’s imaginaries of unity. Furthermore, the act of suspending the Schengen Treaty in the face of a declared emergency—no less at the doing of a socialist government—actually gives legitimacy to the otherwise fringe, Eurosceptical position that nation-states would be much better than the EU at controlling immigration, securing borders, and fighting terrorism. What the state of emergency reveals, then, is just how deep Euroscepticism runs even among EU supporters. The claim that France’s suspension of the Schengen agreements would be temporary rather than permanent is only reassuring within the modern temporality of emergency, which can tolerate the dismantling of an entire system of juridical principles under a “state of exception” that is not at all exceptional but that is in fact the rule (Agamben 2005; Benjamin 1969: 257).

To dispel any possible doubts on the matter, it is helpful to remember that this tragic occasion was not the first time the Schengen Convention had been unilaterally abrogated in the short time of its existence. In fact, Schengen agreements have been suspended repeatedly and usually to coincide with world leaders’ summits in the aftermath of the G8 meeting of 2001.
On that occasion, tens of thousands of protesters descended on Genoa. Amid the violent street clashes and large-scale police abuses that left hundreds of protesters injured and one dead, Genoa saw the rise of a worldwide anti-globalization movement (Razsa 2015). To prevent future mass mobilization of that scale, later G8 meetings have preemptively closed down national borders by suspending the Schengen Convention. It is therefore not only the figure of the Muslim terrorist that has served to rationalize member States’ temporary retreat from the EU, but also the figure of the anti-globalization leftist protester: both enemies, internal and external, in a liberal cosmological imagination.

While the retreat to the nation-state as a means to curtail free speech or to fight terrorism seems to fly in the face of Europe’s liberal and cosmopolitan imaginaries, the temporality of emergency and the logic of security—within which the suspension of the Schengen Convention is made rational—actually confirm Occidentalist values. Liberalism is the ideological arm of capitalism. As a cosmology, it provides a worldview that naturalizes both the temporality of crisis and the affective economy of political subjectivity in which the European Union exists as a secular rendition of an Occidentalist utopia. The ease with which the most fundamental tenets of the EU can be lifted, and yet the EU can continue to represent for many or even most Europeans (pace Brexit) a vital and manifest imaginary of futurity, highlights the internal paradoxes of this liberal cosmology.

The European Union was designed as a supranational utopia, not a universal community. It was born out of nation-states and it is a form of supra-nationalism both in its deference to individual member States and in its efforts to procure from European citizens the affective attachments that nationalisms command. More than merely a bureaucratic institution, it is a sovereign humanistic enterprise that attempts to give material and political form to a set of cultural values and beliefs that symbolically define Europe. Its construction of internal and external enemies, as well as its aggressive border policing—which have earned it the nickname
of “Fortress Europe”—are fundamental features of the EU’s liberal vision and of its strategic construction of Occidentalism. It is under the dominance of that vision that the Mediterranean, for instance, has been rendered not a borderland but a militarized border zone. As Inderpal Grewal argued, “It is nation—that horizontal and vertical relationship that brings the ‘people’ together with the individual—that connects disciplinary power with population and geopolitics” (Grewal 2006: 31). A critical theory of Europe ought therefore to recognize that, far from being obsolete, the nation-state form continues to anchor cosmopolitan, global, and supra-national European imaginaries of the subject. It is by reading Europe—both the EU and the “master symbol”—through this interpretive key that Occidentalist geopolitics may begin to be re-written out of Europe.

**Conclusion**

The essays in this volume have offered nuanced readings of Europe’s “crisis” as a historically produced crisis of politics and representation. As a whole, the collection breaks down the boundaries of area studies in both subtle and straightforward ways to engage in a critical geohistorical project. Focusing on the EU, colonial histories, and post-war policy-making, the contributors offer incisive analyses of the construction of Europe in the aftermath of colonialism and from the perspective of North Africa. The book’s critique of area studies formations is evident in the editors’ choice to bring together all of North Africa—including Libya and Egypt—rather than only the former French colonies of the Maghreb. Consistently, their attention to colonial legacies and neo-colonial practices goes beyond individual nations’ colonial histories to situate the power relationship between Europe and North Africa more broadly in a complex web of Occidentalist imperialism.

For instance, as undocumented immigrants since the early 1990s have mostly entered
the EU via Italy through the Mediterranean, and mostly boarding boats that departed from Libya, former leader Muammar Gaddafi negotiated favorable agreements with the EU in exchange for policing his own borders. It was Italy, as the former colonizer, to broker those deals with Libya on the EU’s behalf, but it would be too simplistic to view such modes of politics as just neocolonial. This case and others like it show that colonial histories binding individual nations to each other are leveraged in present times to facilitate neoliberal geo- and bio-politics that are profoundly transnational in both character and effects. The book’s intellectual move is therefore transnational and historically specific in its reconfiguration of area studies to account for the global flows and processes within which Europe is produced on an ongoing basis.

Viewing Europe’s crisis from an expanded North African perspective has opened up an intellectual space from which to theorize how areas of the world are written into being or written out, how particular places are reconfigured by biopolitics and geopolitics, how borders are redrawn to make space for borderlands or border zones. It is a book about Europe from without its imaginary that recognizes in its supposed crisis a long-standing, persistent ambivalence, one that was perhaps more recognizable all along from the colonies. Euroscepticism is a new term, and in its reference to the European Union it is a novel idea. However, skepticism of what Europe stands for—its universalist promises of equality, its principled investment in individual freedoms, its self-congratulatory modernity—is not a novel affect among those whose lived experience of Europe has been unmistakably brutal. If the EU has engendered a new form of skepticism about its institutional efficacy and its capacity to engender nationalist love, the liberal cosmology of Europe has long raised skeptics.

#Eurostop is a radical expression of skepticism. It is radical because it de-links the European Union from the liberal cosmology of Europe, denaturalizing the embodiment of the latter into the political formation of the former. It is also internal, born out of a critical intimacy,
out of love for the potentiality of an irredeemably failed project. Its proponents are engaged in a critical geography of dissent. By reconfiguring Europe as a “cage” rather than a fortress, they underscore the diffuse precarity of life under neoliberal, global regimes of power. What they wish to bring about is “an alternative Mediterranean area” capable of recuperating the subversive hybridity of the Mediterranean as a borderland. It is a courageous imaginary, one that valorizes the dream space of the unrealistic to embrace the impossibility of a political vision oriented toward an unimaginable future.

Following Anzaldúa’s theorization of the borderland, Walter Mignolo has argued that for critical theory to be decolonial it must reconfigure the geography of knowledge. In his words, “when critical theory becomes de-colonial critique it has of necessity to be critical border thinking and, by so doing, the de-colonial shift (decolonization of knowledge and of being) marks the Eurocentered limits of critical theory as we know it today” (Mignolo 2007: 485). This volume engages in precisely such a project of “critical border thinking.” By redefining Europe as well as area studies, the contributors enable alternative geopolitics of knowledge to emerge.

The aim of a feminist decolonial critical theory of Europe must not be merely to “provincialize” it (by turning it into an object of study, and then parochializing its cultural practices) but rather to replace it, to relocate it. This volume experimented with one form of European dislocation, a willful distortion of Europe’s own perspective, by occupying its political imaginaries from the perspective of its others. It is an impressive feat, which complements the efforts made by countless postcolonial theorists to envision non-European spaces, subjectivities and bodies outside Occidentalist frames of reference (Bhabha 1994; Fanon 1991; Mbembe 2001). There is also another modality to formulate such a critical theory of Europe, however, and that is from within.

Writing as a Europeanist, rather than a North Africanist, in the regional logics that this
book is trying to challenge, I have attempted to offer here a “native anthropology of Western cosmology” (Sahlins et al. 1996). According to Gayatri Spivak, it is critical intimacy, rather than critical distance, that enables the operation of deconstruction to be not merely destructive but also constructive (Spivak 1999). Writing about Europe from within in order to deconstruct it is one element of a critical theory of Europe. It is the decolonial work that many anthropologists of Europe have been carrying out by making visible the cultural practices and worldviews that enchant Europe with symbolic and political value.

Writing out of Europe, therefore, acquires a third sense, a deconstructive sense: it is to decolonize its border formations from a place of critical intimacy. It is not a way to re-center Europe but, rather, to attack its hegemonies through a homegrown insurgency waged against its fictions. It is at least to echo, if not to answer, the rallying cry of a messy and unrealistic resistance whose nuances, paradoxes and contradictions of old have been synthesized with telegraphic brevity in a new call to action: Eurostop.

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