

NORTH AFRICAN INTELLECTUAL MIGRATION  
TO PARIS FROM 1914 TO 1962:

A LOCAL HISTORY OF CULTURAL ENCOUNTERS AND A GLOBAL HISTORY OF IDEAS

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*To my family and friends, who are a perpetual source of  
support, inspiration and motivation.*

## Short Abstract

From 1914, it was increasingly common for North Africa's intellectual and political elite to study in France. While the mobility of North African labourers has been the subject of considerable analysis over the past six decades, the international mobility of the intellectual elite for intellectual purposes has been comparably neglected.

Drawing from French archive material, this study begins by setting out what intellectual migration is in relation to other migratory patterns and how to study it. It positions this topic within the North African context and situates it within the lives of migrants who, for the most part, became authors, artists, thinkers and politicians of note. It also investigates Paris' agency as a stage for cultural encounters.

It then moves on to interpreting the significance of this historical phenomenon on a migrant's life trajectory, their future literary or cultural production, on the ensuing decolonisation movement, on nation building, on East-West relations and on the spiritual-material dialectic. Through the material produced by migrants themselves, we can obtain insight into the significance of this 'rite of passage'<sup>1</sup> on the individual, while situating it within wider structures of intellectual and political colonialism, international political relations and on narratives of cultural encounters. By observing how global contacts were established in a particular locality, this study demonstrates how global discourse developed through a series of local encounters.

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<sup>1</sup> Omri, M-S., *Nationalism, Islam and World Literature – Sites of Confluence in the Writings of Mahmud al-Mas'adi*, (Abingdon, 2006), p. 25

Though an exercise in global history, the thesis draw on disciplines from migration studies, the sociology of literature and comparative literature, to political theory, urban theory and religious thought.

It finds that intellectual migration to Paris was important for local North African artistic, literary and political movements, but not for the reasons previously accredited. It will also show that 1914 to 1962 was a time when this migratory process was particularly significant on the global development of ideas.

## **Long Abstract**

The First World War triggered an unprecedented level of mobility for the colonial intellectual elite. Paris, with its mythical international reputation as a centre of knowledge, culture, the epicentre of international politics and notorious pleasure house was a particular favourite destination, especially for North Africans. Most came to study, but many travelled to do politics, to be artists or simply to have fun.

This phenomenon is attributed to forming a new generation of modern, European-educated and often Francophile North African elites. Yet little work has been undertaken to better understand the nature of that formative influence bar the transference or adoption of European forms. The subject is therefore embroiled in polemical disputes regarding modern developments in the non-Western world, whether cultural, social or political. It also relates to the global discourse on the East-West dichotomy, the spiritual-material dialectic and decolonisation.

The mobility of the intellectual elite from the north of Africa is therefore both a subject of historical analysis and an approach to studying global intellectual history. It is the intersection of three independent histories: that of North Africa, Paris and international intellectual migration. Yet it is also a chapter in a global process that brought about the post-colonial age.

First, the study explores the context of the question, that is to say what is intellectual migration, the history of intellectual migration from North Africa and Paris' cultural history and urban imaginary. Due to the unfamiliarity of these subjects as a common programme of

analysis, it is important to understand each local history to appreciate better the significance of their conjuncture.

It then moves on to discuss the significance of that conjuncture for North African cultural production, nationalism and anti-colonial discourse, identity politics and the discourse on secularism in Muslim majority countries. These relate in particular to Paris' reputation as home of the avant-garde, international political centre and heart of the French colonial administration and as a place of vice and godlessness. This study also investigates less recognised features, such as the creative impact of Paris gathering the global intellectual elite from across the non-Western world and the colonies especially. This unprecedented phenomenon had considerable agency in the development of identity politics in North Africa but also across the Arab, Islamic and colonised world. It also had repercussions on the decolonisation movement, particularly on the mentality of decolonisation.

The second section of the thesis investigates polemical disputes regarding global flows of knowledge and modern cultural production in the non-Western world. It begins by investigating French diplomatic and colonial policy of forming the future elite to secure its influence in Egypt and the Maghrib. It discusses the assumed European authority over and non-European apprenticeship of modernity that framed intellectual migration from this region to Europe during this period. This is discussed through an analysis of the Egyptian Student Missions in the early twentieth century and the Moroccan *foyers* to France. Drawing from post-colonial theorists like Sebastian Conrad, Shmuel Eisenstadt and Dipesh Chakrabarty, it applies this interpretive framework to discuss the concept of 'modernism' in comparative literature and non-European cultural production, drawing on the examples of

Taha Husayn, Tawfiq al-Hakim, Georges Hénein, Malek Bennabi and Abderrahman Badawi. It then tries to evaluate on a case by case basis how studying in Paris affected the subsequent cultural production of these migrants.

In the politics section of the thesis, the study begins by investigating the nature and quality of political migration to Paris by the North African intellectual elite, but particularly the Maghrib. It looks at the impact that Paris as a central authority not wholly aligned with the interests of the colonial authorities had on the tone of North African nationalism. It also questions the impact that a Parisian formation had on the externalisation of nationalist advocacy, discussing questions of inclinations, conditioning and sociability instilled from working in cosmopolitan environments. Particular attention is afforded to the work of Mohamed Hassan Ouazzani's petitioning of the international community and Doria Shafik's international approach to Egyptian feminism. It goes on to discuss the growing international community of elite colonial subjects in Paris, the transmigrant communities they formed and the impact they had on North African nationalism, identity politics and transnational identity formation. It discusses the impact that this global gathering of colonised elites had on the decolonisation movement. The politics section finally concludes with a short overview of the European response to anti-colonial movements in their cultural capital.

The final section of this thesis discusses intellectual migration and religious thought, particularly the perception that migrating to European centres like Paris had a secularising influence upon migrants. By deconstructing the issue of secularism as it is discussed in the spiritual/material dialectic, it will seek to understand how several socially transformative processes of the modern era are conflated with European culture. It will argue that it is in

fact the act of migrating for education or work that affected the behaviour of migrants over exposure to Western culture. It then moves on to present an alternative façade to Paris' secular narrative by discussing the work of French Catholic intellectuals in the city. In particular, it will temper the geo-political categorisation of East-West spirituality-materiality by showing that the supposedly Western feature of secularism was fought by catholic intellectuals in Paris who were seeking to establish an alternative religious community and premise to knowledge and scholarship. In particular it will focus on the case of Louis Massignon and his contribution to interfaith dialogue as a form of reprieve from the secularising influence of modern urban metropolises.

The analysis draws from material available at state and colonial archives to establish the structural circumstances of migration; from government orchestrated schemes of student mobility under colonial regimes to police surveillance of North African migrants and transmigrant communities in Paris. It also draws on material produced by migrants themselves, from memoirs to literary outputs and private archives. As most of this material is either published in French or Arabic, it discusses material less readily available in English language scholarship. This material pertains to notable migrants such as Tunisian president Habib Bourguiba and fellow Neo-Destour militants Mahmoud El-Materi and Tahar Sfar. From Morocco, material relating to nationalists Mohamed Hassan Ouazzani and Mehdi Ben Barka feature prominently in the analysis, as do FLN militants Mohamed Harbi and Mostefa Lacheraf. Algerian thinker Malek Bennabi wrote considerably concerning his experience of Paris. Material produced by MTLN leader Messali Hadj is naturally included. From Egypt, this thesis investigates in particular the Egyptian authors Taha Husayn and Tawfiq al-Hakim, and to a lesser extent Abderrahman Badawi and Mubarak Zaki. Egyptian feminist Doria

Shafik and Tunisian born anti-colonial lawyer Gisèle Halimi are also significant cases of analysis. Assessing circumstantial evidence alongside personal qualifying material enables this study to better understand how this 'rite of passage'<sup>2</sup> affected the ideas, cultural production and life trajectory of migrants. This in turn helps us to re-evaluate the significance of this emerging migratory pattern on the global and local development of ideas during this transformative era.

The dates 1914 and 1962 have been selected because of their significance for the history of intellectual migration, Paris' cultural history and the history of decolonisation. It is a time of modernist Paris, striding away from its romantic 1900s *Belle Époque* and before the greater commercialisation of culture in the late 1960s. The decolonisation movement for which intellectual migration was a contributing factor took off after World War Two but had many of its practical and ideological roots in the interwar period. Furthermore, international intellectual migration was particularly significant during this period on the development of local North African and global intellectual history. It is a time when intellectual migration increased sufficiently to be influential on local and global developments, but limited enough for those migrants to be considered elites. The thesis will ultimately conclude that 1914 to 1962 should be regarded as an Age of Intellectual Migration.

This study will also find that the unprecedented congregation of the world's intellectual elite in Paris between 1914 and 1962 did not globally spread a European modernity, but helped bring about a new global modernity by contributing to the creation of international artistic, cultural and political movements, as well as integrating local socio-

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<sup>2</sup> Omri, M-S., *Nationalism, Islam and World Literature – Sites of Confluence in the Writings of Mahmud al-Mas'adi*, (Abingdon, 2006), p. 25

political, religious and cultural discourse into a new emerging global discourse on race, governance, religion, justice, identity.

Although a study of global history, this thesis draws from many disciplines, from migration studies to urban theory, from political thought to religious thought, from comparative literature to the sociology of literature. It addresses subjects as diverse as ethno-religious discourse on national identity, transmigrant communities and transnational identities; it looks at cultural colonial policy and the pseudo-diplomatic policy of forming the non-Western elite and sons of notables. It looks at issues of non-Western modern cultural production and the issue of cultural transference. It looks at the comparative values of formulative and process-based analysis. It looks at the agency of migration, migrants and space upon the development of ideas locally and globally. It looks at the agency of Paris beyond a museum of Western culture, the agency of migrants beyond carriers of a foreign culture and migration as more than the movement of ideas but the creation of ideas.

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Much of the research that went into this thesis was undertaken across France, in Switzerland, Morocco and Egypt, consulting material at various archives, gathering rare primary sources and producing original oral history interviews. As the study focuses on the colonial era, the majority of Moroccan, Tunisian and Algerian archive source material is held in France, either at the *Archives des affaires étrangères* at La Courneuve, Paris, the *Centres des archives diplomatiques* (CADN) in Nantes and the *Centres des archives d'outre-mers* (CAOM) in Aix-en-Provence. Some material relating to activities and movements in Paris are also held at the National Archives in Paris.

Material included in this analysis concerning notable figures has primarily been published, although not all with good distribution. Other material was accessed through the time and generosity of the custodians of private archives. Considerable thanks and gratitude is due to Nicole Massignon for providing the time and space to consult the material of her father-in-law, Louis Massignon, at her home in Paris. My thanks is also due to Houria Ouazzani and Antoine Fleury for their time, generosity and hospitality in Geneva, donating many of Mohamed Hassan Ouazzani's writings to me and to the University of Oxford, as well as providing such warm Moroccan hospitality. I also owe a huge thank you

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# List of Abbreviations

AEMANF – Association des étudiants musulmans nord africains

AEAR- L'Association des écrivains et artistes révolutionnaires

AGEA - Association générale des étudiants d'Algérie

AGEI - Association générale des étudiants Indochinois de Paris

AN - Archives nationales de France

AS – Annuaires Statistiques

CADN - Centre des archives diplomatiques de Nantes

CAM - Comité d'action marocaine

CAOM - Centres des archives d'outre-mer, Aix-en-Provence

CCEFI – Comité chrétienne d'entente France-Islam

CFM – Comité France-Maghreb

DGEP – Direction générale de l'enseignement publique

EMI – Écrits mémorable, tome 1

EMII – Écrits mémorable, tome 2

ENA – Étoile nord-africaine

FdF – Fédération de France

FEANF – Fédération des étudiants africains noirs en France

FLN – Front de libération national

GPRA – Gouvernement provisoire de la République algérienne

IHEM - Institut des hautes études marocaines

IICI - l'Institut international de coopération intellectuel

MAL – Modern Arabic Literature

MTLD - Mouvement pour le triomphe des libertés démocratiques

OM – Opéra minora, tome 1

OMII – Opéra minora, tome 2

OMIII – Opéra minora, tome 3

OAS – Organisation armée secrète

OS – L'Organisation spéciale

PCF – Parti communiste français

PDC - Partie démocrate constitutionnel

PDI – Parti démocratique d'indépendance

PPA – Parti populaire algérien

SFIO - Section française de l'internationale ouvrière

UDMA - Union démocratique du manifeste Algérien

UGEMA - Union générale des étudiants musulmans Algériens

UGET – Union général d'étudiants tunisiens

UMEA - l'Union maghrébine des étudiants d'Algérie

UN – United Nations

UNEF – Union nationale des associations d'étudiants de France

UNEM – Union national des étudiants marocains

UNESCO – United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

UNFP – Union national des forces populaire

# Transliteration

The thesis draws from English, French and Arabic source material. Where there are published translations, they will be acknowledged as such. All other translations are that of this author.

For the transliteration of Arabic names and words into Latin script, the thesis will follow by and large the conventions laid down by Brill's Encyclopaedia of Islam, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. However for the sake of clarity and for the easier identification of people and places, certain conventions have been adjusted. Firstly the macrons and under-dots employed in the encyclopaedia will be omitted for the sake of clarity. The qaf [ق] is differentiated from kaf [ك] with the letter Q and not K. The 'ayn [ع] and the hamza [ء] are written with a single inverted comma; the jim [ج] is simply written with a J and not DJ. Throughout the references and bibliography, the spelling reflects what was printed in the source.

In the case of North African proper nouns, the thesis will use French conventions when it is most practical to do so. This is to facilitate the identification of people and political parties in secondary literature, as most proper nouns in question are commonly referred by their French transliteration, even in English language historiography. The thesis will therefore write Destour rather than Dustur and Ben Badis rather than Ibn Badis. The thesis will also maintain the French spelling of [محمد] as Mohamed in cases where it is clear that this is how they chose to spell their name, especially Mohamed Hassan Ouazzani and Mohamed Aziz Lahbabi.

# Introduction

The history of intellectual migration between 1914 and 1962 is the history of a global phenomenon which, through the cultural encounters it produced, helped bring about the post-colonial age. But this history is set within a story of migrants which has until now only been sketchily recounted. This story is set in the Paris of Picasso, André Breton and Jean-Paul Sartre, at the conclusion of Zola's *Belle Époque* and at the height of European colonialism. This was a romantic and dynamic setting for an extraordinary story, or rather a series of individual stories; a generation of elites from the colonies whose lives and ideas were defined by partaking in this 'rite of passage'<sup>3</sup>.

A neglected subset of twentieth century international migration, intellectual migration contributed to the formation of complex global physical and intellectual connections that changed the global socio-political landscape. The growing mobility of the colonial or non-Western elite affected both the sending and receiving society. Yet the dynamics of intellectual migration are quite distinct from that of the more commonly studied counterparts: economic and forced migration (refugees and asylum seekers). To study intellectual migration therefore is to adopt a novel approach in migration studies: an intellectual history of international migration.

The majority of intellectual migrants during this period arrived originally as students, often staying on or returning later as political activists, intellectuals, artists and academics. At the start of the twentieth century they increasingly came to Paris from all over the colonised world in search of an education, a career, better prospects, political intervention,

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<sup>3</sup> Omri, M-S., *Nationalism, Islam and World Literature – Sites of Confluence in the Writings of Mahmud al-Mas'adi*, (Abingdon, 2006), p. 25

or to seek out the culturally dynamic and creative spirit of the French metropole. They came to embrace what the city had to offer, to be changed and improved by Paris. But in fact it was them, as colonial subjects and non-Western intellectuals, who were to change Paris, and in the process they changed each other.

The presence of these newly internationally mobile intellectual elites in Paris created a whole new stage for cultural encounters; no longer within the conservative climate of the colonies, but the liberal climate of the *métropole*. Here, they formed communities that helped to develop modernist forms of cultural production in the colonies and provided a fertile breeding ground for the creation of post-colonial thought worldwide. This is an account not of the processes behind political decolonisation, but of the 'decolonisation of the mind'<sup>4</sup>.

By focusing on migrants originating from the north of Africa, with the exception of Libya, this thesis recounts this story in the context of a particular thought zone: Muslim majority countries and important constituents of the Arab world. Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco have had a long and comparable history of cultural and political relations with France. Despite never having been a French colony, Egyptian intellectual migration was a comparable precedent to and contemporary of intellectual migration from the Maghrib; unlike the case of Libya, which had an entirely distinct experience of European colonialism and an insignificant presence in the city of Paris.

While the history of intellectual migration is a global one which affected much of the colonised world, the experience and the outcome of such migrations are inevitably

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<sup>4</sup> Di-Capua, Y., 'Arab Existentialism : An Invisible Chapter in the Intellectual History of Decolonization', *The American Historical Review*, 117: 4, (2012), p. 1063

conditioned, shaped and determined by the local contexts within which they operated. An intellectual history of this subset of migration is therefore rooted in the discourse that characterises the polemics of Muslim-Arab relations with Europe. From the East-West spiritual-material dialectic to the perceived decline of Islamic civilisation in relation to the West, the intellectual product of such elite migration was delimited by ongoing pre-existing debates. This study explores how these debates evolved and how certain migrants contributed to these dialogues in their subsequent literary outputs.

The other local context is of course that of Paris. A migrant's intellectual production was characterised by the innovative and original set of circumstances developing in the city. While the North African strand of intellectual migration was certainly conditioned by a discourse that characterised Europe's engagement with the wider Muslim world, Paris' increasingly international character integrated this local discourse into a newly developing global discourse on race, national membership, politics and religion that came to characterise the humanist age. To undertake an intellectual history of migration to Paris from the north of Africa is therefore to study the cross section of North African, Parisian and global cultural and intellectual history.

This study is situated within the somewhat unconventional timeframe 1914-1962. These dates delimit an era when intellectual migration was of particular historical significance. The First World War is a marker for both global intellectual history and the history of international migration. It was responsible for bringing about an unprecedented mobility amongst the colonies as well as a new modernist impetus in Europe and abroad.

Though the 1920s and 1930s were regarded as the height of colonialism<sup>5</sup>, cultural encounters taking place in Paris between the two world wars laid the practical and intellectual foundations for decolonisation that took place in the Maghrib in the 50s and 60s. This is why the timeframe of this study straddles the Second World War. Despite the social, cultural and political upheaval it brought about, the war also triggered in its aftermath the rise of those intellectual currents that had been ripening in the interwar period.

A colonial presence in the French *métropole* had intellectual and practical implications for mobilising support and establishing contacts between colonial elites, French intellectuals and government officials. These foundations laid in the interwar period facilitated the negotiation of Moroccan, Tunisian and Algerian independence in 1955, 1956 and 1962 respectively. They also contributed to establishing post-independence political alliances and international re-alignment.

The thesis ends in 1962 with the signing of the Evian Accords. Though a diplomatic historic marker, it is also an important date for the history of intellectual migration to Paris from the north of Africa. Between 1956 and 1962 Morocco<sup>6</sup>, Tunisia<sup>7</sup> and Algeria<sup>8</sup> negotiated as part of their political independence separate agreements for cultural cooperation with France that ended restrictions to student mobility. This triggered a stark

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<sup>5</sup> Berque called 1930 the 'era of empire', Berque, J., *French North Africa: the Maghrib between two world wars*, trans. Stewart, J., (London, 1967), p. 215

<sup>6</sup> *Convention culturelle entre la France et le Maroc, ensemble protocoles et échanges de lettres*, Numéro de l'accord: 19570049, signed by France in 05 October 1957, accessed 13/10/2014 at [http://basedoc.diplomatie.gouv.fr/exl-php/util/documents/accede\\_document.php](http://basedoc.diplomatie.gouv.fr/exl-php/util/documents/accede_document.php)

<sup>7</sup> *Protocole de coopération culturelle et technique entre la République française et la République tunisienne*, Numéro de l'accord 19590330, signed 15/04/1959, accessed 13 October 2014 at [basedoc.diplomatie.gouv.fr/exl-php/cadcgp.php?CMD=CHERCHE&QUERY=1&MODELE=vues/mae\\_internet\\_\\_\\_traites/home.html&VUE=mae\\_internet\\_\\_\\_traites&NOM=cadic\\_\\_\\_anonyme&FROM\\_LOGIN=1](http://basedoc.diplomatie.gouv.fr/exl-php/cadcgp.php?CMD=CHERCHE&QUERY=1&MODELE=vues/mae_internet___traites/home.html&VUE=mae_internet___traites&NOM=cadic___anonyme&FROM_LOGIN=1)

<sup>8</sup> *Evian Accords*, signed 18 mars 1962, accessed 13 October 2014 at [http://www.axl.cefan.ulaval.ca/afrique/algerie-accords\\_d'Evian.htm](http://www.axl.cefan.ulaval.ca/afrique/algerie-accords_d'Evian.htm)

jump in the number of Maghribi students in French institutions of higher education. Although students did not constitute the whole of intellectual migration, the liberalisation of student mobility certainly marks a new, more abundant phase in the history of cultural encounters. 1914 to 1962 was a time when intellectual migration had an unparalleled significance for the history of North Africa and the history of cultural relations between Europe and the Arab World.

Egyptian intellectual migration, having never been a French colony, was never restricted in the same way by the colonial authorities as its Maghribi counterparts were. It was also never liberalised in the same way Moroccan, Tunisian and Algerian student mobility were upon independence. In 1968, Egypt also negotiated a post-colonial cultural agreement with France that showed France's ongoing attempt to maintain a special cultural influence in Egypt<sup>9</sup>; this was comparable with France's ambitions in its former colonies and the *Union Française*. But it was not a significant date for intellectual migration from Egypt to France. This is why the signing of the Egyptian agreement for cultural cooperation with France in 1968 is not included in the periodization of this thesis.

The outbreak of World War One also represents the start of a distinct phase in Parisian cultural history, one that marks the end of Golden Age Romanticism and the start of modernist, international Europe. The periodization of this thesis could have been 1914 to 1968, concluding with the climatic events of May 1968. The student-led social revolution represented the culmination of student activism and social unrest in French metropolises that was fed in no small part by intellectual migrants such as those from the north of Africa.

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<sup>9</sup> *Accord de coopération culturelle, technique et scientifique entre le gouvernement de la République française et le gouvernement de la République arabe unie*, Numéro de l'accord : 19680045, signed by France 19 March 1968, accessed on 27.11.2014 at <http://basedoc.diplomatie.gouv.fr/exl-php/cadcgp.php?>

However this is a history of North African intellectual migration to Paris, not a history of student activism in Paris. Furthermore, the late fifties and sixties mark the transition away from those modernist and humanist forms in French culture towards all things *nouveau*<sup>10</sup>. The sixties therefore represent a novel turn in French culture. The late sixties also saw the 'demise of the French intellectual'<sup>11</sup> with the heavy commercialisation of cultural production. The sixties are therefore a period of transition in both French cultural history and the history of intellectual migration to Paris from the north of Africa.

The following analysis will explore the impact of intellectual migration on local cultural, artistic, religious and political discourse. It looks at how the migration of the colonial intellectual elite externalised local struggles by integrating them into global discourse. It also explores the emergence of international artistic and literary scenes for which centres like Paris acted as a nexus. Such an undertaking not only improves our understanding of globalisation in twentieth century intellectual history, it also decentralises the interpretative framework of cultural relations.

The study also seeks to re-evaluate our understanding of Paris' agency upon intellectual production resulting from contacts with that milieu. Paris, more than any other European city, is shrouded in mystical and romantic imageries. These inevitably affected intellectual migration to France and the experience of migrants in the French capital. Yet a deeper investigation into the 'Parisian factor' upon the formation of the North African elite reveals not just the discrepancy between the Parisian imaginary and reality, but also reveals

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<sup>10</sup> Nouveau théâtre, nouveau roman, nouvelle critique, nouvelle vague

<sup>11</sup> Jennings, J., 'Introduction: Mandarins and Samurais. The Intellectual in Modern France', in *Intellectuals in Twentieth-Century France*, ed. Jennings, J., (Basingstoke, 1993), p. 2

important facets to the city that are often overshadowed by its stereotypical associations, whether that be in comparative literature, political or religious thought.

The first section of the thesis will begin by introducing the key components to this study: intellectual migration from the north of Africa, intellectual migrants and Paris. It will then move on to dealing with three separate strands of intellectual history relating to North African migration to Paris: global knowledge and modern cultural production outside the Western world, decolonisation and the onset of post-colonial thought, and ultimately the discourse on secularism in Muslim societies and Paris' alternative Catholic intellectual presence. While the topics covered appear somewhat disparate, they offer a common thread about the physical and intellectual possibilities offered to migrants sojourning in the city.

## Part One – The Story of Intellectual Migration

# Chapter One – An Introduction to Intellectual Migration

International intellectual migration is a neglected field in the study of twentieth century cultural encounters. It is also a component of twentieth century migration which has failed to be sufficiently distinguished from its more copious counterparts, economic and forced migration. There is considerable scholarship on student mobility in the late twentieth century<sup>12</sup>, but this has been mostly undertaken in relation to the increasingly global knowledge economy. Some historical pieces have been produced this century on international student mobility and its agency in national identity formation, knowledge transfer and academic traditions<sup>13</sup>. Yet intellectual migration in the broader sense is rarely the focus of historical writing or theoretical analysis, so it is essential to define it as a historical phenomenon and as an analytical category.

## **Defining Intellectual Migration**

Intellectual migration is both the mobility of the intellectual elite and migration for intellectual pursuits. It is therefore both the mobility of a specific social strata as well as a particular objective for migrating. There is during this period considerable cross-over between these two criteria, especially in the case of North Africa. Yet it is important for the

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<sup>12</sup> Brooks, R., Waters, J., *Student mobilities, migration and the internationalization of higher education*, (Basingstoke, 2011); Murphy-Lejeune, E., *Student mobility and narrative in Europe: the new strangers*, (London, Routledge, 2004); Latreche, A., 'Les Migrations étudiantes de par le monde', *Hommes et Migrations*, 1233, 13-27, (Septembre-Octobre 2001)

<sup>13</sup> *Transnational intellectual networks: forms of academic knowledge and the search for cultural identities*, ed. Charle, C., Schriewer, J., Wagner, P., (Frankfurt, 2004); *Etudiants de l'exil, Migrations internationales et universités refuges (XVIe-XXes.)*, ed. Ferté, P., Barrera, C., (Toulouse, 2009)

analytical category to be inclusive of all forms of migration which are significant for the intellectual history of the region.

Intellectual migrants, though not homogenous, have distinct dynamics to economic migrants and refugees. Migration patterns in the twentieth century did not form neat and distinct categories<sup>14</sup>. Those who had originally intended a temporary stay sometimes chose to settle. This is so as much for intellectual migrants as it is for any other form of migration. Similarly, intellectual migrants can either be highly skilled migrants or students who are yet to acquire their chosen skill-set. Yet there are trends that set intellectual migration apart from other forms of international migration.

Firstly they have a tendency to reside or work in parts of cities that are connected to creative industries, clustering around university rather than industrial districts [see Appendix C]. Intellectual migrants tend to have a greater impact per capita than economic migrants, a point that will be demonstrated in the following chapter [see Appendix A]. Unlike economic migrants, they tend to have as much impact, if not more, on their home countries than the receiving country, due largely to the greater proportion regularly travelling between the two. Individual intellectual migrants also often undertake multiple trips to several destinations. Intellectual migrants are also more prone to forming transmigrant communities. These trends are evident throughout this study.

The study of migration more often than not concerns cultural encounters as the result of the mobility of peoples. But while there is little ambiguity surrounding the definition of economic migrants, the term intellectual, or the idea of being of the intellectual elite, is very culturally specific. Therefore the category of intellectual migrant is likely to

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<sup>14</sup> Castles, S., Miller, M. J., *The Age of Migration*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., (Basingstoke, 2003), p. 4

differ in different regions. In France, the definition of an intellectual has been much deliberated, from the heritage of the French enlightenment to twentieth century existentialists like Jean-Paul Sartre<sup>15</sup> and sociologist Michel Foucault<sup>16</sup>. The French popular understanding of an intellectual is both meritocratic and imbued with a sense of public function, indeed duty.

In addition to the specific character bestowed upon the notion of an intellectual as a proper noun and public figure, France's wider intellectual culture meant that there was also a much more liberal employment of the term intellectual in the adjectival sense of the word. France enjoyed a popular intellectual culture where the pursuit of knowledge was highly esteemed in society and a great source of social mobility<sup>17</sup>. There were therefore many government officials, men and women in high society, in commerce, technocrats and military officials who also engaged in intellectual pursuits; often publishing poems, essays or studies, even if these were usually self-published. These people could be described as intellectual without being an intellectual. They may very likely have travelled for intellectual pursuits without being formally considered intellectuals.

In Muslim societies under colonial rule at the turn of the century such as those in the north of Africa, the understanding of an intellectual was quite distinct. Traditionally there were many expressions employed towards learned men, whether it be teacher *ustaath* استاذ, scholar *aalim* عالم, a man of letters *adib* ادب, or whether they were referring to their learned positions of authority, such as *qadi* قاضي or *mujtahim* مجتهد. But the transference of the

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<sup>15</sup> Sartre, J-P., 'Qu'est-ce que la Littérature?' in *Situations II*, (Paris, 1948); Sartre, J-P., *Plaidoyer pour les intellectuels*, (Paris, 1972)

<sup>16</sup> 'Intellectuals and power: A conversation between Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze', accessed 16/11/2015 at <https://libcom.org/library/intellectuals-power-a-conversation-between-michel-foucault-and-gilles-deleuze>

<sup>17</sup> Goodman, D., *The Republic of Letters: a cultural history of the French enlightenment*, (Ithaca, 1994), p. 5

European, if not French, understanding of intellectuals created an alternative conception of the intellectual quality in Muslim societies, especially in French overseas territories.

In France's North African territories especially, the intellectual elite was considered by the French authorities as the indigenous commercial and ruling class who were either traditionally educated<sup>18</sup> or who increasingly had access to modern education<sup>19</sup>. This understanding of the intellectual in North African Protectorates was virtually a hereditary quality. The French did not consider religious scholars as intellectuals, they were cult leaders. While this perception did not necessarily affect the popular estimation of religious scholars as learned men in Muslim societies, throughout this period, North Africans did see being intellectual as a distinct concept to being learned in the traditional sciences. Whether that quality was attributed to an association with Western knowledge, a critical approach or public function, it was nonetheless a distinct quality.

In the interwar period especially, practically speaking the North African intellectual elite was a social class. Because of the limited levels of literacy and restricted access to modern education under the colonial regime, the idea of an intellectual was more in line with Gramsci's understanding of traditional intellectuals as elements of a social class who are intellectually and technically skilled and whose social position is maintained by 'very concrete traditional historical processes'<sup>20</sup>. Intellectual migrants from North Africa usually had access to Western education because of their family's social rank.

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<sup>18</sup> Smati, M., *Les Elites Algériennes sous la colonisation – Tome I*, (Dahlab, ?), p. 190

<sup>19</sup> In official correspondence, the French authorities refer to North African students in France as '*la jeunesse intellectuelle*'. 'Lettre de Henri de la Rite, 2 Mars 1954, 'Le Problème des Etudiants Nord-Africains en France.', *Courneuve*, Série M 581, Carton 45, Dossier 10

<sup>20</sup> Gramsci, A., [Intellectuals] in *The Gramsci Reader, Selected Writings 1916-1935*, ed. Forgacs, D., (New York, 2000), p. 306 and 308

By the mid-twentieth century, as greater numbers of educational grants became available and opportunities for social mobility increased, more North Africans were reaching that social stratum because they were Western-educated, despite being from poor family backgrounds. Acquiring this European education is considered by Moroccan historian Abdallah Laroui as the defining quality of a 'non-European intellectual', which in turn created the 'new elite'<sup>21</sup>. The small but growing number of graduates was destined primarily for the liberal professions or low level government administration, rather than necessarily encouraging intellectual careers or creative pursuits. Yet throughout this period, to be in those positions was to be the intellectual elite. As Mahmoud Smati notes in relation to Algeria under the colonial regime, access to culture procured an individual a place among the elite<sup>22</sup>. In this way the intellectual elite is defined more along the lines of Gramsci's understanding of the intellectual as a functionary or an organiser, applicable more in a society where education is much more of an elite asset, justified not 'by the social necessities of production' but 'by the political necessities of the dominant fundamental group'<sup>23</sup>.

This is evident throughout the sources relating to this social class in North Africa during this period. The term intellectual was attributed to the educated class, whether they held the position of functionaries, liberal professions, artists, writers or even in some cases political activists. In a letter sent to the French authorities in 1954, signed by '*Les Intellectuels Marocains*' protesting French cultural policy in Morocco, administrative functionaries defined themselves as intellectuals:

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<sup>21</sup> Laroui, A., *La crise des intellectuels arabes – traditionalisme ou historicisme ?* (Paris, 1974), p. 145

<sup>22</sup> Smati, *Les Elites*, p. 7

<sup>23</sup> Gramsci, [Intellectuals] in *The Gramsci Reader*, pp. 307-308

'Twenty or so Moroccan intellectuals, the majority of whom are functionaries, seek to discuss the grievances of the Moroccan youth and to formulate demands to the authorities concerned'<sup>24</sup>.

Having a modern education was therefore key to their definition of an intellectual in the North African context. This understanding of an intellectual was not just attributed by the French authorities; it was self-projected by that educated class.

Partly due to the fact that the term intellectual was imported, it became associated with European colonialism and orientalism. Consequently it has tended to be dropped in post-colonial discourse in favour of the term thinker *mufakir* مفكر, which reflects to a greater extent the meritocratic qualities of an intellectual in French society. But from 1914 to 1962, the French authorities projected an understanding of the intellectual elite in their Muslim colonies, North Africa being no exception, that was distinct from their own understanding of intellectuals in French society and which pertained more to a social hierarchy than a social actor or cultural producer.

The intellectual elite therefore meant different things in the sending and receiving country. This distinction is important when assessing cultural encounters resulting from migration, especially considering the accelerated rate of cultural transference during this period in the Maghrib. These differences do not prohibit the possibility of applying intellectual migration as an analytical category, especially since it is retrospectively attributed. The purpose of such a category is to write an intellectual history of migration. The definition of an intellectual migrant needs to be inclusive of all creative and intellectual pursuits contributing to those developments. It relates therefore to the migration of students to French *lycées*, for higher education and for professional education. It inherently

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<sup>24</sup> 'Lettre du Maroc', *Courneuve*, Série M 581, Carton 45, Dossier 10

concerns the mobility of intellectuals and artists. It concerns the mobility of the intellectual elite, that is to say, the educated social elite even if their stay in the city was touristic, due largely to their disproportional influence upon their home society. It concerns the mobility or migration of those working in the liberal professions, including those choosing to settle in France; this strata of North African diaspora continued to be considered as the intellectual elite throughout this period. It also concerns the mobility of the working classes or of political activists if their mobility and militancy contributed to the development of political thought.

Theoretically, intellectual migrants from the north of Africa are a heterogeneous migratory network with a proportionally higher impact per capita on both sending and receiving societies. Their mobility results from comparable macro-processes at the institutional level but determined by individualistic micro-processes. Sometimes these migrants have considerable human capital. They may also be migrants of low human capital but have considerably higher cultural agency. Some are transmigrants, being involved in transnational communities in Paris and at home and undertaking circular migration. Others settle, naturalise and marry European spouses, becoming representatives of their home populace abroad.

Theoretically it is possible therefore to define intellectual migration as an analytical category. Practically however, intellectual migrants are very difficult to treat as a group. They straddle the formal categories of migration; some are tourists, some students, some are diplomats, business men, politicians and even manual labourers. They are thus virtually impossible to accurately quantify. The identification of an intellectual migrant must be done on a case by case basis. All cases employed in this analysis will therefore be justified

individually in the following chapter. In the cases of Egypt and the Maghrib however, students form a high proportion of intellectual migrants to Paris. It is therefore worth using statistics on student mobility to get an idea of trends during this period. In France, the *Bureau Universitaire de Statistiques* published the number of foreign students enrolled in or receiving degrees from French institutions of higher education in the *Annuaire Statistique de France*. This form of statistical gathering is limited. The reporting conventions are inconsistent, as is the representation of certain student populations.

Using student mobility to gauge trends in intellectual migration also distracts us from the fact that a considerable proportion of intellectual migration was cyclical. Former students later returned to France to undertake politics, to work with the new student body or for artistic or political pursuits. Some information can be obtained through personal memoirs. Others can be retrieved from government security records<sup>25</sup>. Nevertheless neither of these are comprehensive. Nor are they necessarily representative; students and migrants who wrote memoirs or who publish in some way an account of their stay usually have become nationally significant through their political, literary or artistic exploits. Most memoirs are retrospectively written and are often very conscious of establishing a narrative of their formative encounters. They are therefore not necessarily representative of the average student.

Considerable numbers of novels have also been published on the theme of cultural encounters resulting from intellectual migration to Paris from North Africa and other parts

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<sup>25</sup> A collection of documents on Egyptian students in France are available at CADN, AMB 51, Carton 167, (Étudiants égyptiens en France); On Moroccan students in France, *Courneuve*, Série M 581 and M 582, Carton 45, Dossier 10, (Étudiants Marocains en France) ; On North African students in Paris, *Courneuve*, Série K 15, P13681, (Étudiants Nord-Africains, 1932-1938) ; on Tunisian students in France, CADN, Carton 686, 2nd Versement, Tunisie, (Étudiants Tunisien en France – UGET)

of the Arab world<sup>26</sup>. The displacement of students in Europe was a popular medium for intellectuals to explore the cultural disjuncture produced by contact with Western modernity, especially in early twentieth century Arab literature. But while these novels are said to have been semi-autobiographical, there is nonetheless an underlying contrast between popular representations and direct experience of studying Paris.

The history of intellectual migration can therefore be recounted by mining the qualitative and quantitative data concerning intellectual migrants, as well as the movements they affected and were involved in. That data is patchy and distorted. Yet despite their limitations, this material makes up pieces of a puzzle from which we can form a picture of intellectual migration and its impact on the development of ideas.

### **The Historiography of Intellectual Migration from North Africa to France**

Extensive work has been produced, especially in France, on worker migration to France from the north of Africa<sup>27</sup>. North African settlement in France, especially Moroccan and Algerian labourers and factory workers in the *banlieus*, has become a divisive issue in French politics and an ongoing source of social conflict<sup>28</sup>. Egyptian economic migration to France was on the other hand relatively insignificant.

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<sup>26</sup> Al-Hakim, T., *Bird of the East*, translated by R. Bayly Winder, (Beirut, 1966); Hussein, T., *A Man of Letters*, trans., el-Zayyat, M., (Cairo, 1994); Idris, S., *al-Hayy al-Latini*, 2 Volumes, (Tal Abib, 1960)

<sup>27</sup> Aissaoui, R., *Immigration and national identity: North African political movements in colonial and postcolonial France*, (London, 2009); Ben Sassi, T., *Les Travailleurs Tunisiens dans la région parisienne*, (Paris, 1968); Clancy-Smith, J., A., *Mediterraneans – North Africa and Europe in an Age of Migration c. 1800-1900*, (Berkeley, 2011); Liauzu, C., *Histoire des migrations en méditerranée occidentale – question au XXe siècle*, (Bruxelles, 1996); Stora, B., *Ils venaient d'Algérie, L'immigration algérienne en France 1912-1992*, (Paris, 1992)

<sup>28</sup> Kepel, G., *Les banlieues de l'Islam, Naissance d'une religion en France*, (Paris, 1987), Beau, N., *Paris, Capitale Arabe*, (Paris, 1995)

Compared to worker migration, little work has been done on the mobility of the social and intellectual elite from the north of Africa to France. The first was produced in 1938 by Joany Ray on Moroccan students in France, part of an IHEM study<sup>29</sup>. Only Thomas Brisson treats intellectual migration as an analytical category<sup>30</sup>, but there is nonetheless other scholarship addressing student mobility to France from Egypt and the Maghrib. The French historian Guy Pervillé published his thesis in 1997 on Algerian students in French faculties; however this is not a study of cultural encounters but a history of Algerian nationalism<sup>31</sup>.

Mohammed Bekraoui in 2003 published an article on Moroccan students in France during the interwar period and the activities of one of Paris' most important Arab student associations, the Association of Muslim North African Students in France (AEMNAF). The article builds a cultural history of early North African nationalism and intellectual migration, but it does not situate intellectual migration within global intellectual history<sup>32</sup>. The same can to a certain extent be said of Charles-Robert Ageron's article on the AEMNAF in the interwar period<sup>33</sup>. This detailed analysis written by the French historian in 1983 is probably the most comprehensive historical analysis of the student association, using sources from French as well as Tunisian archives. Moreover it is a cultural and political history of the association's impact on the radicalisation of North African nationalism.

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<sup>29</sup> Ray, J., 'Les Marocains en France', *IHEM – Collection des centres d'études juridiques*, tome XVIII, (Paris, 1938)

<sup>30</sup> Brisson, T., *Les Intellectuels arabes en France*, (Paris, 2008)

<sup>31</sup> Pervillé, G., *Les étudiants algériens de l'université française, 1880-1962 : populisme et nationalisme chez les étudiants et intellectuels musulmans algériens de formation française*, (Alger, 1997)

<sup>32</sup> Bekraoui, M., 'Les étudiants marocains en France à l'époque du protectorat 1927-1939', *Présence et images franco-marocaines au temps du protectorat*, ed. Allain, J-C., (Paris, 2003), pp. 89-111

<sup>33</sup> Ageron, C-R., 'L'association des étudiants musulmans Nord-Africains en France durant l'entre-deux-guerres: contribution à l'étude des nationalismes maghrébins', *Revue Française d'Histoire d'Outre-mer*, 70 : 258-259, 25-56

Thomas Brisson's book *Les Intellectuels arabes en France* is one of the few intellectual histories of migration to Paris. It looks at the impact of intellectual mobility from the Arab world on French Orientalist scholarship. It is an essential source on the integration of non-Europeans from the colonies into French academia. It also provides a useful introduction to intellectual migration from the Arab world to France. Brisson's definition of intellectual migration however is limited to migrants working in the knowledge industry. It is therefore limited to that which concerns academic developments, excluding wider intellectual currents and artistic movements.

A few editions have been produced about Paris as a centre of international migration. These include the edition by Mémoires Génériques *Presse et mémoire: France des étrangers, France des libertés* (1990), the Découverte edition *Le Paris Arabe* (2003) and the Sorbonne edition *Le Paris Des Étrangers Depuis 1945* (1990). There is also Michael Goebel's recent book on Paris as an Anti-Imperial Metropolis, published in August 2015, after most of this thesis was written. This study focuses primarily on the impact of migration on political developments in the interwar period. Its findings have therefore been integrated into the third section of this thesis.

Some work has therefore been produced, mostly in French, detailing the international mobility of the new modern elite from the Maghrib. Work has also been undertaken on this subject relating to other cultural zones. Historian Jennifer Boittin<sup>34</sup> and anthropologist Gary Wilder<sup>35</sup> have studied the influence of intellectual migration to Paris from Africa and the Antilles on ideas concerning race, feminism and empire in the interwar

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<sup>34</sup> Boittin, J.A., *Colonial Metropolis, The urban grounds of Anti-Imperialism and Feminism in Interwar Paris*, (London, 2010)

<sup>35</sup> Wilder, *The Imperial Nation-State – Negritude and Colonial Humanism between the Two World Wars*, (Chicago, 2005)

period. They provide a useful analytical framework upon which to interpret intellectual migration from the north of Africa, especially those relating to anti-colonial movements in the capital and the development of transnational networks, discussed in Part Three.

Objective intellectual histories of Franco-North African relations however are few and far between. The lack of scholarship on the subject is expressed explicitly by historian Carl Brown in his introduction to his edited volume on *Franco-Arab Encounters*:

‘This story [of Franco-Arab encounters], different from political and diplomatic history, lies partially buried in the many Arab biographies, memoirs, public records and other primary documents – partially buried, because much of the social and intellectual history that would mine such data is yet to be written.’<sup>36</sup>

This thesis is an endeavour to shed some light on that intellectual history through the study of intellectual migration to Paris from Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria.

## **The History of Intellectual Migration to Paris from the North of Africa**

The history of intellectual migration to Paris from the north of Africa began with the European race for Empire in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. Though Egypt was never a French colony or protectorate, its invasion by Napoleonic forces in 1798 marked the beginning of a pseudo-colonial relationship between France and Egypt that characterised European expansionism. Yet the Mediterranean basin had an independent history of intellectual migration that predates European colonialism in the region, connected to the Muslim tradition of seeking knowledge ‘even if it be in China’<sup>37</sup>. Considerable emphasis is

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<sup>36</sup> Brown, C., ‘France and the Arabs: An Overview’, *Franco-Arab Encounters – Studies in Memory of David Gordon*, ed. Brown, L.C., & Gordon, M.S., (Beirut, 1996), p. 20

<sup>37</sup> Another hadith that is frequently used to justify the learning of foreign knowledge is: ‘knowledge is the stray sheep of the believer, he looks for it, even among the polytheists.’, Al-Tahtawi, R.R., *An Imam in Paris – Account of a Stay in France by an Egyptian Cleric*, trans., Newman, D., (London, 2004), p. 109

placed in Islamic scholarship on receiving knowledge directly from the source and of acquiring authority via the direct transmission of knowledge<sup>38</sup>. Thus, from the early years of Islam a tradition was established of travelling in search of knowledge to pilgrimage sites, universities like al-Qarawiyyin and al-Azhar, *zawiyas* or *khanqahs* and to cities of former influence such as Baghdad, Beirut and Tripolitania. This encouraged a degree of lateral migration and mobility in North Africa. Cairo and Fes with its academic institutions especially gathered intellectual migrants from the Southern Mediterranean, as well as other parts of the Muslim-Arab world.

At the turn of the century, patterns of international intellectual migration in the north of Africa accelerated with technological developments and expanded to include Europe and the West. Students continued to travel across North Africa and to the Near East for education throughout the colonial era, especially from Morocco and Algeria in the interwar period when mobility to Europe was restricted. Bursaries, associations and other such mechanisms were established to send students eastwards<sup>39</sup>. However European and Western centres of knowledge became more prevalent destinations from the First World War onwards. This is due in part to colonial policy and the associated rhetoric of European cultural and civilizational supremacy. London, Oxford and Cambridge naturally gathered many students from South Asia; Mahatma Gandhi trained as a barrister in London, Nehru and Muhammad Iqbal studied at the University of Cambridge. Switzerland, famous for its political neutrality, became an important refuge for Arab intellectuals like Shakib Arslan.

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<sup>38</sup> Berkey, J.P., *The Transmission of Knowledge in Medieval Cairo*, (Princeton, 1992), pp. 23-25

<sup>39</sup> The agenda for third Congress of AEMNAF in Fes shows it was due to discuss the organisation of 'student missions to the Orient' as well as to Europe; 'Bulletin Trimestriel – Association des Etudiants Musulmans Nord-Africains en France, April – May – June – 1933', Sent by the Minister of the Interior to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, *Courneuve*, Série K 15, P13681, p. 23; There are also surveillance records of North African students in Cairo and the Levant held at *CAOM*, 81 F 1032 (Étudiants nord-africains en métropole et à l'étranger, secours, hébergement, surveillance : notes de renseignement, rapports, correspondance)

Many German cities too, such as Berlin and Munich hosted swathes of intellectual migrants from Turkey, Egypt and the Levant.

While Paris was not alone in hosting greater numbers of extra-European students in the early- to mid-twentieth century, the city had considerable cultural capital in drawing intellectual migrants from across the globe. For centuries, France's international relations have been shaped by the reputation of its intellectual culture, discussed in Chapter Three. The image of Paris abroad has since the Enlightenment been a romanticised image of cultural prestige, capturing imaginations and drawing people from across the globe. Paris' reputation thus framed international intellectual migration and qualified migrants' contacts in the city. It determined who came to Paris. It affected people's choice of higher education provider. It affected the preconceptions of travellers and their experiences in the French metropolis.

Paris also has a special significance for the Arab-Muslim world that preconditioned migration from the north of Africa. It was an important destination for two of the nineteenth century's most important Islamic thinkers, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and Muhammad 'Abduh. Publishing in 1884 an Arabic language reformist paper, *al-urwah al-wuthqa*, their legacy in Arabic and Islamic thought gave Paris a certain prominence in the north of Africa. This was particularly so for Egypt, home of Muhammad 'Abduh. It was also the case in Algeria where the influential religious leader Ben Badis had been a disciple of 'Abduh. Allal al-Fassi, the Moroccan nationalist and Istiqlal leader, was also influenced by Muhammad 'Abduh.

Paris' educational infrastructure and cultural history has attracted international students for centuries. The city's cultural capital gave Paris considerable advantage when

competing in European inter-city rivalry. However these intellectual migrants had been almost exclusively Western. The kinds of cultural encounters brought about by the migration of colonial elites in the twentieth century were unprecedented; hence the focus on this period. France is also unique as it was the only European country to have experienced rising levels of immigration after World War One. Compensating for labour shortages, it encouraged migration from southern Europe and from Algeria<sup>40</sup>. This contributed to French metropolises like Paris acquiring a particularly international quality during this period.

There is an interesting nineteenth century history of intellectual migration to Paris from the north of Africa. Some of the first Muslims to travel to Europe from the Near East in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were scholars and envoys and they often published accounts of their encounters<sup>41</sup>. Either via the literature they produced or their actions upon their return, they had an impact on their home societies<sup>42</sup>. These nineteenth century precedents have been the focus of scholarly analysis by the likes of Daniel Newman, Abu-Lughod and Rashid el-Enany<sup>43</sup>. While Rashid El-Enany does discuss some early twentieth century Arab migrant literature such as Suhayl Idriss' novel *al-Hayy al-latini* (the Latin Quarter), more scholarly attention has been afforded to migration in the nineteenth century.

Less work has been done on the phenomenon in the twentieth century, which has quite different characteristics. For instance migrants in the twentieth century were

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<sup>40</sup> Castles, Miller, *The Age of Migration*, p. 91 & p. 99

<sup>41</sup> As-Saffar, M., *Disorientating Encounters, travels of a Moroccan scholar in France in 1845-1846*, trans., ed., Miller, S. G., (Berkeley, 1991); Khaïr al-Din, 'A mes enfants: Ma vie privée et politique', published originally in 1934; *Khéridine, homme d'État : documents historiques annotés*, ed. Mzali, M-S., Pignon, J., (Tunis, 1971); Al-Tahtawi, *An Imam in Paris*

<sup>42</sup> Abu-Lughod, I., *The Arab Rediscovery of Europe: a Study in Cultural Encounters*, (London, 2011), p. 79

<sup>43</sup> el-Enany, R., *Arab Representations of the Occident: East-West encounters in Arabic fiction*, (London, 2006)

generally much more familiar with European culture, language and scholarship than those in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. The infrastructure of migration evolved significantly over the nineteenth century, thereby integrating twentieth century migrants to a greater extent into the pedagogical infrastructure of the French *métropole*. However, like Muhammad 'Abduh and al-Afghani, nineteenth century migrants created a legacy that shaped the rhetorical framework in which North Africans later engaged with European culture and European thought. It is therefore worthwhile going back to the nineteenth century tradition in order to provide the rhetorical background for the analysis of twentieth century intellectual migration from the region.

## **Egypt**

The Egyptian Student Missions were the first institutionalised occurrence of intellectual migration to Paris from the north of Africa. Established in 1826 by Mehmet Ali to modernise the Egyptian state and economy, it persisted throughout the Khedivate and into the twentieth century. These student missions are most famously associated with the Muslim scholar and translator, Rifa'a Rafi' al-Tahtawi, whose record of the experience has been published in several languages. The structure and significance of these student missions have been thoroughly explored by Heyworth-Dunne's *An Introduction to the History of Education in Modern Egypt*<sup>44</sup>, Daniel Newman's introduction to his translation of Tahtawi's *Takhlis al-Ibriz fi Talkhis Bariz*<sup>45</sup> and Darell Dykstra's biographical study of 'Ali Mubarak, a member of the 1844 Egyptian Student Mission'<sup>46</sup>.

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<sup>44</sup> Heyworth-Dunne, J., *An Introduction to the History of Education in Modern Egypt*, (London, 1968)

<sup>45</sup> Newman, D., 'Imam in Paris – Al-Tahtawi' in Al-Tahtawi, *An Imam in Paris*, pp. 15-96

<sup>46</sup> Dykstra, D.I., *A Biographical Study in Egyptian Modernization: 'Ali Mubarak*, Vol. 1, (Michigan, 1980)

The scheme was first established by the Egyptian government in collaboration with the French authorities, creating a rigid programme of apprenticeship in European languages, sciences and history. This bespoke programme was formulated especially by the mission's director Edme-François Jomard<sup>47</sup>. It was later institutionalised by the creation of the *Ecole Militaire Egyptienne* in 1844. Though the student missions were sustained throughout the Khedivate, by the late-nineteenth century, its structure was relaxed and most Egyptian students were enrolled into French institutions of higher education.

From 1885, the student missions increasingly came under attack from the Egyptian authorities. The then Under-Secretary for Public Education Artin Pasha repeatedly threatened to shut the programme down due to the perceived lack of effective supervision of students<sup>48</sup>. Since the French direction of the student missions was seen as crucial to maintaining French influence in the region, especially under British colonial rule, the French authorities fought to sustain it until 1909. After 1909, the number of Egyptian students studying in France continued to grow and those who were funded by the state continued to be administrated under the structure of the Egyptian Student Missions to Europe. However that administration was now in the UK.

Funding to study in France came for the most part from the Egyptian authorities, the Egyptian University or the French Ministry of Education. Between 1914 and 1962, the number of independently financed students rose. The French authorities therefore established *le Comité Consultatif de Patronage des Égyptiens qui Font Leurs Études en Europe à Leurs Propres Frais*, intended to fulfil an equivalent role as the former missions'

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<sup>47</sup> Jomard, E-F., 'École Égyptienne de Paris', *Journal Asiatique*, (December 1828)

<sup>48</sup> Letter from M. Saint René Taillandier to M. de Freycimet, Cairo, 21 September 1885, 'Maintien de la Mission Égyptienne en France', CADN, AMB 51, Carton 167

director: to administer, facilitate, monitor and promote intellectual migration from Egypt<sup>49</sup>. But despite the French authorities' continued attempts to exert influence, compared to the nineteenth century model, Egyptian students in the early twentieth century were relatively speaking left to their own devices<sup>50</sup>.

The Egyptian Student Missions encouraged over a century of extensive student mobility between France and Egypt, despite British occupation in 1882. It is for this reason that in 1914, at a time of modicum international student mobility, 190 Egyptian students were receiving degrees and diplomas from French universities, an equivalent figure to the number of Britons [223] or Italians [155] studying in France at the time<sup>51</sup>. Egyptian student numbers rose to as many as 635 in 1927, with the exception of 1922, where figures momentarily plummeted as a result of the Egyptian revolution. In 1930 there was another significant dip in student numbers, relating to the Great Depression, and again during the Second World War, which universally affected student mobility worldwide.

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<sup>49</sup> Ministry of Public Education, 'Attribution du Comité, Règlement concernant le Comité Consultatif de Patronage des Égyptiens qui font leurs études en Europe à leurs propres frais', Article 7, CADN, AMB 51, Carton 167

<sup>50</sup> Hussein, T., *A Passage to France*, (Leiden, 1976), p. 132

<sup>51</sup> 'Tableau 1', *Annuaire Statistique – Statistique Générale de la France*, Vol. 33, (Paris, 1913), p. 33

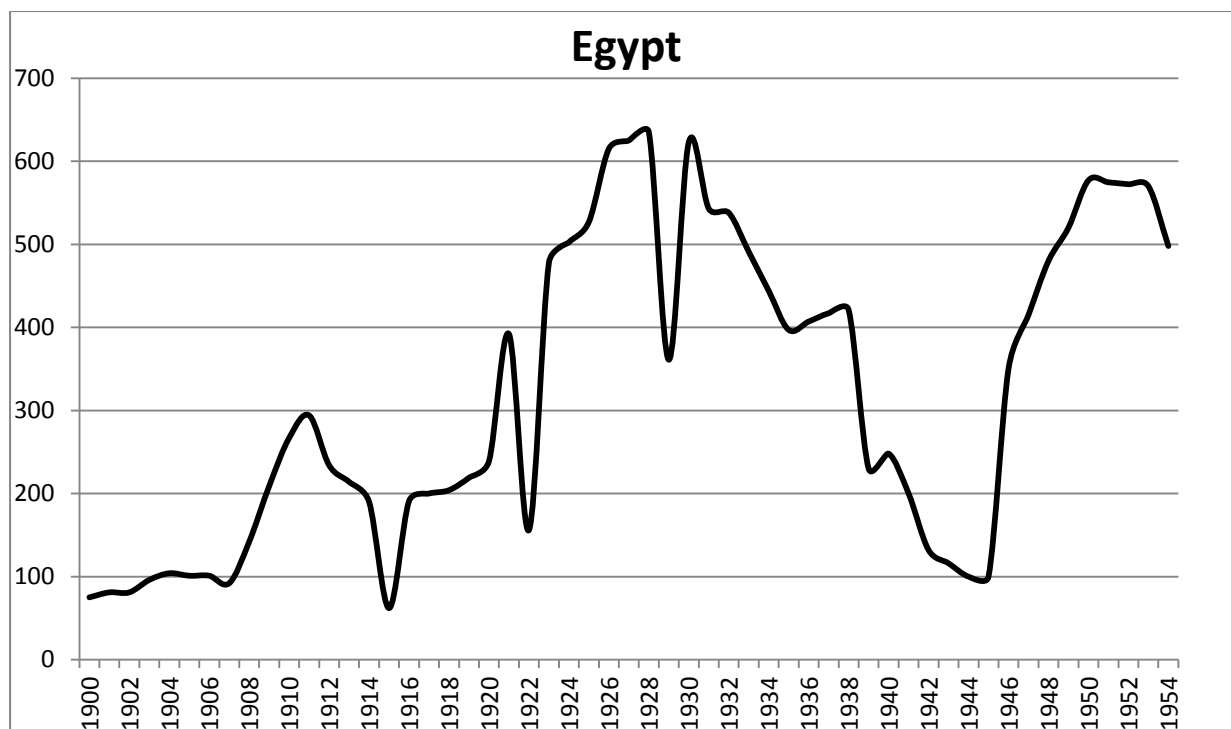


Figure 1 - Egyptian Students in French Higher Education<sup>52</sup>

Egypt therefore had a relatively long and established history of student mobility to France. In the Muslim world, that tradition was matched only by that coming from the Ottoman Empire, which also had a nineteenth century precedent of intellectual exchange with France<sup>53</sup>. The number of Egyptian students in France however did not recover after World War Two to the elevated rate of the interwar period. The numbers plateaued around the 500 mark in the immediate aftermath of the overthrow of the Egyptian monarchy but then began to diminish sharply after the tripartite aggression that led to the Suez Crisis in 1956.

Egypt's elevated rate of student mobility in the interwar period, resulting from its nineteenth century history of intellectual exchange with France, was atypical. In general,

<sup>52</sup> Statistics taken from 'Relevé général des étudiants français et étrangers' in AS 1900 to 1954. 1954 is the last edition that reports Egyptian numbers distinctly. Where there are gaps in the statistics, straight lines have been drawn between available points of data. From 1917, they switch from recording yearly numbers on the 15<sup>th</sup> January to the 31<sup>st</sup> July.

<sup>53</sup> For more on Turkish intellectuals and artists in Paris, see Kreiser, K., 'Le Paris des Ottomans à la Belle Epoque', *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée*, Vol. 91-94, (July 2000), pp. 333-350

Paris hosted only a very small number of extra-European students until the interwar period. The First World War acted as a catalyst for the growth of student mobility worldwide. Tunisian and Moroccan, as well as Syrian, Iranian, Indochinese, African, Peruvian and Antillean student numbers grew steadily after 1918. But it was not until 1945 that Maghribi student mobility started to catch up with that from Egypt, eventually overtaking it by the 1950s.

### Tunisia

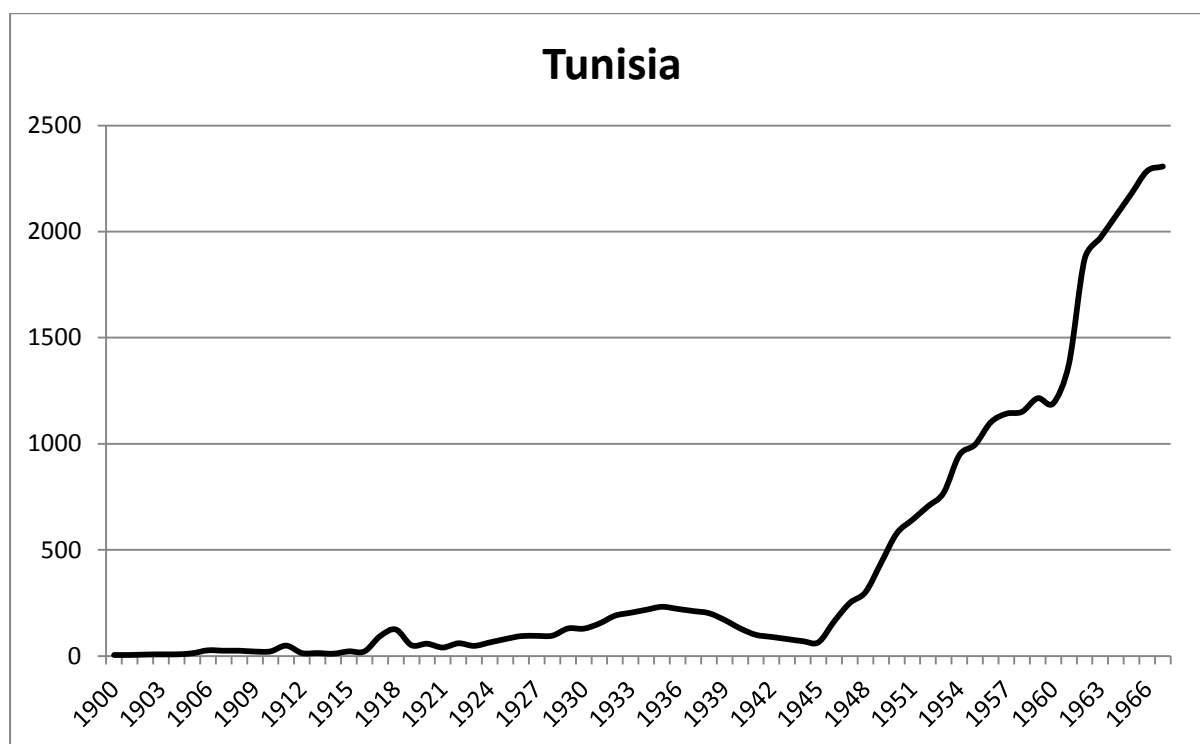


Figure 2 – Tunisian students in French Institutions of Higher Education<sup>54</sup>

In 1914, there were only 11 Tunisian students in France. There had been a handful of Tunisians in French institutions of higher education prior to 1914, including notable

<sup>54</sup> Statistics taken from 'Relevé général des étudiants français et étrangers' in AS from edition 1900 to edition 1969. Statistics for Tunisian students from 1945 to 1947 taken from 'Note sur la situation des Etudiants Musulmans Tunisiens à Paris', *Courneuve*, P4062, No. 232, Carton 45, Dossier 6, 10, 11, f. 10 and f. 32. Where there are gaps in the statistics, straight lines have been drawn between available points of data. From 1917, statistics switch from recording yearly numbers on the 15<sup>th</sup> January to the 31<sup>st</sup> July.

Destourian figures such as Ali Bach Hamba<sup>55</sup>. This was partly due to the advent of the French protectorate in Tunisia in 1881 with the signing of the Treaty of Bardo. It was also a result of the modernisation programme established under the rule of Kheirreddine Pasha, who himself undertook several diplomatic missions to France. The Grand Vizir of Tunisia in 1875 established the Sadiki College in Tunis along the French *lycée* model<sup>56</sup>. His ambitions of 'national improvement' and 'civilizational development'<sup>57</sup> in Tunisia were comparable to that of Mehmet Ali in Egypt. Because of this pre-colonial tradition of Tunisian modernisation, there was considerable demand for a modern French education among the Tunisian elite<sup>58</sup>, a situation which was more comparable to Egypt than its Maghribi counterparts.

However Tunisian student mobility was initially limited by infrastructure. Despite the College Sadiki contributing significantly to the spread of European style education in Tunisia, the resulting qualification was not equivalent to the French baccalaureate. Students from the Sadiki College could not therefore gain admission into French universities without enrolling into a French *lycée*. The combination of high demand and low supply resulted in a tradition of advocacy in Tunisia which targeted above all education provision in the Protectorate. It was not until Destourian figures like 'Abd al-'Aziz Tha'alibi began to petition for educational reform at the turn of the century that education provision was increased<sup>59</sup>.

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<sup>55</sup> Vermeren, 'Les élites nationalistes tunisiennes et marocaines en formation en France (1920-1955)', *Etudiants de l'exil*, p. 252

<sup>56</sup> *Khéredine, homme d'État*, p. 36

<sup>57</sup> Le Général Khéredine, *Réformes Nécessaires aux États Musulmans*, (Paris, 1868), p. 7

<sup>58</sup> Vermeren, P., *Ecole, Elite et Pouvoir au Maroc et Tunisie au XXe Siècle*, (Rabat, 2002), p. 16

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19

In 1920, the Destour party was formed and their advocacy resulted in a series of institutional reforms in government policy (1922) and curriculum (1927, Sadiki College) which facilitated growing numbers of French educated Tunisians to enrol in institutions of higher education<sup>60</sup>. The result was larger numbers of Sadiki graduates going on to successfully complete their baccalaureate at the Lycée Carnot in Tunis or other *lycées* in the *métropoles*<sup>61</sup>. Yet until the late twenties and early thirties there were still very few macro-structures in place to encourage Tunisians to study abroad. The colonial authorities did not have any formal bursary schemes in place for Muslim Tunisians until 1930. Before then, some funding was available from the Chambers of Commerce and the Direction of Public Education; however those were primarily destined for French and Jewish Tunisians. According to Tunisian nationalist Mahmoud el-Materi, only 8 out of 24 funded studentships abroad were assigned to Muslims or non-naturalised Tunisians in the academic year 1924-1925<sup>62</sup>. Most migrants up until the 1930s were privately financed, either by their families or by taking paid employment. Private fund-raising initiatives were also established by former students, such as the *Société des Amis de l'Étudiant* founded in 1931<sup>63</sup>. Thus by the 1930s, a cyclical pattern of migration emerged, or chain migration, where former intellectual migrants upon returning home encouraged their compatriots to undertake the same 'rite of passage'<sup>64</sup>.

The multi-decade tradition of advocacy for education in Tunisia, continued by the Neo-Destour party once established in 1934, resulted in the steady growth of student mobility to Paris and France as a whole in the interwar period. It also resulted in fewer

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. 15 and p. 18

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p. 18

<sup>62</sup> El-Materi, M., *Itinéraire d'un militant (1926-1942)*, (Tunis, 1992), p. 190

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p. 44

<sup>64</sup> Used in relation to Mahmoud Messadi by Omri, *Nationalism*, p. 25

restrictions to student mobility than experienced by Moroccans or Algerians. Tunisian students were reported in every source as the most prominent Maghribi student presence in France, with as many as 232 in 1935<sup>65</sup>. It was also generally speaking the most militant.

This elevated rate of mobility levelled off however in the mid-1930s as the government clamped down on Tunisian activism in 1934/1935 under Resident-General Marcel Peyrouton and then again in 1938, when a number of Neo-Destour leaders were exiled by the French authorities. Throughout World War Two the Vichy Governor-General further clamped down on political activism; since student mobility was seen to be connected to political unrest, it had repercussions on intellectual migration. It took several years for the numbers of Tunisian students in France to recuperate to interwar levels (250 in 1947).

By 1950 however, the numbers had doubled, reaching 578; culminating in the *Protocole de coopération culturelle et technique entre la République française et la République tunisienne* ratified by the French in 1959 which officially lifted French restrictions on student mobility from Tunisia<sup>66</sup>. Effectively, restrictions had already been removed after World War Two and the number of students in French institutions of higher education steadily grew in the forties and fifties until it reached over one thousand in 1956. Interestingly enough, the signing of the *Protocole* did not have any dramatic effect on those numbers, which had already been steadily growing. It is possible that the social and political conflict resulting from the Algeria war between 1954 and 1962 indirectly restricted student

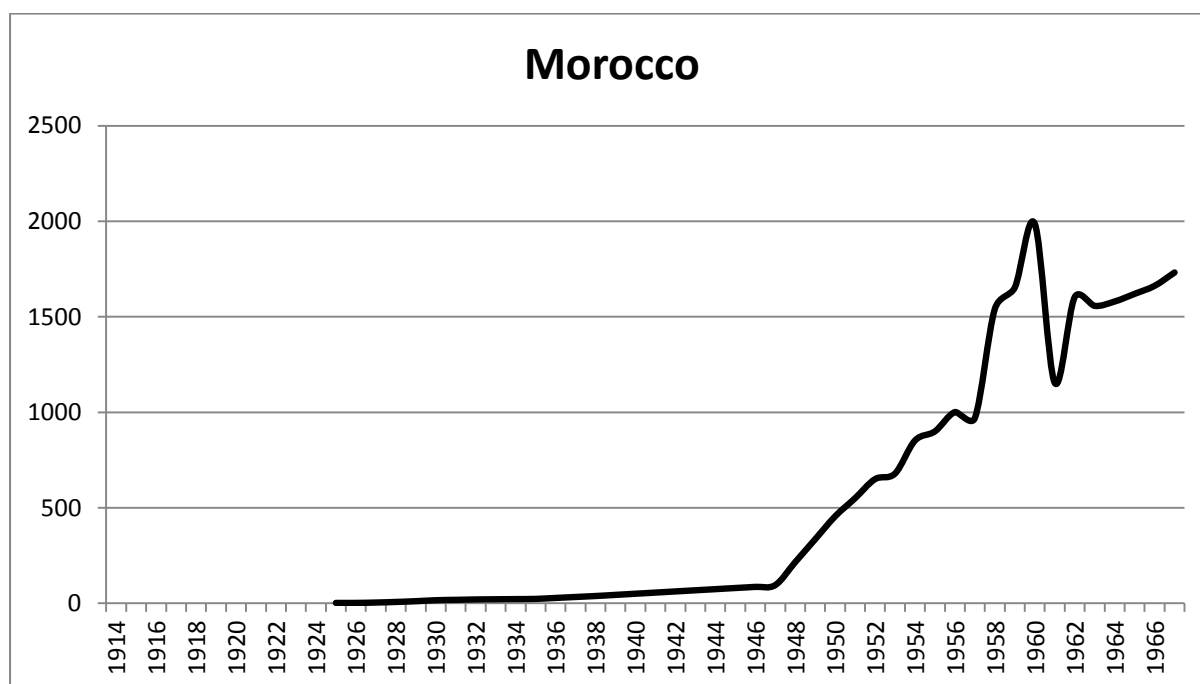
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<sup>65</sup> AS, Vol. 51 (Paris, 1935), p. 43

<sup>66</sup> *Protocole de coopération culturelle et technique entre la République française et la République tunisienne*, Numéro de l'accord 19590330, signed 15/04/1959

mobility from the whole of the Maghrib, as there is a second jump up in Tunisian numbers after the signing of the Evian accords in 1962.

## Morocco



**Figure 3 –Moroccan Students in French Institutions of Higher Education<sup>67</sup>**

Moroccan student mobility had a much later start than most. This was partly due to the Protectorate's later establishment in 1912 but also to the nature of colonial policy in the region. Sultan Moulay Hassan had established a small number of student missions between 1887 and 1890<sup>68</sup>, but the *conquête morale* practiced in Morocco discouraged student mobility to Europe until after the Second World War, a factor that will be discussed in Chapter Four. Moroccans were often denied the necessary travel documents and the French authorities would spread negative propaganda among notable Moroccan families,

<sup>67</sup> Statistics taken from 'Relevé général des étudiants français et étrangers', AS, from edition 1900 to edition 1969. Moroccan statistics for year 1947 taken from Ibid., p. 58. Where there are gaps in the statistics, straight lines have been drawn between available points of data. From 1917, statistics switch from recording yearly numbers on the 15<sup>th</sup> January to the 31<sup>st</sup> July.

<sup>68</sup> Ray, 'Les Marocains en France', p. 241

warning of the nefarious influence that Paris would exert on their children<sup>69</sup>. Statistics for Moroccan mobility therefore did not surge in the 1920s and 30s as they did for Tunisia and countries outside the French Empire such as Egypt and Iran.

Maréchal Lyautey, the first Resident General of Morocco, did establish a couple of Moroccan foyers to France in 1922 and 1923. But these were described as touristic trips rather than student missions<sup>70</sup>. Most instances of Moroccan intellectual migration in the interwar period were highly contrived government organised *séjours* designed to woo the Moroccan elite with French culture and civilisation. It was not until 1925 that the first Moroccan graduated with a degree from a French institution of higher education. The number of Moroccan students only reached thirty eight in the interwar period. Yet despite being a relatively small cohort, these migrants were to have a significant impact on Moroccan political thought.

After World War Two, the number of Moroccan students rose very quickly in the forties and fifties. Like Tunisia, former restrictions were lifted in an attempt to appease nationalist and anti-colonial demands advocated by the small number of outspoken Moroccan graduates in the interwar period. The number of Moroccan students rose quickly after the signing of the *Convention culturelle* which, though drawn up in 1956, was signed and ratified by France in 1957<sup>71</sup>. This growth was momentarily stunted in 1961, possibly as a result of tensions in both France and the Maghreb resulting from the Algeria war, as had been the case with Tunisia; but it steadily resumed after the signing of the Evian Accords.

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<sup>69</sup> Ouazzani, M.H., *Mudhakkirat hayat wa muhaawa*, tome 1, (Fes, ?), p. 441

<sup>70</sup> Ray, 'Les Marocains en France', p. 241

<sup>71</sup> *Convention culturelle entre la France et le Maroc, ensemble protocoles et échanges de lettres*, Numéro de l'accord : 19570049, signed by France in 05 October 1957

## Algeria

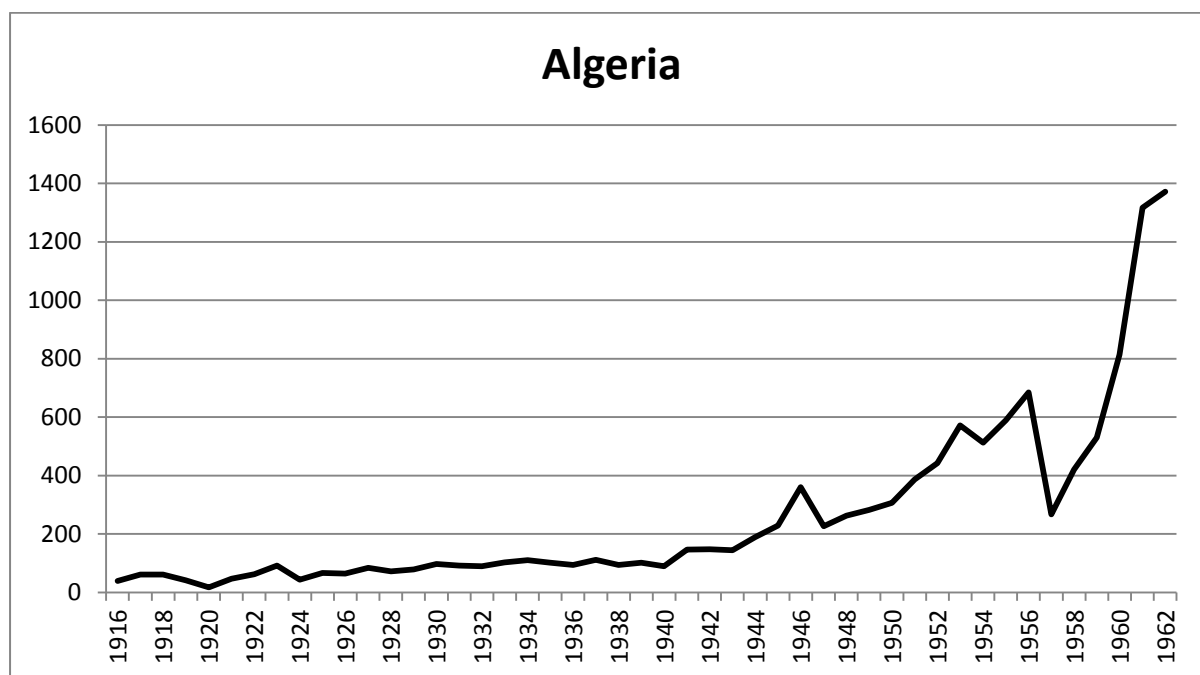


Figure 4 – Muslim Students at the University of Algiers<sup>72</sup>

Statistics for Algerian student mobility are affected by Algeria being governed by the French Ministry of the Interior and considered a department of France. The *Annuaire Statistique de France* did not class Algerians as foreign students until after the Evian Accords. Before 1962 students from Algiers were included in the breakdown of French student mobility, but no indication is made as to whether these numbers include Algerian *indigènes*, or what proportion they made up. Occasionally, the *Annuaire Statistiques* did produce separate figures on its colonies, which paradoxically included Algeria. There is a breakdown between French, Jewish and Muslim students for primary education but not for higher education. The *Situation d'Algérie* also provides a breakdown between *indigène* and French students at the University of Algiers, figured above, which provides some insight into the numbers of Muslim Algerians reaching university level. It accounts largely for the creation of the Francophone indigenous elite known as the *Jeunes Algériens*, including Ferhat Abbas.

<sup>72</sup> Figures originally from *Situation d'Algérie* cited in Pervillé, *Etudiants*, pp. 29-30

However those numbers also include Muslim subjects from Morocco and Tunisia studying in Algiers. Plus it does not necessarily reflect the number of Algerians studying in France.

There are indicators that there was a limited level of intellectual migration from Algeria to France in the interwar period. On 15 July 1914, the French authorities introduced new laws relating to Algerian *indigènes*, Article 17 of which removed barriers for the displacement of Muslims from Algeria to Metropolitan France by lifting the requirement for travel permits, despite not being French citizens<sup>73</sup>. The number of Algerians in French metropolises rose considerably from that point onwards, resulting in there being 85,568 Algerians in France by 1931<sup>74</sup>. This measure was introduced to encourage labour mobility and did not necessarily result in elevated levels of student mobility, primarily because of ongoing restricted provision of European style secondary education for French subjects in Algeria. By 1935 only 7.7% of those enrolled in French *lycées* and colleges in Algeria were autochthonous subjects (958 students), despite making up 92.5% of the population<sup>75</sup>. Since there were over 2000 Muslim students enrolled in the University of Algiers in the academic year of 1936/1937, including Muslim students from Tunisia and Morocco<sup>76</sup>, the number of those going to France therefore for higher education must have been relatively low.

The most comprehensive statistical survey of Algerian intellectual migration is undertaken by Guy Pervillé, however even he notes that statistics on Algerian students in France are imprecise. We know of some notable cases, such as Mohammed Kessous, Mohand Cherif Sahli, Malek Bennabi and his friend Mohamed Ben Saï. Some of them even

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<sup>73</sup> *Annuaire Législation Française – Principales Lois Votées en France en 1914*, 34<sup>ème</sup> Années, (Paris, 1915), p. 167

<sup>74</sup> Liauzu, *Histoire des migrations*, p. 120

<sup>75</sup> Statistics taken from AS, Vol. 54 (Paris, 1938), p. 259 ; Breakdown of lycée statistics taken from *Exposé de la Situation d'Algérie en 1935*, (Alger, 1936), p. 48 & p. 52

<sup>76</sup> Pervillé, *Etudiants* p. 29

produced memoirs. It is possible to tell that educational provision for Algerian *indigènes* was late and slow, especially in further education<sup>77</sup>. The French *colons* were very wary of opening French education up to Algerians, suspecting its futility and fearing its subversive potential. Their numbers therefore are likely to be closer to those of Morocco in the interwar period than those of Tunisia or Egypt.

Despite the repeal of the *Status indigène* in 1947, student mobility for Algerian Muslims also rose more slowly in the forties and fifties than for their Maghrebi counterparts until independence in 1962<sup>78</sup>. One isolated figure provided by the General Secretary for Algerian Affairs states that there were only 640 Muslim students of Algerian origin in French metropolises in 1960, nearly half the number of Tunisians at the time<sup>79</sup>. Qualitative data suggests that this is due to the ongoing lack of macro-structures encouraging student mobility from Algeria, especially bursaries. It will also be due in part to the greater animosity relating to the decolonisation process in Algeria and the greater degree of discriminatory practices towards Algerian students in Paris<sup>80</sup>.

Gendering statistics on intellectual migration is more difficult as country by country breakdowns do not include gender breakdowns. As with Algerian statistics, qualitative data does give us an impression of trends. For instance, Doria Shafik who completed her doctorate in 1940 was not one of the first Egyptian women to get a doctorate but one of the youngest. When she first went to Paris as an undergraduate in 1933, she was one of twelve Egyptian girls to be sent to Europe<sup>81</sup>. This suggests that there were a small number of

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid., p. 15

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., pp. 18-22

<sup>79</sup> CAOM, 81 F 1729

<sup>80</sup> Harbi, M., *Une vie debout, mémoires politiques, tome 1 : 1945-1962*, (Paris, 2001), p. 215 ; Also Lacheraf, M., *Des noms et des lieux, Mémoires d'une Algérie oubliée*, (Algiers, 1998), p. 93

<sup>81</sup> Nelson, C., *Doria Shafik, An Egyptian Feminist*, (Gainesville, 1996), p. 33

Egyptian women studying in Europe in the interwar period, yet not as many as male students. Accounts by Abdelkader Ben Barka<sup>82</sup> and Fatima Mernissi<sup>83</sup> also indicate that the Moroccan nationalist movement encouraged elite families to educate their daughters as part of their struggle against European colonialism. Yet there is no evidence of any Moroccan woman undertaking a degree abroad during the interwar period. Tunisia, like Egypt, seemed a little ahead of Morocco and Algeria as there are a few remarkable Tunisian women who were educated in the interwar years, but this trend was more prominent after the Second World War.

It does also appear that Jewish Maghribi girls were more likely to go to school because of the support provided by the *Alliance Israelite* in Tunisia and Morocco. But overall the impression is that, during the interwar period, the number of Egyptian and Maghribi women studying in France was very limited, grew after the Second World War and became increasingly common place among the elite in the 50s and 60s.

The signing of cultural agreements with France doubled the rate of Maghrebi student mobility in the fifties and sixties. Thus a new era of intellectual migration ascended. Decolonisation, along with cheaper transport networks, enabled hundreds and thousands of students to flock to France, Europe, and other destinations worldwide. This was the case for intellectual migration globally, not just the north of Africa. Conversely, Egyptian student mobility to France lagged at this stage, having peaked in the interwar period, and was overtaken by that from the Maghrib.

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<sup>82</sup> Abdelkader Ben Barka talks of 'Istiqlal cadets', Ben Barka, A., *El Mehdi Ben Barka – mon frère*, (Paris, 1996), p. 59

<sup>83</sup> Mernissi, F., *Dreams of Trespass – Tales of a harem girlhood* (Reading, 1995), p. 196

Though students did not make up the whole of intellectual migration from the region, they established a precedent for future mobility. They drummed up interest among North Africans to travel to Paris by spreading stories, propagating expectations and boasting results, a process of migration referred to in migration studies as chain migration<sup>84</sup> or cumulative causation<sup>85</sup>. The structures surrounding student mobility also provided an infrastructure for North African transmigrant communities not exclusive to the student body. The important thing to remember at this stage is that 1914 to 1962 was a period when intellectual migration was limited but obtainable, restricted but significant. There were enough cases for this emerging migratory pattern to be of historical note and to have had agency in socio-political and intellectual developments, but still exclusive enough to bestow upon those migrants an elevated status at home and to give them particular agency in the development of ideas.

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<sup>84</sup> Castles, Miller, *The Age of Migration*, p. 28

<sup>85</sup> Massey, D. S., Alarcon, Rafael, and Durand, J., *Studies in Demography, Volume 1 : Return to Aztlan - The Social Process of International Migration from Western Mexico*, (Berkeley, 1990), p. 4

## Chapter Two – An Intellectual History of Migrants

### **Studying Intellectual Migrants**

Quantitative methods are available to decipher trends in intellectual migration. Despite methodological pitfalls, some telling information can be derived from treating intellectual migrants as a category of analysis distinct from other forms of migration. They reveal some of the circumstances under which this type of mobility was derived and evolved, referred to in Migration Systems Theory as macro-processes. Yet, this is only part of the picture. Many notable cases of intellectual migration fall outside of those statistics. Their exclusion would have a distorting effect on writing an intellectual history of migration during this period. It is important therefore to drill down upon individual cases. The methodological difficulties in the collective treatment of intellectual migrants relate to questions of composition, causality and representation.

### **Composition**

Firstly intellectual migrants from the north of Africa to Paris between 1914 and 1962 were not a homogenous entity. While they formed the intellectual elite either by virtue of being educated or because of their intellectual pursuits, they were not always from socially privileged backgrounds, especially after World War Two when more bursaries were made available. They generally had different motives for migrating; their intellectual pursuits were often quite divergent. Individual circumstances and personalities determined who went to France as much as government orchestrated schemes. It affected why they chose to travel and pre-determined their experience of it by setting out in advance what they were

looking to achieve, thereby shaping to a large extent how they engaged with that environment.

Some migrants for instance were of the social strata where it was increasingly common to undertake a further education in Europe. Others were from underprivileged backgrounds whose family scrimped and saved to send their children to France in order to buy social mobility. There were some who had originally arrived to work but later became involved in political, artistic or intellectual movements that turned them into intellectual migrants. This is all in addition to the cyclical forms of intellectual migration; many students returned in later years to maintain ties with the cultural and political movements they had originally become involved with.

The motives of intellectual migrants were also highly divergent, even among those migrants who travelled under similar circumstances and came from comparable social backgrounds. These have led to a number of stereotypes, especially among the student populace, that were determined primarily by individual inclinations. For instance some students were genuinely self-motivated, intellectually inclined migrants whose pursuit of knowledge in France was genuine disinterested scholasticism. Many students were simply jumping hoops to achieve a position of authority, especially those from socially elevated backgrounds. There were also some students who were seemingly only in France to do politics, while others were lured by the scandalous reputation and social liberalism of Parisian culture. Such distinctions certainly influenced the way in which migrants engaged with the Parisian environment. Students who were particularly studious engaged to a

greater extent with Paris' intellectual milieu. Those motivated by materialist interests chased after what is frequently referred to as the 'Parisian blond'<sup>86</sup>.

Naturally no one fits perfectly into one classification as there is often considerable overlap. Yet thinking about individual migrants in this way does emphasise the heterogeneity of the category. While this fact is unsurprising, it does make it very difficult to write an intellectual history of migration through the collective treatment of intellectual migrants.

### **Causality**

Writing intellectual history inherently involves the search for a narrative of cultural production by relating it to historical events and personal biographies. As American essayist Phyllis Rose writes in her biography of Virginia Wolf:

'[...] life is as much a work of fiction as a novel or a poem and the task of the biographer is to explore that fiction. [...] past, present and future would be inassimilable, perhaps an unliveable blur, unless we projected upon it a structure of meaning to sift certain moments as significant, some experiences as crucial'<sup>87</sup>.

This is no less the case when writing an intellectual of history migration, where the degree of migration's agency upon cultural production is evaluated. In fact in the study of intellectual migration from the north of Africa to Paris, there are multiple factors for which the level of agency is sought to be established. These included the agency of historical processes (the movement of peoples), the agency of space (Paris) and human agency (migrants).

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<sup>86</sup> Bennabi, M., *Mémoires d'un témoin du siècle*, (Alger, 1965), pp. 116-117

<sup>87</sup> Phyllis Rose, *A Woman of Letters*, quoted by Nelson, *Shafik*, p. 284

There is a natural tendency to expect to discover some kind of product, or clear definable outcome of migration. Paris was generally an important part of a migrant's life trajectory during the period in question, especially since so many migrants came to Paris at such a formative age. But the outcome is not always clear, nor is it necessarily comparable case by case. It is especially easy to assess impact and influence by form alone; that Paris imparted its features upon its visitors in a near carbon copy of itself. The relationship between the visitor and the visited is far more complex. The agency of Paris as a space for encounters, explored throughout the thesis, was multifaceted. Furthermore, an individual's interaction with those facets varied according to individual circumstances and inclinations. So even if the macro-circumstances of migrants are the same, as Mohamed-Salah Omri notes, 'the immediate conditions within which each intellectual operated were by no means the same'<sup>88</sup>. A veritable intellectual history of such migration would focus not on the outcome but on the impact, that is to say, on the question of causality. It is for this reason that a history of intellectual migration is part of global intellectual history. It brings into question assumptions about global flows of knowledge and their connection to flows of people.

It is therefore methodologically hazardous to treat migrants collectively in intellectual history. But most intellectual migrants, either as students and professionals, left little trail of their experience except making up the numbers within the mechanisms of migration they took part in. Knowledge of these structures has become their only effective voice or representation. The minority who produced written trails which personalised their encounters and qualified the impact of contextual circumstances are almost always people who later became significant intellectuals, politicians, artists and authors. This inevitably

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<sup>88</sup> Omri, *Nationalism*, p. 29

skews the sample, creating a disjuncture between the structural or circumstantial evidence and the personalised qualifying material. It is therefore necessary to adopt a balanced approach to the study of intellectual migration which qualifies wider trends with individualising material. This approach is discussed in migration systems theory as the balance between the macro and micro processes of migration<sup>89</sup>. It is also discussed by American sociologist C. Wright Mills as the balance between personal and structural evidence: 'neither the life of the individual nor the history of a society can be understood without an understanding of both'<sup>90</sup>.

It is crucial therefore to deal with intellectual migrants at the individual level in order to make an assessment of the whole. That does not necessarily mean that that sample is representative of everyone's experience. But the point is that not one experience was the same as another. It may even be worth suggesting that there is no representative. Rather, drilling down on a collection of individual cases that make up the body of intellectual migrants can help create what Mills calls a sociological imagination, which 'enables its possessor to understand the larger historical scene in terms of the inner life and external career of a variety of individuals. It enables us to grasp history and biography and the relation between the two'<sup>91</sup>.

These methodological difficulties constrain the types of statements that can be made, especially about the source of somebody's ideas. There are nevertheless trends that are historically notable and telling. Furthermore a collection of notable yet heterogeneous

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<sup>89</sup> Castles, Miller, *The Age of Migration*, p. 28

<sup>90</sup> Mills, C. W., *The Sociological Imagination*, (Oxford, 2000), p. 3

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5

stories not only show how intellectual migration was experienced, but how the story of that migration was told and shaped by the plurality of ways in which it was experienced.

### **Representation**

Because of the difficulties in treating intellectual migrants as a group, normal tools of representation, especially quantitative graphs, are of limited value. Alternative tools need to be developed to aid our analysis of this small yet divergent group. Benjamin Stora created a biographical dictionary of Algerian PPA/MTLD militants to aid his writing an account of Algerian nationalism<sup>92</sup>. Understanding the qualitative, rather than quantitative significance of intellectual migrants, is also aided by a biographical survey of intellectual migrants.

The chart [see Appendix A] represents notable migrants from the north of Africa to Paris from 1914 to 1962. The list is not exhaustive yet demonstrates the temporal distribution of notable intellectual migrants in France, and for the most part Paris. The Moroccan case demonstrates most acutely the contrast between the quantitative and qualitative significance of intellectual migration. Although the number of Moroccan students in French higher education never rose above thirty eight in the interwar period, a large proportion of those students became historically notable. Ahmed Belafrej, Prime Minister of Morocco in 1958, studied literature and political science in Paris between 1928 and 1932<sup>93</sup>. There was also the Moroccan Franciscan priest, scholar and God-son of Louis Massignon, Jean Mohammed Abdeljalil who began a degree in literature at the Sorbonne in

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<sup>92</sup> Stora, B., *Dictionnaire biographique de militants nationalistes algériens : E.N.A, P.P.A., M.T.L.D., 1926-1954*, (Paris, 1985)

<sup>93</sup> *Who's Who in the Arab World*, Biographical Dictionary, 1988-1989, 9<sup>th</sup> Ed., (Lebanon), p. 126

1925 and his brother, Istiqlal activist and co-founder of the journal *Maghreb*, Omar Abdeljalil was also one of the first Moroccans in French higher education<sup>94</sup>. Their contemporaries Mohamed el-Fassi, Habib Thameur and Mohamed El-Kholti were all important figures in the early Moroccan nationalist movement.

Moroccan intellectual migration to France was especially significant in the interwar period because of the fame that these students acquired. As restrictions to student mobility were lifted in the 50s and 60s, the proportion of migrants to have a significant impact on their country's development was reduced. Future intellectuals, academics and politicians continued to travel to Europe after World War Two, as did philosopher Mohamed 'Aziz Lahbabi, unionists Ben Barka and Istiqlal militant Abderahim Bouabid. Yet they did so within a framework of greater familiarity and lesser exclusivity.

Although there were over two hundred Tunisian students enrolled in French institutions of higher education in France by 1930, intellectual migration was nevertheless an elite process and an important part of the development of Tunisian political discourse under colonialism. It has been attributed by French historians such as Roger Le Tourneau to the formation of Tunisia's first modern politicians and political movements<sup>95</sup>. Tunisian students of historical significance include Habib Bourguiba, Mahmoud El-Materi and Tahar Sfar (discussed below). Tunisian journalist and founding member of the ENA Chedli Khairallah studied law in France in the late 1920s. Bahri Guiga, contemporary and classmate of Bourguiba and Tahar Sfar at Sadiki College and Lycée Carnot, undertook a doctorate in Law in Paris at a similar time. Salah Ben Youssef, co-founder and for a time

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<sup>94</sup> Ray, 'Les Marocains en France', p. 242

<sup>95</sup> Le Tourneau, R., *Evolution politique de l'Afrique du Nord Musulmane, 1920-1961*, (Paris, 1962), p. 69

Secretary-General of Neo-Destour Party<sup>96</sup>, Hédi Nouria, who became Tunisian Minister of Finance between 1955 and 1958 and Mongi Slim, Interior Minister of Tunisia 1955-1956 and first African to become President of the United Nations General Assembly in 1961, all studied Law in Paris in the mid-1930s<sup>97</sup>. Mahmoud Messadi, the renowned Tunisian literary figure and author of Tunisia's post-independence education system studied Arabic literature at the Sorbonne between 1933 and 1936. Founding member of the AEMNAF Ahmed Ben Milad and Neo-Destour militant Slimane Ben Slimane were both at the Faculty of Medicine in the 1930s. By the nineteen fifties, the Neo-Destour continued to have considerable support from Tunisian students in France.

It appears that the Algerian student community in France during the interwar years consisted primarily of *évolué* migrants or naturalised Algerians, like president of the *Fédération des Elus* Dr Benjelloun. After World War Two and the Sétif Massacres which radicalised Algerian nationalist politics, Algerian students in France were increasingly politicised and supportive of independence. There was considerable Algerian militancy in France, originally from the MTLD's *Fédération de France* (FdF) and later the FLN's seventh *wilaya*<sup>98</sup>. Though these movements drew from a much more populist leadership than its Moroccan and Tunisian counterparts, there were some intellectual migrants among their ranks. In addition to Mostefa Lacheraf and Mohamed Harbi discussed below, there was Abdelmalek Benhabyles, law student, AEMNAF committee member, FLN militant and later Algerian diplomat. There was also Ahmed Taleb-Ibrahimi, UGEMA president and FLN militant who pursued medical studies in Paris in the mid-fifties.

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<sup>96</sup> Ibid., pp. 86-87

<sup>97</sup> *Who's Who in the Arab World*, 9<sup>th</sup> Ed., p. 499

<sup>98</sup> Haroun, A., *La 7<sup>e</sup> Wilaya, La guerre du FLN en France 1954-1962*, (Paris, 1986)

Qualifying Egyptian student mobility is a slightly different exercise given that numbers were so comparatively elevated in the interwar period. Intellectual migration has been defined by this author as a group of migrants who had a disproportionate impact per capita on their sending and receiving country. The fact that student mobility from Egypt to France was so advanced during this period would suggest an inconsistency in the categorisation and definition of intellectual migration. Yet compared to the 85,568 Algerian labourers in France in 1931<sup>99</sup>, 631 Egyptian students in France in 1930<sup>100</sup>, the highest total during this period, is still very small relatively speaking.

Some extremely significant figures in Egyptian literary history studied in Paris, like Taha Husayn, Tawfiq al-Hakim and director-playwright Zaki Tulaymat. Egyptian feminist Doria Shafik studied many years in Paris, as did *al-Dakatira* Zaki Mubarak<sup>101</sup>. Egyptian Surrealist Georges Hénein studied at the Sorbonne in the early thirties and Ramsis Yunan moved there for a while after the war, as did Abderrahman Badawi. Professor and UN Secretary-General Dr Boutros-Ghali acquired a string of degrees in Paris in the late forties<sup>102</sup>. There were also many important Egyptian figures whose careers inevitably took them at some point to Paris, such as artist and feminist Inji Aflatun.

The majority of intellectual migrants who did not end up of political or historic fame were still to have a significant impact at home, either by working in government administrations, supporting anti-colonial movements or through their work in national industries or national cultural production. To empirically evaluate the nature and impact of

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<sup>99</sup> Statistics for 1931 in Liauzu, *Histoire des migrations*, p. 120

<sup>100</sup> AS, Vol. 46, p. 38

<sup>101</sup> *Biographical Dictionary of Modern Egypt*, ed., Goldschmidt Jr., A., (Colorado, 2000), p. 134

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38

intellectual migration would necessitate tracing all migrants, regardless of social class or historical status. This would provide a veritable social history of intellectual migration.

Social histories of the intellectual elite have been undertaken by Daniel Newman and Donald Reid<sup>103</sup> in regards to nineteenth century Egyptian student mobility. In relation to Morocco and Tunisia, Pierre Vermeren<sup>104</sup> and Nouredine Sraieb<sup>105</sup> have produced social histories of the elite attached to particular institutions of further education. Mahmoud Smati too has written a social history of the Algerian elite before and throughout colonisation<sup>106</sup>. An intellectual history of migration must draw from those social histories, together with additional qualifying material, to paint a picture of intellectual migration between 1914 and 1962.

Qualifying material can be memoirs, diaries, letters, cultural products and other such material that makes the connection between their lives and their ideas explicit. Not all qualifying material is as thorough as others. Moreover, it helps when assessing the impact of migration upon the ideas of key historical actors within a given region. That is to say, it helps to provide insight into the sociological imaginations of the subjects themselves, how they understood the connection between the 'kinds of men they were becoming' and 'the kinds of history-making' they might have taken part in<sup>107</sup>. This approach helps to identify how notable migrants in writing their memoirs understood how their ideas and activities were intended to respond to their perceived historical trajectory, to give meaning to their intellectual and cultural production as a result of their experienced life.

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<sup>103</sup> Reid, D.M., 'Educational and Career Choices of Egyptian Students, 1882-1922', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 8 : 3, 349-378, (July 1977)

<sup>104</sup> Vermeren, *Ecole, Elite et Pouvoir au Maroc et Tunisie au XXe Siècle*, (Rabat, 2002)

<sup>105</sup> Sraieb, N., *Le collège Sadiki de Tunis 1875-1956 : enseignement et nationalisme*, (Paris, 1995)

<sup>106</sup> Smati, M., *Les Elites Algériennes sous la colonisation – Tome I*, (Dahlab, ?)

<sup>107</sup> Mills, *The Sociological Imagination*, pp. 3-4

Writing history through a series of personal anecdotes could seem inherently ahistorical. It is naturally extremely important to contextualise those anecdotes with material which situates them within historical proceedings. Nevertheless this is partly a history of sentimental reactions to and perceptions of experiences. It is not simply a history of what happened but how people perceived and experienced events, and how that affected the way they saw themselves, each other, their collective identity and their faith. In that sense, anecdotal representations of events and experiences is the only way of attaining that narrative, which is crucial not only in understanding intellectual developments and cultural production from those agents, but also in understanding the place of this rite of passage in North African popular memory. The memoirs of important cultural producers and political actors play an important role in the memory of the Parisian connection, and in turn in the memory of their country's contact with Europe. Therefore the story of intellectual migration and its significance for global intellectual history will be told largely through the eyes of those migrants whose accounts of Paris, used in conjunction with other circumstantial material, paint a picture of intellectual migration from the north of Africa to Paris between 1914 and 1962.

## **The Migrants – A Survey**

### **Doria Shafik**

Doria Shafik was a middle class Egyptian who attended a French language missionary school, as was commonly done by girls of her rank.<sup>108</sup> After her baccalaureate, receiving the

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<sup>108</sup> Nelson, *Shafik*, p. 12

second best results in the country<sup>109</sup>, she went to Paris to get her degree in 1933 and then doctorate from the Sorbonne in 1940.

Shafik's commitment to further education was very much self-motivated. She convinced her father to allow her to pursue a further education and contacted Egyptian feminist Huda Shaarawi to help her find funding for her Parisian degrees, which she received from the Ministry of Education upon Shaarawi's recommendation<sup>110</sup>. Shafik was herself a feminist and was the first Muslim woman to participate in the beauty pageant Miss Egypt in 1936<sup>111</sup>. By studying in France Shafik was liberating herself from the shackles of traditional gender constructs and expectations in Egypt. Yet her account of studying in Paris shows that she was still extremely sensitive about her reputation back home.

Shafik returned from Paris with an extremely modern countenance, being deeply attached to Parisian fashion and style. These are reflected in her journalistic work for Princess Chevikar's paper *La Femme Nouvelle* and her own paper, *al-Bint al-Nil*. Doria is said to have made several attempts at writing her memoirs, all of which remained in an 'unpublishable' state<sup>112</sup>. Their content has been compiled and annotated by Cynthia Nelson in her biographical study *Doria Shafik, An Egyptian Feminist*. Shafik also produced several essays on the condition of women in Egypt<sup>113</sup>, her doctoral thesis on Egyptian art<sup>114</sup>, a historical novel (of sorts)<sup>115</sup>, a collection of poetry and many journalistic pieces. Some

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid., p. 24

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., p. 26

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., p.xxiv

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., p. xvi

<sup>113</sup> Shafik, D., *La Femme et Le Droite Religieux dans l'Islam*, (Paris, 1940)

<sup>114</sup> Shafik, D., *L'Art pour l'art dans l'Egypte antique*, (Paris, 1940)

<sup>115</sup> Shafik, D., *L'Esclave Sultane*, (Paris, 1952)

editions of *La Femme Nouvelle* are available on the website of the *Centre d'Études Alexandrines*<sup>116</sup>.

### **Taha Husayn**

The 'most prestigious of modern Arab writers'<sup>117</sup>, Taha Husayn was one of the few Egyptians to study in France during the First World War. He remained there until 1919, bar a brief interruption in 1915 resulting from a funding crisis at the Egyptian University in Cairo. During that time he became the first Egyptian to achieve the French licentiate, as well as completing a diploma of higher education, supervised by Emile Durkheim until his death in November 1917. Upon his return to Egypt with his French wife Suzanne, he went on to begin a prolific literary career, with a brief stint as Minister of Education from 1950 to 1952.

Taha Husayn was originally an intellectual migrant by virtue of being a student in France. The last son of a large family with limited means, he started off from a socially and physically disadvantaged position, being blinded when young by a badly treated medical condition. His studies were funded by the Egyptian University in Cairo, making him officially part of the Egyptian Student Missions to Europe. Upon returning home, he became a bona fide Egyptian intellectual, teaching at Cairo University, publishing literature, essays, social commentaries, philosophy and articles. Being married to French wife and having such an affinity with French scholarship, he often returned for conferences, literary festivals and interviews. These later examples of intellectual migration were undertaken as an intellectual and as an *Adib*.

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<sup>116</sup> <http://www.cealex.org/>

<sup>117</sup> Tomiche, N., 'Taha Husayn : A la recherche d'un monde perdu', *Arabica*, Tome XXXVIII, Fascicule 1, p. 107

Taha Husayn's experience of France as a student is volunteered in the third volume of his memoirs. The English translation by Kenneth Cragg has been published as *A Passage to France*. This account shows Husayn to have had an especially studious personality for whom travelling to Paris constituted the disinterested pursuit of knowledge. He has also produced tremendous volumes of literary outputs, from essays, articles to fictional literature<sup>118</sup>. One of his novels, *al-Adib*, or Man of Letters, directly deals with the topic of Oriental students in Paris<sup>119</sup>. Like many of his contemporaries, including Tawfiq al-Hakim<sup>120</sup> and Yahya Haqqi<sup>121</sup>, it deals with the spiritual and existential crises experienced by Egyptian students abroad. The case of Taha Husayn therefore provides insight into the way intellectual migration was represented at a popular level in modern Arabic literature. It also pertains to issues relating to the development of Egyptian modernist literature, which will be discussed in Chapter Five.

### **Mohamed Hassan Ouazzani**

Mohamed Hassan Ouazzani was one of the first Moroccans to undertake a further education in France. Upon returning to Morocco, he became an important figure in the Moroccan nationalist movement. He was heavily involved in the activities of the CAM. When this body split in 1937, he led the ensuing faction more prone to democracy, *Ash-shoura al-Istiqlal*. Upon independence, he became the leader of the PDI, which pushed for greater democratic reforms upon independence, still within the auspices of a Moroccan monarchy based upon the British parliamentary model. His party, which became the PDC in

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<sup>118</sup> For a near comprehensive bibliography of his work, see 'Bibliography of Taha Husayn', *Journal of Arabic Literature*, 6, 140-145, (1975)

<sup>119</sup> Hussein, T., *A Man of Letters*, trans., el-Zayyat, M., (Cairo, 1994)

<sup>120</sup> al-Hakim, *Bird of the East*, translated by R. Bayly Winder, (Beirut, 1966)

<sup>121</sup> Hakki, Y., *The Lamp of Umm Hashim and other stories*, trans., Johnson-Davies, D., (Cairo, 2004)

1959, were heavily targeted during the Years of Lead, with many party members officially missing. The PDC continues to this day to be a voice for democratic reform in the region, although its influence since Ouazzani's death has diminished.

Mohamed Hassan Ouazzani came to Paris in 1925 to study for the French Baccalaureate at the *lycée Charlemagne*; he then entered higher education in 1927. Ouazzani was a self-motivated student who was driven by the desire for self-development, not the acquisition of power<sup>122</sup>. Despite being one of the first Moroccans to obtain a degree in France, Ouazzani acted independently from the expectations of the colonial authorities. Instead of pursuing a practical degree programme such as medicine, agricultural science or engineering, he chose to study journalism and political science; topics that did not serve the rhetorically utilitarian interests of the Protectorate. Though not prohibited, this course of study was discouraged by the then Governor General himself, Maréchal Lyautey. France had enough political scientists to serve Moroccan interests, he said<sup>123</sup>. Nevertheless, Ouazzani enrolled to *l'École Libre des Sciences Politiques*, the School of Journalism and at the School of Oriental Languages. He also audited classes at the *Collège de France* and at the Carnegie Peace Foundation. Ouazzani's agency as a politically inclined migrant therefore overcame that of structural circumstances.

Ouazzani frequently returned to Paris as an advocate of Moroccan nationalism. He was also in the 1930s a prominent figure in the North African transmigrant community in Paris. Along with Omar Abdeljalil and Ahmed Belafrej, he regularly attended meetings established by the AEMNAF, the ENA and other pan-Maghribi and Pan-Arab political events

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<sup>122</sup> He rejected a post as Minister of State in 1960 to protest against the single-party system, *Combats, tome 1*, p. 366

<sup>123</sup> Ouazzani, *Mudhakkirat*, Vol. 1, p. 440

in France, North Africa and Cairo. So although Ouazzani originally travelled as a student, he was an intellectual migrant throughout his life as an intellectual actor, journalist and political lobbyist.

Ouazzani produced some written accounts of his time in Paris. However like all of his memoirs, they are rather official; an impersonal account providing a historical overview of the Moroccan nationalist movement from his perspective. Much of the content of his six volume memoirs, written in Arabic and for the most part untranslated, do not concern him directly. Ouazzani also published a large number of articles throughout his life in his nationalist papers and through the party literature he produced as leader of the PDI. Some of these have been compiled by his family under the auspices of the *Fondation Mohamed Hassan Ouazzani*, along with translated extracts of his memoirs<sup>124</sup>. Others have been published untranslated in compilations entitled *The War of the Pen, Harb al-Qalam*<sup>125</sup>. His contribution to the development of Moroccan nationalism in the interwar period and post-colonial thought are of interest to this thesis and will be discussed later in the politics section. His memoirs also provide insight into the North African student community in Paris and political movements connected to it. It therefore contributes to the wider picture of Maghribi transmigrant communities in Paris.

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<sup>124</sup> Ouazzani, *Entretiens avec mon père* ; Ouazzani, M.H., *Combats d'un nationaliste marocain*, tome 1 &2, (Fes, c.1987)

<sup>125</sup> Ouazzani, M.H.O., *Harb al-Qalam*, (Fes, ?)

### **Tawfiq al-Hakim**

Tawfiq al-Hakim came to Paris in 1926 for four years to undertake a doctorate in Law at the peak of Egyptian intellectual migration to France<sup>126</sup>. Tawfiq was born into a relatively wealthy Egyptian family with considerable social standing, his father being a *qadi*. Tawfiq had had a full modern secondary and higher education in Egypt before travelling to France, with knowledge of both English and French. His studies in Paris were funded privately by his father and he was therefore not part of any government orchestrated scheme.

In funding Tawfiq's doctorate, his father intended his son to reach the higher echelons of Egypt's law profession, compensating for Tawfiq's poor results in his licentiate at the University of Cairo. So Tawfiq was sent to Paris for careerist ambitions and prospects. Yet it is clear from his autobiography that he was not inclined towards law, but instead to theatre and the arts:

'Even while I was at Law School, there were no indications of any inclination toward this profession on my part – I who kept company only with artists, even in my student days.'<sup>127</sup>

Al-Hakim did not go to France to pursue theatre; he was sent to France to escape the socially undesirable prospect of a career as a man of letters<sup>128</sup>. But his personality, his love and devotion to the arts and theatre, awakened originally in Egypt and developed throughout his licentiate in Cairo, meant that he engaged with Paris' cultural and artistic assets more than with its academic facilities. He shirked his scholastic duties, deemed so important by Taha Husayn, in favour of submersing himself in Paris' avant-garde theatrical milieu.

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<sup>126</sup> There were 615 Egyptian students in French higher education in 1926; AS, 43<sup>ème</sup> Volume, (Paris, 1927), p. 46

<sup>127</sup> Al-Hakim, T., *The Prison of Life – An autobiographical essay*, translated Cachia, P., (Cairo, 1964), p. 165

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 206

The fact that Tawfiq was a privately funded student afforded him greater freedom to follow artistic pursuits. In 1930, Tawfiq returned home without the doctorate. His family were said to have been ashamed. Despite his academic failure, he went on to work as a county prosecutor, a career which provided the writer with considerable source of artistic material, inspiring one his most acclaimed plays, the *Diary of a Country Prosecutor*. He also continued to write and produce Egyptian Arabic literature, becoming one of the most important names in Egyptian theatre. In 1936, he abandoned his legal career and dedicated himself exclusively to the arts.

Like Taha Husayn, Tawfiq al-Hakim produced a semi-autobiographical novel on the experience of oriental students in Paris, entitled *Bird of the East*. Although some of the stories and characters were real<sup>129</sup>, they are written as a philosophical narrative regarding the dangers of cultural disjuncture and moral corruption that epitomize the East-West dialectic, a theme he explores considerably in his writings. He has also produced what Pierre Cachia calls a psycho-analytical memoir, *The Prisoner of Life*, which explores the early trajectory of al-Hakim's theatrical career, as well as his familial relations. These inevitably provide some insight into the impact of Paris on al-Hakim's literary career, primarily by demonstrating the extent to which his artistic exploits were founded upon Egyptian, rather than European, cultural milieus.

Al-Hakim also published some private letters to his French friend André, who also features in the previously mentioned semi-autobiographical novel. Although written originally in French, the author decided to translate them and publish edited sections in

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<sup>129</sup> Evident when comparing the novel to his private correspondences, Al-Hakim, T., *Zahrat al-Umr*, (Cairo, 1965?)

Arabic<sup>130</sup>. These letters provide some more candid and less contrived accounts of the writer's reactions to European cultural currents and his experience of them at the time. It also provides an opportunity to connect some of the content of his novel to his personal experiences. Yet these letters are heavily edited clearly with the intention of controlling the narrative regarding his artistic and intellectual formation. Nonetheless it provides excellent qualifying material. That material is so personal that it only serves to qualify the connection between his biography and his cultural production, rather than providing any wider information about the student milieu which could shed light on the experience of other Egyptian intellectuals and students in Paris at the time.

### **Malek Bennabi**

A notable North African migrant with plenty of qualifying material is Algerian thinker, Malek Bennabi. Born in 1905 in the village of Tebessa, Bennabi was at the tail-end of Islamic reformism and acted on the fringes of Algerian nationalism. He was brought up in a household which straddled the traditionally Islamic and progressively French cultural spheres. His father was a *khodja*<sup>131</sup> while his uncle, whom he lived with in Constantine, was an active member of his local *zawiya*<sup>132</sup>. Bennabi was educated in both modern French and traditionally Islamic schools. His first experience of France was an unsuccessful foray as a migrant labourer. He later returned for further education at the age of twenty five.

During the hiatus of the Second World War, Bennabi started to write, developing a literary career focused on a Nietzschean style deconstruction of Islamic civilisation. He

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<sup>130</sup> Al-Hakim, *Zahrat al-Umr*, p. 11, 12 & 14

<sup>131</sup> Teacher in the mixed commune

<sup>132</sup> North African equivalent of Sufi *khanqahs* in the Near East

continues to this day to be heralded as one of the most important Algerian intellectuals of the twentieth century and his followers continue to propagate his writings and ideas in Algeria, Europe and across the Muslim world<sup>133</sup>.

Bennabi's decision to study in France was financially supported by his father<sup>134</sup>, even though they survived on a modest income. This dynamic of poor families seeking social mobility through the European education of their offspring is poignantly represented in the short story, *The Lamp of Umm Hashim* by Egyptian writer and diplomat, Yahya Haqqi:

'Ismail would later learn that [his father] had fallen on bad times. Even so, he had not once been late in depositing the money for his son in the bank. [...]. Ismail was having a good time in Scotland and eating steak, while his father was confined to the house and making his supper off radishes or taamiya.'<sup>135</sup>

Yet unlike that novel's protagonist, Bennabi did not travel to pursue a pre-determined programme of study or to attain a definite career. His first choice, the Institute of Oriental Studies, rejected his application on supposedly political grounds, so he enrolled into an electrical engineering school that specialised in wireless and radio technology adjacent to his friend's apartment<sup>136</sup>. He did not ultimately pursue a career in this field. Instead he ended up as a notable intellectual, so there was no clear trajectory in Bennabi's education. When Bennabi came to Paris, he was looking for something. He was looking for answers, for a vocation, for a direction, for inspiration. This affected the way he later conceptualised both cultural relations between France and the Muslim world and his experience of intellectual migration.

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<sup>133</sup> Interview with Abderahmane Benamara, 'Bennabi, à l'instar des prophètes', posted online by Rédaction LQA, 7 Octobre 2010, accessed 05 July 2011, <http://www.lequotidienalgerie.org/2010/10/07/bennabi-a-l%E2%80%99instar-des-prophetes>

<sup>134</sup> Bennabi, *Mémoires*, p. 166

<sup>135</sup> Haqqi, *The Lamp*, p. 71

<sup>136</sup> Bennabi, M., *Mudhakkirat shahid al-qarn*, (Beirut, 1979), p. 218

Malek Bennabi published two volumes of memoirs, published under the title *Mudhakkirat shahid al-qarn*, The Memoirs of a Witness of the Century. These are both self-conscious memoirs from the perspective of an intellectual who seeks to set a narrative to their life trajectory. The second volume, dealing with his time in Paris, shows Bennabi to have been on an intellectual quest, not the kind of student jumping hoops or chasing women. His contact and engagement with French intellectual culture is marked in his literary behaviour. His memoirs provide a context for many of his theories, in particular his ideas on the *colonisabilité* of Muslims and the *post-Almohadian* man, discussed in Chapter Five. The circumstances of Algerian student mobility certainly affected his experience of Paris, particularly those relating to political discrimination, surveillance and eventual restrictions of activity.

### **Neo-Destour Founders: Habib Bourguiba, Mahmoud El-Materi, Tahar Sfar**

President of Tunisia for thirty years, Habib Bourguiba was born into a large family of moderate means. Nevertheless he received a decent education, going to Sadiki College, Lycée Carnot then the Sorbonne where he studied law and political sciences. He began a career as a lawyer before committing his life to politics. He was one of the founding members of the Neo-Destour, elected first as Secretary-General, then as President when Mahmoud El-Materi resigned in 1937. Bourguiba was a prolific orator and a vast collection of his speeches have been published. He wrote extensively for the Destour and Neo-Destour papers *La Voix du Tunisien* and *L'Action Tunisienne*. Several volumes have been published compiling most of these articles<sup>137</sup>.

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<sup>137</sup> Bourguiba, H., *Ma vie, mon œuvre*, Vol 1929-1933, (Paris, 1985)

He also conducted a series of autobiographical lectures as President in 1973. Transcripts of these are available on the website *Bourguiba.com*. Through these we can get an impression of his time in Paris, his motives for studying abroad and his experience of it. As expected from such a glorified head of state and leader of a revolution, he offers a narrative of his life that is entirely framed by his political and revolutionary objectives. His life thus appears as a direct and deliberate trajectory towards his becoming leader of an independent Tunisia. Nevertheless he was part of a crucial generation of Tunisia's intellectual elite who were conditioned by their French intellectual formation but for whom Paris offered an opportunity for revolt as well a centre of colonial power.

Mahmoud El-Materi was the first president of the newly formed Neo-Destour. Despite being a trained medical doctor, he was prevented from working at Tunis' hospital because of his Tunisian nationality. He ran instead a successful local practice. He studied in Paris a few years before Bourguiba and was a very important figure in encouraging further young Tunisians to study abroad. He also wrote for the Destour and Neo-Destour papers and was exiled with his fellow compatriots in Borj-Leboeuf.

El-Materi did write his memoirs, published as *Itinéraire d'un militant* in 1992, but these start after his return to Tunisia upon completing his studies. He does not therefore provide an account of his time in the French capital or of the influence it had upon him. Nevertheless it does provide considerable insight not just into the workings of the Neo-Destour in the 1930s, but also the culture of intellectual migration from Tunisia to France, being an important figure in raising funds for Tunisian students. He also provides a useful counterpoint to Bourguiba's own account of interwar Tunisian nationalism, which comes across as self-congratulatory at best, narcissistic at worst.

Tahar Sfar was a contemporary and friend of Habib Bourguiba, going through Sadiki College, Lycée Carnot and Paris at the same time as the Tunisian president. He was a lawyer in Tunis and, like Bourguiba and El-Materi, wrote articles for the Destour and Neo-Destour papers. He was also on the founding committee of the Neo-Destour. Sfar was a progressive thinker of the Tahar Haddad school, contributing along with Bahri Guiga to the Tunisian paper for women, *Leïla*<sup>138</sup>, which was akin to Doria Shafik's *La Femme Nouvelle*, covering fashion, poetry and day-to-day concerns of educated women in Tunisia.

He wrote a memoir in 1935 while exiled in Zarzis. Unlike El-Materi and Bourguiba's autobiographical accounts, these are private reflections which were not intended to be published. They therefore range from philosophical musings, nostalgic recollections (including his time in Paris), social commentary and political rants. They are useful for providing a candid and honest insight into the mind-set of his generation of French educated Tunisians and as co-founder of the Neo-Destour.

### **Mehdi Ben Barka**

With the media frenzy surrounding his mysterious and tragic abduction, Mehdi Ben Barka needs little introduction. The Moroccan nationalist, founder of the UNFP, despite coming from a family of modest means, was educated at the College Moulay Youssef in Rabat. His education was sponsored and closely monitored by both Moroccan nationalists and the French authorities, who both sought to form him into an ally. He went on to study mathematics at the University of Algiers in the 1940s. He was a member of the Istiqlal and was on the committee that negotiated the return of Mohamed V at Aix-les-Bains in 1955.

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<sup>138</sup> *Leïla, revue illustrée de la femme 1936-1941*, ed. Boujmil, H., (Tunis, 2007)

Ben Barka's time in Paris prior to Moroccan independence was limited to a short stay during the 1939 Moroccan *foyer* to France (discussed in Chapter Four) and the occasional political trip in the 1940s when his friend and colleague, Abderrahim Bouabid, was studying law. It was not until Moroccan independence in 1956 that Ben Barka spent any significant amount of time in Paris. In 1960, he enrolled at Paris' Law Faculty to flee political persecution in Morocco. Ben Barka was also an important figure in the Non-Alignment movement and Third-World nationalism, taking part in the *Conférence de la solidarité des Peuples afro-asiatiques* in Accra in 1965 and planning the *Conférence tricontinentale* in Havana in 1966 before his abduction.

Ben Barka, due in part to his premature death, did not produce any account of his life. His brother has posthumously produced a biography from childhood to the last contact he had with his younger sibling. Though written by a third person, this is still an intimate account of Mehdi Ben Barka's life, events and thoughts. It does try to reproduce Ben Barka's reflections, reactions and inspirations to those events that concerned him. He even relays the significance of moving to Paris for his brother's ideas, although this cannot be corroborated. Ben Barka did produce one extended essay in 1962, entitled *Autocritique*, on the need for full political and economic decolonisation after independence.

### **Gisele Halimi**

Gisèle Halimi was born Zeiza Gisèle Élise Taïeb into a poor Jewish household in Tunisia. Her family were religiously conservative and she was raised with traditional expectations of domestic life and female subservience. As a Jewish girl she had more opportunities for

education than if she'd been a Muslim Tunisian, having access to French schools or schools by the *Alliance Israélite*<sup>139</sup>.

Halimi was committed to her education, getting good grades and independently seeking out scholastic bursaries and book loans available to poor families<sup>140</sup>. She refused to marry at the age of 16 and instead sought out the means to undertake a Baccalaureate. Upon the conclusion of the Second World War, she managed to convince the authorities to let her travel to France to study. Being self-funded, she worked operating switchboards at night for *Paris-Militaire*<sup>141</sup>, as well as being a private tutor for an acquaintance of her brother in Paris<sup>142</sup>. She studied Latin and Italian, before moving into Law.

Halimi quickly developed a notable career as a political lawyer, defending victims of show trials during North African decolonisation, from the Al-Halia case in 1955 to that of Djamila Boupacha. She then went on to be a prominent active member of the *Choisir* feminist group, advocating for the decriminalisation of abortion in France that resulted in the Simone Veil Law of 1975. She was also a signatory of the *Manifeste des 343*. She then went to defend militant professors in the Congo, Basque separatists in the Burgos Trial in 1969 and was President of the Russell Tribunal against American War Crimes in Vietnam. She was also for a short time elected Deputy for the Department of Isère until 1984.

Privately, Gisèle Halimi was the mother of three sons, twice married. Once her father naturalised she became a French citizen. She settled in France permanently and integrated herself into the heart of French intellectual and literary circles, marrying Jean-

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<sup>139</sup> See Albert Memmi's semi-autobiographical novel *La statue de sel*, (Paris, 1966) or Elie Cohen-Hadria's memoirs, *Du Protectorat français à l'indépendance tunisienne – souvenirs d'un témoin socialiste*, (Nice, 1976), p. 8 or Mernissi's memoirs, *Dreams of Trespass*, p. 95

<sup>140</sup> Halimi, G., *La cause des femmes*, (Paris, 1992), p. 29

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, p.46

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31

Paul Sartre's secretary, Claude Faux. She had close relations with Simone de Beauvoir, was Sartre's attorney in his later years, and was closely acquainted with Albert Camus, Yves Dechezelles and even at one point François Mitterrand. Louis Aragon was a witness at her second wedding and godfather to her third child<sup>143</sup>. She nevertheless continued to follow and support Tunisia's struggle for liberation and maintained contacts with Habib Bourguiba<sup>144</sup>.

Halimi produced two memoirs where she offers detailed insight into her life choices and proceedings. The first, *Le lait de l'orangier*, was translated into English by Dorothy Blair. The second, *La cause des femmes*, details the proceedings of the Bobigny Trial and the reasons for her own feminist inclinations. Both these provide considerable insight into her upbringing in a traditional Jewish household in Tunisia, the significance of her education, studying in France and her career. This material is especially insightful regarding her involvement in so many notable political trials, connecting her feminism with her anti-colonial activism. It also addresses many questions regarding identity dynamics in colonised Tunisia.

Halimi was also a writer. She published several books concerning her most notable trials, often to publicise her campaigns. These included *Djamila Boupacha* in 1962, which also bears Simone de Beauvoir's name as co-author, *Le procès Burgos* in 1971 (with a preface by Sartre) and *Le procès Bobigny* in 2006.

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<sup>143</sup> Halimi, G., *Milk for the Orange Tree*, translated by Blair, D., (London, 1990), p. 276

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 186

**Mohammed Harbi**

Mohammed Harbi was born into a rich and notable Algerian family in the village of El-Arrouch. Despite his privileged background, he neglected his education and family status in favour of nationalist politics. He began his militancy from a young age and contrary to his social conditioning, rejected the politics of the *Elu* in favour of the populist politics of the MTLD.

Officially Harbi came to Paris in 1952 to study but from day one he joined the FdF and became an active member of Algerian nationalist and student politics in Paris. Once his involvement in the FLN became known to the authorities, he was forced underground, narrowly escaping arrest on several occasions, before being forced into temporary exile in Germany in 1958<sup>145</sup>. After independence, he worked for Ben Bella's government then was arrested after Boumedienne's coup in 1965. He eventually escaped to Paris, where he has spent the rest of his life as an academic.

He has produced several important histories of the FLN<sup>146</sup>, including one in collaboration with Gilbert Meynier<sup>147</sup>, as well as a memoir, which resembles a kind of revisionist history of the FLN in autobiographical form. This memoir provides very useful insight not just into Algerian militancy in Paris after the Second World War but also into Paris' political climate, the connections between various nationalist movements, militants and the student milieu.

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<sup>145</sup> Harbi, M., *Une vie*, p. 188

<sup>146</sup> Harbi, M., *Le F.L.N: mirage et réalité*, (Paris, 1980)

<sup>147</sup> Harbi, M., Meynier, G., *Le FLN, documents et histoire : 1954-1962*, (Paris, 2004)

**Mostefa Lacheraf**

Like Harbi, Mostefa Lacheraf was an FLN militant. He studied and taught in Paris after the Second World War. He is considered by James McDougall a 'theoretician of FLN hegemony'<sup>148</sup>. He contributed to the Algerian nationalist press and wrote a primordial history of Algeria post-independence<sup>149</sup>. He was an important member of the FLN during the Algerian conflict. After Algerian independence, he went on to pursue both political and intellectual interests, filling various posts as statesman and diplomat until his death in 2007.

Lacheraf also produced a memoir which was published by Casbah Editions in 1998. Though clearly an autobiography, it is considered by Lacheraf to represent the story of a whole generation of 'Algerian citizens'<sup>150</sup>. Both Harbi and Lacheraf's account of their time in Paris provide insight into the post-war student milieu and its connection with anti-colonial and nationalist movements in the city.

**Messali Hadj**

Messali Hadj stands a little as the odd one out in this list of intellectual migrants because he was neither an intellectual nor a student. He did audit some classes stationed in Bordeaux towards the end of the First World War, but he came to Paris as an economic migrant. Yet he was also a political migrant and he contributed significantly through the ENA to Algerian post-colonial thought. Categorising political actors and thinkers as intellectuals during this epoch is supported by Gramsci in his prison diaries:

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<sup>148</sup> McDougall, 'Introduction', *Nation, Society and Culture in North Africa*, ed. McDougall, J., (London, 2003), p. 159

<sup>149</sup> Lacheraf, M., *L'Algérie: nation et société*, (Paris, 1965)

<sup>150</sup> Lacheraf, *Des noms*, p. 7

'That all members of a political party should be regarded as intellectuals is an affirmation that can easily lend itself to mockery and caricature. But if one thinks about it nothing could be more exact. [...]. What matters is the function, which is directive and organizational, i.e. educative, i.e. intellectual. A tradesman does not join a political party in order to do business, nor an industrialist in order to produce more at a lower cost [...]. In the political party the elements of an economic social group get beyond that moment of their historical development and become agents of more general activities of a national and international character'<sup>151</sup>

Moreover, Messali Hadj was an important figure in Paris' North African student and intellectual milieu, particularly among Tunisians and Moroccans in the interwar period. Despite being a major figure in the Algerian nationalist movement, he remained in France until his death in 1974.

An extensive array of biographies has been published on Messali Hadj's life. A section of his memoirs have also been published which provides valuable insight not just into the workings of the early Algerian nationalist movement in France but also North African and Arab transmigrant communities in Paris<sup>152</sup>.

### **And the Rest**

There are other migrants who will feature throughout this study but whose case is either less prominent, less pertinent to the matters discussed or who have insufficient qualifying material to analyse in greater depth. They nonetheless add breadth to the study and help at times to fill in gaps where material is otherwise lacking or unavailable. These include Ahmed Taleb-Ibrahimi, UGEMA president, FLN militant and later Algerian politician. His

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<sup>151</sup> Gramsci, [Intellectuals] in *The Gramsci Reader*, pp. 310-311

<sup>152</sup> Hadj, M., *Les mémoires de Messali Hadj 1898-1938*, (Alger, 2006)

account of Paris is somewhat superficial but does indicate the impact of Paris' personalist movement on North African migrants<sup>153</sup>.

There are also the Tunisians Mahmoud Messadi, Eli Cohen-Hadria and Albert Memmi who are mentioned but are not central to the thesis. The latter two, being Jewish Tunisians, are particularly interesting for the identity question discussed in Chapter Seven.

Egyptians intellectuals and scholars Aberrahman Badawi<sup>154</sup> and Dr. Mubarak Zaki both wrote their memoirs in Arabic dealing with their time in Paris. This material is at times useful in setting the scene and providing further insight into the Egyptian student milieu in Paris. However most of their literary production was in Arabic. The Arabic language skills of this author are not sufficient to undertake a serious analysis of their literary production, for which their memoirs serve as qualifying material.

This study also utilises the writings and memoirs of North Africans who were not intellectual migrants to Paris, but whose stories provide useful complementary material to the topics discussed. These include the writings of Ferhat Abbas in relation to Algerian nationalist politics. The memoirs of Fathma Amrouche are pertinent to the question of Algerian identity formation. The same goes for that of Fatima Mernissi in the Moroccan context, which also provides insight into the impact of the Moroccan nationalist momentum on traditional Moroccan family dynamics. While the memoirs of Huda Shaarawi sets the scene well for understanding Doria Shafik's Egyptian feminism<sup>155</sup>.

Similarly, the study includes accounts from migrants who originate from outside of North Africa but whose accounts are either complementary to those of North Africans or

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<sup>153</sup> Taleb-Ibrahimi, A., *Mémoires d'un algérien, Tome 1 : Rêves et épreuves (1932-1965)*, (Alger, 2006)

<sup>154</sup> Badawi, A., *Sirat Hayati*, 2 Vols. (Beirut, 2000)

<sup>155</sup> Shaarawi, H., *Harem Years, The Memoirs of an Egyptian Feminist*, trans. Badran, M., (London, 1986)

whose writings are pertinent to the subjects discussed. The writings of Sayyid Qutb, Ali Shariati, Suhayl Idris and Michel Aflaq for instance help to situate intellectual and cultural production of North African migrants in a Muslim or Arabic cultural sphere. Others, such as the writings of Josephine Baker, Shusha Guppy or relating to organisations such as the FEANF provide complementary information on international migration to and student movements in Paris.

The brief round-up of intellectual migrants included in this study shows the category to be heterogenous. They show some breadth of outcome, as some finally resided in Paris, others undertook circular forms of migration between North Africa and France. Some were important figures in Paris' transmigrant communities; others were important figures in encouraging chain migration at home. Some were students, others were manual labourers. Some adopted French nationality, others rejected it.

The survey also shows the variety of sources available. Some memoirs provide much more useful and universally relevant insight into the North African intellectual milieu in Paris, while others contain much more mundane information about accommodation and leisure activities; or they simply reproduce stereotypes. Therefore some cases will be integrated to a much larger degree within this study, while others will serve more to corroborate information provided by another source. Ultimately, these cases emphasise how Paris meant something different to each intellectual migrant, which should already make us wary of making sweeping assumptions about the impact of Paris on the development of ideas in the region.

## Chapter Three – Paris and the Historical Agency of Space

An equal partner to the story of intellectual migration from North Africa is that of Paris. It is a story that is not unique to the migration of North Africans as Paris gathered students, intellectuals and artists from all over the world. Since Egyptians, Moroccans, Tunisians and Algerians also travelled to other destinations within Europe and the Near East for the pursuit of knowledge, there is no exclusively symbiotic relationship between Paris and North African intellectual migration. It is rather the intersection of two different strands of local history, itself a symptom of twentieth century globalisation.

Paris during this period was an especially dynamic environment. From the Lost Generation of the 1920s to the Existentialists of the forties and fifties, Paris' cultural history has become something of a legend. It is important to explore both Paris' history and its urban identity. The Parisian reality inevitably affected the experience of migrants. But its identity shaped an imaginary of Paris abroad that remotely spearheaded the non-Western world's encounters with Europe. These relate to the perception of Paris as a *Ville Lumière*, centre of progress, creator of the avant-garde or harbinger of moral laxity. In relation to intellectual migration especially, this distinction is crucial to understanding the dichotomy between the history (and therefore experience) of Paris and the imaginary (and therefore expectation) of Paris.

## **The History of Paris 1914-1962**

1914 to 1962 was a distinct phase in Parisian cultural history. Intellectually, Paris as a centre of internationalism, modernism, humanism and existentialism came to fruition with the outbreak of the First World War and petered out in the late 1960s with the onset of structuralism, post-structuralism, and all things *nouveau*. While cultural histories of France tend to use 1968 as their historical marker, the late 50s and early 60s was a period of transition. Driven by the tide of consumerism, commodity culture and popular culture from across the Atlantic, French culture adapted and evolved in response to the superseding of American cultural dominance.

That is not to say that 1914 to 1962 was a consistent and homogenous era, given the remarkable changes and turbulences of France's political make up. France not only underwent two World Wars, experienced the twentieth century's worst economic depression, it was occupied by foreign forces and it gained and lost territories throughout this period<sup>156</sup>. These had a profound impact on cultural production in the capital, both by the French and by its visitors and expatriate communities. Yet there was coherence to that cultural production as the era's tumultuous events often served to crystalize rather than sever burgeoning movements and intellectual currents.

Paris started out during this period as the centre of the world's international economic and political world order, hosting the Paris Peace Conference as well as other institutions of international relations. It was however to lose this position upon the conclusion of the Second World War.

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<sup>156</sup> In 1919, France regained Alsace-Lorraine from the Germans, a territory they had lost in the 1870 Franco-Prussian War. They also acquired Mandates over the former Ottoman territories of Syria and Lebanon, negotiated during the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916, only to lose them again in 1936 and 1943 respectively.

It was also the time of political struggle between the Left and Right. The PCF was created at the *Congrès de Tours* in 1920, grew in importance in the 1930s before being banned by Délaadier's government in 1939<sup>157</sup>. After the war, communism dominated not just politics but also culture; many notable artists and intellectuals associated with it as members or 'fellow-travellers'<sup>158</sup>. Messali Hadj and Mohammed Harbi's memoirs show that communism was a very significant presence for Algerian migrants especially. Throughout the period in question, communism was an increasingly polarising force in France.

The public mood in Paris in the 20s and 30s was considerably anti-war. In 1932, the Association of Revolutionary Writers and Artists (AEAR) was founded with help from the Komi tern<sup>159</sup>. It gathered much of Paris' intellectual and artistic elite, from surrealists such as Louis Aragon, André Breton and Paul Eluard<sup>160</sup>, to foreign residents such as Tristan Tzara, Salvador Dali, Max Ernest, Alberto Giacometti<sup>161</sup>. They printed a literary review and advocacy outlet *Commune* in Paris to make known their struggle against '[...] French fascism of the Right and the Left'<sup>162</sup>. Such activism bestowed upon the city an atmosphere of political criticism and social commentary before Sartre's philosophy of the *engagé*.

The ascendancy of the Left during the interwar period culminated in the election of the Popular Front in 1936. While it brought about considerable social reform in France, Leon Blum's government eventually came to an end in 1938. This proved a disappointing

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<sup>157</sup> Scriven, M., Hewitt, N., Kelly, M., Atack, M., 'Wars and Class War (1914-1944)', in *French Cultural Studies - an introduction*, ed. Forbes, J. and Kelly, M., (Oxford, 1995), p. 70

<sup>158</sup> Kelly, M., Fallaize, E., Ridehalgh, A., 'Crises and Modernization', in *Ibid.*, pp. 127-129

<sup>159</sup> For more information on the AEAR, see Racine, N., 'L'Association des Ecrivains et Artistes Révolutionnaires (A.E.A.R.) - La revue "Commune" et la lutte idéologique contre le fascisme (1932-1936)', *Le mouvement social*, No. 54, Front Populaire, (Jan-Mar 1936), pp. 29-47

<sup>160</sup> 'Lettre autographe de Paul Éluard datée du 5 décembre 1932 envoyée à L'Association des Écrivains et des Artistes Révolutionnaires', Dossier A.A.E.R./A.E.A.R, *André Breton online archives*, accessed 21 October 2014 at [http://www.andrebretton.fr/en/catalogue/?category\\_id=282](http://www.andrebretton.fr/en/catalogue/?category_id=282)

<sup>161</sup> 'Lettre collective manuscrite, signée et datée 15 juin 1933, "les soussignés réunis ce soir 15 juin pour liquider les conflits suscités entre eux et l'A.E.A.R".', *Ibid.*

<sup>162</sup> *Commune*, No. 5, (July 1933)

experiment in the north of Africa, where activists had hoped the Popular Front would have brought about greater reforms in the colonies.

The occupation of Paris on the 14<sup>th</sup> June 1940 was naturally a catastrophic shock and disrupted cultural activities within it. Millions fled the city, including intellectuals and artists such as Simone de Beauvoir, Jacques Maritain and Pablo Picasso, some of whom joined the resistance, like André Malraux, Robert Desnos and Albert Camus. Strict censorship of cultural production was in place. Many foreign students had to suspend their studies during this period until the conclusion of the conflict.

Paris was liberated on 25<sup>th</sup> August 1944 and France began its political and economic reconstruction. While the post-Vichy politics of reprisals and forgiveness was a pervasive feature of late 1940s, France's political history during this time is better remembered for its struggles against decolonisation. Upon Liberation, practically all of France's colonies sought greater political autonomy or emancipation. The Neo-Destour lobbied for Tunisian devolution from French sovereignty, as did the Istiqlal and *ash-Shoura al-Istiqlal* with the *Manifeste de l'Indépendence*.

The surge of anti-colonial sentiments across the colonies after liberation was met erratically by the French state, depending on the region. The French West African indigenous elite achieved greater political emancipation. Elsewhere, reformers and activists were met with repression and violence, such as the Sétif massacres in May 1945 that killed thousands of Algerians. Constitutional reforms were offered in hope of quelling local grievances, such as the *Status de 1947* in Algeria, dispensing with the contentious *code de l'indigénat*, but this has generally been regarded as too little too late. In Indochina, the

French began a war in 1946 that ended with the signing of the Geneva Conference on the 21<sup>st</sup> July 1954 after their defeat at Dien Bien Phu.

Contributions of the colonial intellectual elite in Paris to decolonisation will be explored in the third section of this thesis; so will the spread of anti-colonial advocacy and activism among French and European intellectuals in Paris, spurred on by a universal and humanist extension of France's spirit of resistance.

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Paris' history was shaped by the politics outlined above. Yet it is popularly remembered for its cultural history. Paris between 1914 and 1962 was an international city. As the 'capital of the world'<sup>163</sup>, it was famed for its vibrant mix of expatriate and *émigré* artistic communities, its passing tourism and the growing presence of the exotic, from American Jazz musicians to Oriental students and Algerian labourers. Upon the conclusion of the First World War, many foreign soldiers and workers remained in France, including Ernest Hemingway. A large number of Maghribi workers had been mobilised during the war into metropolitan industry. The demobilisation of half a million migrant workers was not wholly comprehensive, leaving a small proportion to settle in France for good<sup>164</sup>.

The American expatriate community was an especially famous contingent of the Parisian milieu, gathering names such as Scott F. Fitzgerald, Gertrude Stein, James Joyce and Cole Porter on the Left Bank<sup>165</sup>. The Lost Generation as they are remembered wrote and

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<sup>163</sup> Higonet, P., *Paris, Capital of the World*, (Cambridge, 2002)

<sup>164</sup> Liauzu, *Histoire des migrations*, p. 125

<sup>165</sup> For more details on this notable expatriate community, see Benstock, S., *Women of the Left Bank: Paris 1900-1940*, (Austin, 1986), see also Gertrude Stein's memoirs, Stein, G., *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, (London, 2001)

socialised to a backdrop of Paris' Jazz Age, attending fashionable and 'licentious' *boîtes* across Montparnasse<sup>166</sup>.

Jazz also brought to Paris an increasing number of African-American musicians, singers and dancers like Josephine Baker who preferred Paris' liberal climate to the staunch racial segregation in America<sup>167</sup>. There was also a large influx of white *émigrés* after the Russian Revolution, including artist Wassily Kandinsky and composers Sergei Prokofiev and Igor Stravinsky<sup>168</sup>.

There were also a growing number of Oriental students, intellectuals and artists originating for the most part from the colonised world. Explored further in Chapter Seven, there were not only North Africans in Paris but intellectual migrants from Iran and the former Ottoman territories; there were an increasing number of Japanese students, artists and intellectuals including Tsuguharu Foujita. There were many Indochinese students and intellectuals, as well as South Americans and students and intellectuals from AOF and the Caribbean, including Lamine Senghor and Aimé Césaire. Most contacts between Parisians and Orientals in the interwar period were contrived, structured encounters such as the Colonial Exposition of 1931. It was not until the conclusion of the Second World War that the colonial presence in Paris became much more visible.

The international presence in Paris between 1914 and 1962 made it a significant locality for cultural encounters. This international character was central to the many forms of cultural and intellectual production that emanated from the city and from its visitors

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<sup>166</sup> Flanner, J., 'Introduction', in Drutman, I., ed., *Paris was yesterday 1925-1939, Janet Flanner (Genet)*, (London, 1973), pp. xxii-xxiii

<sup>167</sup> Baker, J., Bouillon, J., *Josephine*, trans. Fitzpatrick, M., (London, 1978), p. 89

<sup>168</sup> Nevill, R., *Days and Nights in Montmartre and the Latin Quarter*, (London, 1927), p. 61

during this period, coinciding meaningfully with the rise of humanistic and existential philosophies about the universal nature of human existence and human experience.

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In the language of urban theorists, Paris between 1914 and 1962 was a modern-industrial city. The 1920s especially was a period of unprecedented growth in industrial production<sup>169</sup>. But it was not simply a modern-industrial city, it was a modernist city. The *Ville Lumière* certainly looked modern with its large electrically lit Haussman boulevards and public spaces, motorised vehicles and new cinemas. But it was also host to the world's most avant-garde art, architecture and technology, celebrated at events such as the *Exposition Internationale des Arts et Techniques dans la Vie Moderne* in 1925.

French writers like Jean Cocteau, Guillaume Apollinaire and André Gide, though active before the First World War, represented the avant-garde in literature, dealing with risqué subjects like homosexuality and embracing a pantheistic exploration and reconciliation of humanity's natural impulses. Like French Surrealist writers at the time, they embarked on a profoundly sincere exploration of the human psyche. Together with the literary modernists, the cubists, the fauvists and the *ballet russes*, the Parisian avant-garde was defined by the striking unsettling provoked by the First World War. In their own way, they addressed the reality of their new modernity, some questioning the values of European civilisation and moral order, others utterly dispensing with it.

Paris during this period was pre-dominantly a humanist intellectual environment that is said to have provided an umbrella under which post-war French intellectual

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<sup>169</sup> Scriven, Hewitt, Kelly, Atack, 'Wars and Class War', in *French Cultural Studies*, p. 61

dynamism was to flourish<sup>170</sup>. Much of Paris' cultural production grew from the same rootstock of nineteenth century philosophers like Nietzsche and early twentieth century thinkers such as Freud, Henri Bergson and Heidegger. French writers like André Malraux, Paul Valéry, Jacques Maritain and Emmanuel Mounier were questioning societal values and Western civilisation before the Second World War stripped them bare for scrutiny.

After World War Two, writers such as Raymond Aron, Albert Camus, Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir became household names with considerable political clout. They also became the mainstay of Paris' Left Bank. Influenced by Heidegger's phenomenology, they continued the ontological enquiry into the nature of existence and limitations of perception. Thus they represented the intellectual abyss felt by much of society after the Second World War, as well as the collective search for a universalism to make sense of their suffering.

So North African migrants between 1914 and 1962 were travelling to and working within a Paris that housed the avant-garde, where the arts were striding away from the classics and romantics which had for so long dominated European cultural production. They arrived in a Paris that was more than anywhere in Europe cosmopolitan, at the time of a prevailing humanism and a dynamic era of cultural production. But they were also in Paris at a time of conflict and contradiction, with growing tension between nations, between democratic and authoritarian forms of government, between the Left and the Right.

There is therefore clearly a particular Parisian history during this period that intellectual migrants from the north of Africa experienced in one shape or another. The relationship between that cultural production and that of intellectual migrants will be the

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<sup>170</sup> Kelly, M., Fallaize, E., Ridehalgh, A., 'Crises and Modernization', in *Ibid.*, p. 109

subject of the next section of the thesis. But it is also a time when the global imaginary of French and European civilisation was more than ever being brought into question; it is the time of the unveiling of European colonialist hypocrisy. Although European political colonial manoeuvrings during this period contributed considerably to that effect, so did the migration of the colonial intellectual elite to centres like Paris. It is a time when migration showed most prominently the gaping hole between the Parisian reality and Paris' urban identity.

### **Paris' Urban Identity**

Paris quite unlike any other city had an international reputation based on a romanticised imaginary that transcended the actual periodization of its history. This was the Paris that was at the forefront of the non-Western world's encounters with Europe; remote encounters with Paris' urban identity.

As an analytical category, Paris is somewhat schizophrenic; it has two quite distinct personalities. The Paris of history was dynamic and ever changing while the Paris of peoples' imaginations has proven to be relatively static and enduring. Based on past glories and nostalgic reminiscence, highlights of Paris' cultural history were compiled into one overarching imaginary which connected France's eighteenth century Enlightenment, early nineteenth century scientific primacy, late nineteenth century bohemia, interwar jazz age and post-war existentialism. The composition of such representations is what is referred to as Paris' urban identity.

The notion of an 'urban identity' is presented by Peter Burke as cultural representations of cities based both on its physical attributes and its perceived social

makeup. Urban identities are the sum of a city's reputation 'as an artefact' and as an 'imagined community'<sup>171</sup>. So pronounced is Paris' reputation that it has been the equal source of scholarly attention as its history. There have been many endeavours to deconstruct the charisma surrounding the French capital and the processes which gave this particular metropolis such mystique. In historicising Paris' 'extraordinary appeal', historians such as Charles Rearick have found that social representations of Paris, in accumulating centuries of 'high praise and awestruck description', immortalised a small selection of Parisian features or 'conventions', creating the city's 'core identities'<sup>172</sup>. These features include the city's association with the Enlightenment, Paris as a producer of scientific civilizational progress, Paris the centre of artistic and intellectual production and Paris as the city of pleasure.

### **Capital of Enlightenment**

The city of Paris first took to the world stage as the Capital of the Enlightenment<sup>173</sup>. Though the pseudonym *Ville Lumière* was coined by the British in the early nineteenth century to denote its electrification<sup>174</sup>, it is often misemployed to represent Paris' association with the Enlightenment. Forward thinking literary figures and political theorists like Voltaire, Denis Diderot and Jean-Jacques Rousseau were associated with the city, as were their ideas. Interesting work has been produced in the 1990s concerning the city's mechanisms of sociability around which enlightened thinkers gathered, particularly certain key *salonnière*

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<sup>171</sup> Burke, P., 'Culture: Representations' in *The Oxford Handbook of Cities in World History*, ed. Clark, P., (Oxford, 2013), published online April 2013, accessed 06 October 2014 at 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199589531.013.0024, p. 1

<sup>172</sup> Rearick, C., *Paris Dreams, Paris Memories – the city and its mystique*, (Stanford, 2011), pp. 2-3

<sup>173</sup> Roche, D., *France in the Enlightenment*, trans. Goldhammer, A., (Cambridge, 1998), p. 641

<sup>174</sup> Rearick, *Paris Dreams*, p. 12

such as Marie Thérèse Rodet Geoffrin and Suzanne Curchod<sup>175</sup>. It has even become the topic of several undergraduate university modules in the UK<sup>176</sup>. More than any other city in Europe, Paris was the metropolis of the Enlightenment.

### **Paris as a 'Progress-Generator'<sup>177</sup>**

Paris was also considered for a time a leading producer of scientific knowledge. Paris has boasted for several centuries an impressive array of research and pedagogical infrastructure and France's most prestigious academic institutions have historically been centred in Paris. Some were founded before the revolution, such as the *Collège de France* and the Academy of Sciences. Others were established by the newly founded Republic, including the Faculty of Medicine in 1793 and *l'Ecole Polytechnique* in 1794. In an era when science and knowledge were advanced primarily by the interest of a few philanthropists, as was generally the case in London<sup>178</sup>, these kinds of state initiatives coordinating scientific infrastructure contributed to France's perceived primacy in scientific discovery.

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, especially during the Bourbon Restoration, these institutions produced some of Europe's leading scientific figures. A new generation of ground-breaking scientists such as Antoine Lavoisier, Pierre-Simon Laplace and George-Louis Leclerc were building the foundations of modern chemistry, mathematical

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<sup>175</sup> Censer, J. R., *The French Press in the Age of Enlightenment*, (London, 1994); Hesse, C., *Publishing and Cultural Politics in Revolutionary Paris, 1789-1810*, (Berkeley, 1991), Goodman, *The Republic of Letters*, p. 91

<sup>176</sup> 'Enlightenment Paris, c.1721-1789', *Royal Holloway*, accessed 27/10/2014 at <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/history/prospectivestudents/undergraduate/thirdyearcourses/enlightenmentparis,c1721-1789.aspx>; 'Paris and the European Enlightenment', *University of Kent*, accessed 27/10/2014 at <http://www.kent.ac.uk/courses/modulecatalogue/modules/FR803>

<sup>177</sup> Term employed by Rearick in *Paris Dreams*, p. 45

<sup>178</sup> Crosland, M., *Science under control – The French Academy of Science 1795-1914*, (Cambridge, 1992), p. 27

physics and natural sciences<sup>179</sup>. Together with Paris' academic artefacts, these men and their achievements are the reason why, by the start of the nineteenth century, Paris was generally acknowledged as the leading centre of scientific knowledge in Europe<sup>180</sup>.

But even French science had its own identity. France's knowledge industry was seen to produce modern civilizational progress. This identity was not necessarily meritocratic but rhetorical. While it is true that Paris at the beginning of the nineteenth century had a greater scientific community than elsewhere in Europe<sup>181</sup>, the French Republic deliberately projected upon its scientific production a greater sense of civic utility.

Despite setbacks during the Reign of Terror<sup>182</sup>, the French Republic embraced science and education as a means to attain civic progress. French scientists and intellectuals were integrated into government. The result was an early manifestation of the welfare state; intellectuals in government advocated for the state's responsibility to provide public education, as did the Marquis de Condorcet in 1792<sup>183</sup>, housing benefits as did Frédéric duc de la Rochefoucauld-Liancourt in 1790<sup>184</sup>, or public healthcare like Vicq D'Azyr<sup>185</sup>. Each case was made in the name of public utility<sup>186</sup>. It reinforced the impression that Paris as a

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<sup>179</sup> Gillispie, C.C., *Science and Polity in France: the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Years*, (Princeton, 2004), p. 2

<sup>180</sup> This is said to be the case by Crosland, M., *Studies in the Culture of Science in France and Britain since the Enlightenment*, (Hampshire, 1995); Ben-David, J., *Centres of Learning – Britain, France, Germany, United States*, (New York, 1977); Osborne, M.A., *Nature, the Exotic, and the Science of French Colonialism*, (Bloomington, 1994); Anderson, R.D., *European Universities from the Enlightenment to 1914*, (Oxford, 2004)

<sup>181</sup> Gillispie, *Science and Polity*, p. 2

<sup>182</sup> Some prominent scientists such as Lavoisier were executed in 1794 and the Academy of Sciences was closed in 1793 because it was seen as a Royal Institution; *Ibid.*, p. 19

<sup>183</sup> PM. Condorcet, *Rapport et Projet de Décret sur l'Organisation Générale de l'Instruction Publique*, (Paris, 1792)

<sup>184</sup> 'Procès-Verbal – Tom. 75', Plan de Travail du Comité pour l'extinction de la Mendicité – Présenté à l'Assemblée Nationale, en conformité de son Décret du 21 Janvier, Seizième Livraison, Tome 75, *Assemblée Constituante, Paris*, (Paris, 1791)

<sup>185</sup> La Société Royale de Médecine, *Nouveau plan de constitution pour la médecine en France*, (1790); Gillispie, *Science and Polity*, p. 39

<sup>186</sup> Luce, O., 'Discuss the evolving role of Paris as a centre of intellectual stimulus for Islamic modernism from 1789 to 1968' (Royal Holloway, University of London, MA Dissertation, 2008), p.11

locality, with its mechanisms of knowledge production and knowledge producers, could generate modern technological and civilizational progress.

Even the French language was heralded as a *langue civilisatrice*<sup>187</sup>, promoted by the Republic at the expense of regional patois. Thus both the French language and French science were promoted by the state as a model to civic progress and national perfection. It continued to do so well into the late nineteenth and early twentieth century as a means to secure the country's position on the international arena.

### **Parisian Bohemia and the City of Pleasure**

Then there was the romanticised image of Parisian Bohemia. Artists who had immortalised Paris on canvas, in song and in dance had made Paris a centre of artistic production. This reputation was associated with specific districts; at the turn of the century, it was especially centred upon Montmartre. Impressionists including Claude Monet, Edouard Manet, Pierre-Auguste Renoir and Toulouse-Lautrec, as well as French writers and *chansonniers* such as Francis Carco and Aristide Bruant, are largely responsible for Paris' bohemian celebrity.

The fame of Montmartre's artistic milieu was accompanied by an equally famous but slightly less illustrious reputation, that of Paris as a city of pleasure. 'No cities in the world are the pleasures so numerous and varied than in Paris. Everything is dreamy, amusing and enchanting'<sup>188</sup> so claimed the opening lines of a 1927 guide book. Parisians and tourists would head to *La Butte* to drink champagne into the twilight hours and, while retaining a

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<sup>187</sup> Kayuza, K., 'Discourses of Linguistic Dominance: A Historical Consideration of French Language Ideology', *International Review of Education*, 47: 3/4, (July 2001), p. 245

<sup>188</sup> *Guide des plaisirs à Paris : Paris le jour, Paris la nuit, où dîner, où souper, les dessous de Paris, comment on s'amuse, où l'on s'amuse, ce qu'il faut voir, ce qu'il faut faire*, (Paris, 1927), p. 5

degree of anonymity, dance the night away. Its clubs and cabarets, including *La Folie Bergère*, *Maxime's* and of course the *Moulin Rouge* have become as famous as the city. With their *bals musettes* and their *demimondaine*, the world of indulgence and amusement in Montmartre gave *Gay Paree* an especially licentious reputation as a city of sin, vice and debauchery. Paris was, according to American journalist and modernist writer Janet Flanner, Europe's 'capital of hedonism'<sup>189</sup>.

### **The City of Intellectuals**

The only component of French cultural identity that remained true throughout the period of this study was the international reputation of its intellectual culture. Paris was romanticised abroad as the Promised Land for intellectuals and intellectual pursuits. This pertains to France's cultural attachment to literature and to the advancement of knowledge. It relates moreover to the status of intellectuals and of intellectual endeavours in French society:

'[...] in no country do literature and science open so free and honourable, and independent a career as in France [...].'<sup>190</sup>

'[An intellectual] is the person in France that he cannot be in America, for there is no superstition for the arts in America; the vanity of wealth, the natural consequence of a nation depending wholly on its industry and its commerce, predominates over the diviner thoughts and more graceful occupation of letters.'

'[...] he is the person in France that he cannot be in England – for, in England, politics is the only passion of the men, fashion the only idol of the women – for, in England, to be a blockhead is far more pardonable than to live in a bad street [...].'<sup>191</sup>

The extract written by Lord Henri Lytton Bulwer, liberal MP and diplomat of the nineteenth century, highlights this perceived cultural distinction. British high society did of course

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<sup>189</sup> Flanner, *Paris was yesterday*, pp. xx-xxi

<sup>190</sup> Lytton Bulwer, H., ESQ. M. P., *France; Social, Literary, Political, Vol. 2*, (London, 1834), p. 185

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 186-187

produce important scientists, philosophers and artists at the time. Yet it was perceived internationally as an industrial nation that appreciated the material benefits of science without being in love with the act of endeavouring to progress, of creating.

Intellectuals and intellectual pursuits were highly esteemed in French culture since the seventeenth century. Statesmen and military officials engaged in intellectual pursuits. Men of letters conversely became statesmen; intellectual accomplishments were seen internationally as a source of power and social mobility in France. As journalist Francis Blagdon notes in his 'sketch' of the French capital:

'The title of *savant* is not more brilliant than formerly, but it is more imposing: it leads to consequence, to superior employments and ...to riches.'<sup>192</sup>

Between 1914 and 1962, Léon Blum and André Malraux both lead successful literary careers before holding important ranks in the French State as Premier and Minister of the Interior respectively. Furthermore, French literary figures and artists continued well into the twentieth century to mingle in French high society.

By the 1950s, Paris had also become internationally renowned as a literary milieu, a reputation built by the presence of the Lost Generation during *Les Années Folles* and by the existentialists of the 1940s. But this reputation was built between 1914 and 1962. So Paris' cultural identity was not immutable; it was multi-faceted and it did evolve. But it was also drawn from various points in France's history, spanning several centuries. What is peculiar about this cultural identity is the longevity of outdated principles, such as France's scientific primacy and the creativity of Montmartre's Bohemia.

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<sup>192</sup> Blagdon, F.W., *Paris as it was and as it is, or A sketch of the French capital*, Vol. 1, (London, 1803), p. 395

Despite drawing from Paris' cultural history, many of these conventions were enduring because they were perceived through what Peter Burke calls a 'double lens' of individual experience and conventions of representations<sup>193</sup>. There is thus a discrepancy between Paris' cultural identity and Parisian reality between 1914 and 1962. This discrepancy is important to an intellectual history of migration. Migrants also perceived Paris through this 'double lens', which biased their encounters. It has to be taken into account when evaluating the outcome and assessing the impact of migration upon the development of ideas.

### **Paris' International Reputation**

'There is indeed only one Paris. It is acclaimed worldwide and the whole universe is drawn to it.

No other city has the same appeal. But why? Of what does Paris' unique charm consist? What is the cause of this mysterious force attracting Europeans, Americans, Asians and Africans alike? There are many big beautiful cities, with their theatres and their museums, just like Paris. But why is Paris so much preferred? What is so particular to Paris that people dream of it from the furthest corners of the globe?'<sup>194</sup>

Alaoui Ahmed, Moroccan Foyer 1939

Paris' urban identity and its disparity with Parisian temporal reality are intrinsically tied to its international reputation. This timeless identity is the Paris of people's minds and hearts. It was especially the Paris of foreigners. Non-Parisians, whether French provincials or foreigners, formed this imaginary from a combination of historical precedent, published imagery, international celebrity and state propaganda.

<sup>193</sup> Burke, 'Culture: Representations' in *The Oxford Handbook of Cities*, p. 2

<sup>194</sup> 'Compte rendu du séjour en France des élèves du foyer Marocain, rédigé par Alaoui Ahmed actuellement élève en Philosophie au Lycée de Fès.' No. 190, 07 May 1940, CADN, Carton 687, 2<sup>ème</sup> Versement, Protectorat du Maroc, p. 17

Paris' urban identity was drawn from several periods of French history, the memory of which exhibited a surprising longevity. France's national association with notions of civilizational progress far outlasted its era of scientific and pedagogical primacy. French scientific and industrial creativity deteriorated after the fall of the Restoration. Their defeat at the hands of the Prussians in 1870 marked the end of French science's Golden Age<sup>195</sup>. The primacy of French pedagogy was overtaken by the retrospectively named German Humboldtian system, losing its status as the best provider of higher education in Europe. Yet Paris continued to compete at the end of the nineteenth century with its European rivals, exhibiting its industrial and technological advances at their *Expositions Universelles* in 1889 and 1900, undertaking the aerial channel crossing in 1909 and modernising Parisian slums<sup>196</sup>. This, along with the Parisian avant-garde, helped sustain the impression that Paris was still at the forefront of modern European civilisation in the early twentieth century.

Montmartre's iconic bohemian reputation was also sustained beyond its actual historical ascendancy. Physically, its village style atmosphere was destroyed as the district was developed<sup>197</sup>. Famous clubs such as *Moulin Rouge* and *Maxim's* continued to exist after the First World War as they had done in the 1900s. However according to English chronicler Ralph Nevill writing in 1927, this was for the sake of British and American tourists:

'Montmartre, as late as the end of the last century, was little visited by tourists [...]. In those days, when motors had not yet come into use, 'la Butte', though fast losing its semi-rustic character, was still the resort of artists, poets and singers whose life and spirit were essentially French.'

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<sup>195</sup> Paul, H., 'The Issue of decline in Nineteenth-Century French Science', *French Historical Studies*, 7:3, (1972), p. 418

<sup>196</sup> Rearick, *Paris Dreams*, pp. 11-12

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.*, p.50

'To-day, all is altered and the Parisian openly admits that Montmartre has become little more than a sort of pleasure run for the purpose of exploiting English and American visitors.'<sup>198</sup>

The cancan of Montmartre was no longer an authentic form of Parisian cultural production. It was rather an inauthentic cultural reproduction for foreigners. Bohemia appeared during the interwar period only in travel literature<sup>199</sup>, chronicles of Paris such as those produced by Ralph Nevill<sup>200</sup> and French nostalgic literature of the 1900s, of which Francis Carco and Roland Dorgelès are the most celebrated<sup>201</sup>. Bohemian life, according to historian Charles Rearick, lived on only in the imagination of the 'externals'<sup>202</sup>. According to the memoirs of Mohamed Harbi, these institutions continued to generate tourism from the north of Africa well into the 1950s:

'We passed three wonderful days together in Paris. [My father] wanted to get to know the great capital, its monuments, its performances and Pigalle which his pieds-noirs friends had spoken to him about. I therefore accompanied him to the Moulin Rouge.'<sup>203</sup>

Postcards, literature, magazines, posters and literature reviews were distributed worldwide, contributing significantly to spreading Paris' identity abroad. Remote communication networks expanded across the Mediterranean and the Near East, particularly the circulation of books, journals and newspapers. Its impact on those societies has been studied by the likes Ami Ayalon, Palmira Johnson Brummett, Ibrahim Abu-Lughod

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<sup>198</sup> Nevill, *Days and Nights*, p. 16

<sup>199</sup> *Guide des plaisirs à Paris*

<sup>200</sup> Other works by Ralph Nevill on Paris: Nevill, R., *Paris of to-day*, (London, 1924), Nevill, R., *The romance of Paris*, (London, 1928)

<sup>201</sup> Carco, F., *De Montmartre au Quartier Latin*, (Paris, 1927) ; Dorgelès, R., *Quand j'étais montmartrois*, (Paris, 1936) ; Dorgelès, R., *Au beau temps de la Butte*, (Paris, 1963)

<sup>202</sup> Rearick, C., *Paris Dreams*, p. 50

<sup>203</sup> Harbi, *Une vie*, p. 176

and Christiane Souriau-Hoebrachts<sup>204</sup>. By the late nineteenth century, the educated elite in much of the Near East had access to and were reading European, particularly French literature. Many bilingual gazettes were published by what Brummett calls the ‘Ottoman Revolutionary Press’, translating and reviewing European cultural and literary products, including French enlightenment literature<sup>205</sup>. The translation of European texts in Egypt into Arabic was spearheaded by the creation of the *Madrasat al-alsun wa al-tarjama* in 1836, an initiative shaped largely by Rifa’a Rafi’ al-Tahtawi<sup>206</sup>. In Tunisia, Khayr al-din al-Tunisi established the *Collège Sadiki* in 1875, helping young Tunisians engage remotely with European history and international affairs. Beirut too was in the nineteenth century an important centre ‘of independent Arab journalistic endeavour in the region’<sup>207</sup>, through which knowledge of European literature and cultural products could be disseminated.

Furthermore in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, French was the lingua franca of the Egyptian, Ottoman and to a certain extent Iranian elite. This helped turn Paris into a *patrie intellectuelle* for foreign intellectuals, including Turks like Cemil Meriç:

‘Paris is also the city of my dreams. I lived there several years. [...]. From where does Paris derive its magic? Firstly, most of those I love have lived there; and live there still. The music of my friends rings in my ears: Chénier, Diderot, Comte... It is more than the enthusiasm of Flaubert, of Lamartine or of Loti for the Orient. They evolve in a form of suspect nostalgia [...]. I have been initiated [...] in London, New York, Moscow. All these distant towns are

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<sup>204</sup> Ayalon, A., *The Press in the Arab Middle East: A History*, (New York, 1995); Brummett, P.J., *Image & Imperialism in the Ottoman revolutionary press 1908 to 1911*, State (New York, 2000); Abu-Lughod, *The Arab rediscovery of Europe*; Souriau-Hoebrachts, C., *La Presse Maghribine, Libye, Tunisie, Maroc, Algérie*, (Paris, 1969)

<sup>205</sup> Brummett, *Image & Imperialism*, p. 192

<sup>206</sup> Newman, ‘Imam in Paris’, p. 45

<sup>207</sup> Ayalon, *The Press*, p. 45

foreign to me. But Paris is my spiritual homeland. And it is my heart which ties me to that land [...].<sup>208</sup>

The Francophonia and Francophilia of the Egyptian, Ottoman and Iranian elite framed their impressions of Paris through their remote literary engagement with those spaces. This can be seen in the memoirs of Egyptian feminist Huda Shaarawi:

'I liked Paris – not only for its beautiful architecture, gardens and boulevards, and elegant dress and sophisticated entertainment, but because there was something to excite the imagination everywhere. Every street and square evoked the deeds of bygone heroes. Like an open book of the past, [...].<sup>209</sup>

The connection made by travellers between literary representations of Paris and the city itself established a precedent for further migration. This process of chain migration, as noted by Abu-Lughod<sup>210</sup>, resulted especially from the travel literature produced in the nineteenth century. Therefore the distribution of French literature and the writing of Oriental travelogues in the nineteenth century was an important precedent to twentieth century intellectual migration to France from the Muslim-Arab world.

These circumstances differed however in the colonies. Rather than stemming from cultural practices of the nineteenth century elite, French literary culture and education spread as a result of France's civilising mission. In Southeast Asia, French Africa, French Polynesia and eventually in the Levant, this endeavour was spearheaded primarily by Catholic missionaries<sup>211</sup>. Tunisia and Morocco, like Egypt, had a stronger, though still limited pre-colonial history of cultural engagement with Europe via the travel literature of Muhammad As-Saffar and Kahyr al-Din. However in the Maghrib, whose pre-colonial social

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<sup>208</sup> Kreiser, 'Le Paris des Ottomans à la Belle Epoque'

<sup>209</sup> Shaarawi, *Harem Years*, p. 84

<sup>210</sup> Abu-Lughod, *The Arab rediscovery*, p. 92

<sup>211</sup> Daughton, J. P., *An Empire Divided: Religion, Republicanism, and the Making of French Colonialism, 1880-1914*, (Oxford, 2006)

elite were by and large Turkish, Arabic or Berber speaking<sup>212</sup>, knowledge of French literary heritage, and therefore familiarity with the rhetorical image of Paris as a city of civilisation, culture and science, went hand in hand with the spread of European colonialism. The Parisian imaginary was propagated by the European educated elite. For the same reasons, the press is said to have been more important than the book in spreading intellectual currents in the Maghrib<sup>213</sup>.

The French state also had a hand in this process. On the 15<sup>th</sup> January 1920, the *Service des Oeuvres françaises à l'étranger* was created to replace the former *Bureau des Ecoles et Oeuvres françaises à l'étranger* as the agent of French propaganda overseas<sup>214</sup>. Writers and intellectuals such as Paul Morand and Jean Giraudoux were employed to promote French literature and civilisation abroad<sup>215</sup>. Scholars and academics such as Louis Massignon served as academic envoys, promoting sent to promote French scholarship and forging ties with universities across the globe<sup>216</sup>.

The connection between the international distribution of French literary heritage and Paris' urban identity built an 'imagination' of the city in the minds of intellectual migrants well into the 1960s<sup>217</sup>:

'I had seen postcards of the Luxembourg Garden in Persia, old ones in which the women had long dresses, large hats and parasols, and the men frock coats, top-hats and canes – and new ones sent by friends. I had glimpsed them in French movies, and I had read about them in novels. I visualised Casette, in *les Misérables*, sitting on a bench, Gauroche skipping along merrily,

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<sup>212</sup> Smati, *Les Elites*, p. 227

<sup>213</sup> Souriau-Hoebrechts, *La Presse Maghribine*, p. 27

<sup>214</sup> *France Diplomatie*, accessed 30/10/2014 at <http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/photos-videos-publications/archives-diplomatiques-3512/fonds-et-collections/archives-des-affaires-etrangeres/administration-centrale/affaires-culturelles-scientifiques/article/oeuvres-francaises-a-l-etranger>

<sup>215</sup> Cronin, V., *Paris : City of Light 1919-1939*, (London, 1994), p. 25

<sup>216</sup> Degros, M., 'Jean Marx (1884-1972)', *Bibliothèque de l'école des chartes*, 131 : 2, (1973), p. 685

<sup>217</sup> Guppy, S., *A Girl in Paris – A Persian Encounter with the West*, (London, 2007), p. 13

his képi rakishly tilted back, poets like Victor Hugo, Vigny, Verlaine, Musset sauntering along the shaded paths with their Muses, real or invisible. I imagined their ghosts forever haunting the darker corners, the breeze whispering their poems, their statues coming to life at night to roam among the moonlight flowerbeds and lawns.<sup>218</sup>

While this extract was written by an Iranian intellectual migrant, the spread of French literary culture was established in much the same way in Iran as it was in Egypt. The fact that Shusha Guppy's sentiments expressed in the 1960s are so comparable to Huda Shaarawi's 'open book of the past' expressed in the late nineteenth century is testament to the universality and durability of this association abroad, a longevity that was only broken by English overtaking French as the global *lingua franca* and America as leading cultural producer.

Similar expressions were recorded by Maghribi intellectual migrants, despite the colonial context:

'The only thing that mattered to me was the exciting reality of finally setting foot on French soil. The country whose image I had fashioned in my mind, from my reading, from pictures, from my imagination, was transmuted into solid earth and light. I revelled in the prospect of becoming part of it, blending with it in sensual delight. The Eiffel Tour brought tears to my eyes. I stood motionless for hours on end on the square in front of Notre-Dame which drew me like a magnet, I wandered in a daze through the Marais, seeing in every street, every square, the old town houses of the time of the Sun King and Racine loom up before me.'<sup>219</sup>

The Luxembourg Gardens in particular are frequently evoked in the Parisian imaginary because, as Abderrahman Badawi remarks in his memoirs, one can find there the 'statues of great poets', from Baudelaire to Verlaine, from Heriot to Victor Hugo<sup>220</sup>.

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<sup>218</sup> Ibid., p. 71

<sup>219</sup> Halimi, *Milk*, p. 69

<sup>220</sup> Badawi, *Sirat Hayati*, Vol. 1, p. 186

French literature therefore contributed significantly to the development of Paris' international reputation and to the growing familiarity of French intellectual culture abroad, especially among the intellectual and social elite. Paris' cultural identity lived above all in the minds and hearts of foreigners. Preserved and disseminated via literature, education, propaganda, postcards and magazines, it remotely spearheaded the non-Western world's cultural encounters with Europe.

Paris' urban identity greatly influenced the way migrants interacted with the city. More than economic migrants, the impressions of Paris held by intellectual migrants shaped their expectations of the city, their incentives for migrating and it often predetermined the nature of their encounters in the city and the content of their observations. But the extent to which French cultural heritage, whether literary, artistic, popular or scientific, could be experienced abroad brings into question the importance of directly experiencing Parisian life.

## **The Historical Agency of Space**

There is a theoretical basis for evaluating the impact of space upon cultural production. The influence of urban spaces upon the activities taking place within them has attracted considerable attention from urban theorists and planners in the second half of the twentieth century<sup>221</sup>. Paris is what they call a creative city<sup>222</sup>. It had a long history of novel production, whether cultural or industrial, and it continued to draw on this legacy to sustain

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<sup>221</sup> For more on this see 'Introduction' in *The Oxford Handbook of Cities*

<sup>222</sup> For more on creative cities, see Clark, P., Hietala, M., 'Creative Cities' in *The Oxford Handbook of Cities*, as well as Landry, C., *The Creative City: a toolkit for urban innovators*, (London, 2000); Florida, R., *The Rise of the Creative Class And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life* (New York, 2002) and Scott, Allen J., 'Mainsprings of the Creative City: Lessons for Policy-makers', in *OECD, Competitive Cities in the Global Economy*, (2007)

its creativity<sup>223</sup>. There is considerable debate as to what exactly constitutes a creative city. Theorists like Allen Scott try to establish formulas through past examples in the hope of regenerating waning districts<sup>224</sup>. Considerations regarding the positioning and distribution of industrial, commercial and residential districts, as well as the international mobility of capital are more pertinent to the study of labour and economic migration. Others, such as the social liberalism of urban metropolises and the geographical clustering of creative industries, are pertinent to the study of intellectual migration and resulting cultural encounters.

### **Urban Liberalism**

The social and intellectual liberalism of many urban metropolises is frequently quoted as an important ingredient to a city's artistic and cultural production<sup>225</sup>. American expats in the 1920s often cited social liberalism as their motive for migrating to and settling in Paris, escaping what Ralph Nevill calls the 'grandmother legislation prompted by Puritanism'<sup>226</sup> of the Anglican world.

Liberal Paris was also perceived as a refuge from racist discrimination. Although racism was not totally absent from Parisian attitudes, the relatively tolerant atmosphere in Paris attracted many American Jazz musicians and dancers who, escaping American racial segregation, made Paris their adopted home. In the words of American entrepreneur and

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<sup>223</sup> Clark, P., Hietala, M., 'Creative Cities' in *The Oxford Handbook of Cities*, p. 7

<sup>224</sup> Scott, 'Mainsprings of the Creative City: Lessons for Policy-makers'

<sup>225</sup> Benstock, *Women of the Left Bank*, p.9

<sup>226</sup> Nevill, *Days and Nights*, p. 17

erotica dancer Josephine Baker, 'In New York I was nothing but a darky [...] but in Paris I would be treated like a white girl [...]'<sup>227</sup>.

As for migrants from the non-Western world, especially from the Muslim-Arab world, the attraction of socially liberal Paris is self-evident. Many Egyptian and Maghribi migrants sought to escape social conservatism at home. The minority of educated women in the north of Africa especially enjoyed greater personal, social and sexual liberty. Such is the case with Gisele Halimi and Doria Shafik, discussed in Chapter Nine. However such cases were extremely rare at the time as so few women were educated, let alone permitted to study in a foreign country alone and unsupervised.

For the Egyptian intellectual Taha Husayn, academic liberty was the main motivation for pursuing a European education:

'An ample, uninhibited milieu which allowed me to fill my lungs with fresh air on my way to and fro and likewise to fill my mind with open knowledge which did not bind me like the narrow structures of the Azhar professors in their lecturing, nor ruin my intelligence with *qanqallahs* (citations and arguments about this and that), and endless equivocations.'<sup>228</sup>

Although this quote refers to the European university in Cairo, it is clear that the intellectual freedom of European style academia appealed greatly to Taha Husayn. His shift to European style education, epitomized by his undertaking further education in Europe, was a deliberate step away from the intellectual restrictions which religious conservatism imposed on traditional Egyptian education.

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<sup>227</sup> Baker, *Josephine*, p. 46

<sup>228</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34

Social liberalism and creative freedom is accredited with attracting intellectual migrants or what Richard Florida calls 'the creative class'<sup>229</sup> to urban centres. Combined with the notoriety of the avant-garde, Paris' reputation as a liberal environment has contributed to the growing presence of the intellectual, artistic and creative elite from across the world, including the north of Africa. However here lies here a question of chicken and egg. While Paris certainly attracted intellectual migrants because of its liberal reputation, cities were socially liberal because of the influx of migrants. Changes in industrial employment led to a displaced labour force primarily consisting of men of the working age. The transient demographic of cities through urbanisation created a level of anonymity which, according to theorists such as Emile Durkheim and Max Weber, changed social relations, especially the way the community regulates collective and individual behaviour. This process is generally called 'contrast theory'<sup>230</sup>. This suggests that the urbanisation of both the working and creative classes is responsible for creating the kind of environment that attracts more migrants; a self-perpetuating process of social and individual liberalisation.

The relative freedom of individuals in Paris helped to generate novel production. It nurtured avant-garde forms of artistic production, a point frequently made in relation to the Anglophone modernist expatriate community. They produced and published in Paris material that would never have been accepted in the UK or The States, including James Joyce's *Ulysses*, Henry Miller's *Tropic of Cancer* or Anaïs Nin's *House of Incest*<sup>231</sup>. Yet intellectual migrants from the north of Africa during this period rarely could act with the same kind of liberty enjoyed by American expatriates. For most intellectual migrants, their

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<sup>229</sup> Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, p. 7

<sup>230</sup> Thorns, D. C., *The Transformation of Cities: Urban Theory and Urban Life*, (New York, 2002), pp. 23-26

<sup>231</sup> Cronin, *Paris*, p. 143 & p. 154

sojourn in France was temporary. They were therefore not indeterminately escaping intellectual or social conservatism at home. That means that their artistic production was still affected by the prospect of criticism upon returning home, something that affected writers including Taha Husayn.

By 1914, when Taha Husayn first made his way towards France, members of the Egyptian Student Missions to Europe were at liberty to live in their university town relatively free from supervision or control. Students could frequent cafés and interact with the Parisian cultural milieu, but the Egyptian University in Cairo which funded their studies could still mediate their behaviour. It imposed its own set of conditions, the details of which are related by Taha Husayn in his memoirs. Students for instance could not be married before leaving Egypt, nor were they permitted to marry during their sojourn. In Taha Husayn's case they seem to have made an exception. It may be related to Taha Husayn's blindness and need for extra financial support to pay for guides, readers and scribes. His wife largely took over these duties<sup>232</sup>.

Measures were also put in place to ensure the studious behaviour of migrants. If students failed to achieve their intended qualifications they were obliged to refund the University their full expenses<sup>233</sup>. Most significantly, all doctoral theses written by Egyptians in foreign institutions had to be approved by the Egyptian University in Cairo before being submitted; a stipulation clearly intended to control intellectual products emanating from Europe<sup>234</sup>. This particular measure resulted from the controversy stirred by Dr Mansur Fahmi's thesis on the role of women in Islam, temporarily driving him into exile.

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<sup>232</sup> Hussein, *A Passage*, p. 116

<sup>233</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 129

<sup>234</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 120-121

Members of the Egyptian Student Missions therefore were not completely free from their society's conservative mediations. The very circular nature of student mobility meant they were still accountable to the conventions and taboos they were originally escaping. While Taha Husayn's thesis was not considered controversial in Egypt, the sociological techniques influenced by his supervisor Emile Durkheim and employed in his thesis on Ibn Khaldun led him to produce an account of pre-Islamic history that questioned the chronology of religious scriptures. Such hermeneutics caused considerable stir and certain al-Azhar sheikhs petitioned the university to strip Husayn of his degree and ban him from teaching at the university. It was apparently Sa'ad Zaghlul, a committee member, who came to Husayn's defence by rubbishing the sheikh's concerns<sup>235</sup>. This nevertheless, according to Albert Hourani, meant Husayn avoided discussing religious matters in his subsequent work<sup>236</sup>.

Doria Shafik's memoirs also reveal how conservative Egyptian society influenced her behaviour in Paris. Funded and therefore under the direction of the Egyptian Student Missions, she was disappointed by her lack of freedom once in the capital:

'How let down I was by the gloomy obscurity of the Gare de Lyon. In my quest to greet this free life (forgetting that our chains pursue us) I only wanted to see Light'.

When the secretary of the 'Egyptian office' met her at the station, she thought to herself:

'Already a jailer! I felt an intense desire to break completely with the past. But impossible and I knew it!'<sup>237</sup>

Despite being attracted to Paris by the prospect of individual freedom, Doria still expressed a perpetual concern for her reputation back home:

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<sup>235</sup> Ibid., p. 137

<sup>236</sup> Hourani, A., *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age*, (Cambridge, 1983), p. 327

<sup>237</sup> Nelson, *Shafik*, p. 35

'[...] when the poet first invited me to accompany him to the opening of an art exhibition, I remembered the words of the director. Reputation! Be wise! They reverberated in my head like a hammer.'<sup>238</sup>

Even when socialising with her husband's friends, she feared potential gossip returning to Egypt and thus 'remained scrupulously correct from a Muslim point of view'<sup>239</sup>. So Shafik still 'felt oppressed' by the restrictive attitudes of the Egyptian conservative milieu that she had sought to escape, despite being hundreds of miles away.

Therefore unlike some of their American or English counterparts, migrants from Egypt and the Maghrib created material that still operated within their native field of production, with all its mediations. For the most part, their work was written for and directed to their native audiences and within national dialogues. Despite writing in French, Bennabi's *Vocation d'Islam* and *Discours sur les conditions de la renaissance algérienne* were written for an Algerian French educated audience. Tawfiq al-Hakim and Taha Husayn both spent their careers developing Arabic language Egyptian theatre and literature. Mahmoud Messadi is considered a pioneer in modern Arabic Tunisian literature. Doria Shafik worked to change societal dynamics within Egypt. The most notable exceptions were advocates who wrote to affect or lobby international political and public opinion. These include Ouazzani, Messali Hadj and Gisèle Halimi. In these cases they were trying to represent, rather than address, their home populace.

Either way, the majority of notable intellectual migrants from the north of Africa during this period were highly integrated in their national cultural production, even when they were writing in French. Unless like Gisèle Halimi they chose to permanently settle in France, they never fully escaped the mediating influence of their home societies. The result

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<sup>238</sup> Ibid., p. 37

<sup>239</sup> Ibid., p. 79

is that the creative influence of Parisian social liberalism was not felt in the same way by migrants from the north of Africa as it might have been for migrant artists and writers like Gertrude Stein, Picasso or Tsuguharu Foujita.

Furthermore, migrants from French colonies were subject to restrictions and surveillance. Paris by 1914 was no longer a political refuge as it had been in the nineteenth century for the like of James Sanua and Jamal al-Din al-Afghani<sup>240</sup>, a platform for critiquing the British and Ottoman Empire. Most North African establishments and their residents were monitored during this time by the French colonial authorities and Parisian police. Directors of student related institutions were expected, if not required to provide information on colonial subjects and their activities. The director of the *Cité Universitaire* in 1947 for instance received a stern letter from displeased French authorities for failing to notify them of a meeting held by North African students at the *Salon Internationale* of the *Cité Universitaire*<sup>241</sup>. Individual students were also monitored. Reports were produced detailing where students lived, ate, slept and with whom they socialised<sup>242</sup>. Migrant scholars and intellectuals were also tracked when travelling either to give lectures or to meet other notable figures<sup>243</sup>.

The monitoring of North African migrants began in earnest in the 1920s and 30s as the French authorities became increasingly concerned about the spread of Pan-Islamism

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<sup>240</sup> *Presse et mémoire: France des étrangers, France des libertés*, (Paris, 1990), pp. 120-123

<sup>241</sup> "Copie" of a report to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 14 February 1947 ; based on description of events in Moroccan Arabic journal 'El Alam', published in Rabat', *Courneuve*, Série M 581, Carton 45, Dossier 10

<sup>242</sup> Detailed report on Tunisian student AZZOUZ Ahmed, 'Lettre 10 Mars 1945 de la Préfecture de la Police (Commissaire de la Police) à le MIER, office de la Tunisie', *Courneuve*, P4062, No. 232, Carton 45, Dossier 6, 10, 11, ff. 4-6

<sup>243</sup> When Mehmed Soubhi Bey (Minister of Foreign Affairs in Angora) and Mouhrin Refat Bey travelled from Bucharest to Paris to attend a meeting at the 'Foyer Turo', they were both monitored by the French authorities on suspicion on 'indoctrinating' North African students, 'Renseignement, communiqué à A. E; A/S: 'Agents panislamistes se rendant en France'', *Courneuve*, Série K 20, P3531, Carton 102, Dossier 3

and Communism in its colonies<sup>244</sup>. Such concerns were aggravated in the late forties and nineteen fifties with the radicalisation of nationalist movements across the Arab world. Essentially, they feared Paris' revolutionising influence.

The memoirs of North African migrants all refer to the restrictive impact of government surveillance on their activities in Paris. Malek Bennabi for instance was interviewed by a police officer for delivering a lecture on Islamic culture in the Maghrib<sup>245</sup>. Mohamed Hassan Ouazzani recounted how difficult it was to find somewhere to house their newly founded student association as the French authorities had coerced café and restaurant owners into refusing to serve them<sup>246</sup>.

Students funded by the French authorities, or whose families were in some way connected to the French administration, were particularly vulnerable as the French authorities had greater recourse to undesirable behaviour. Malek Bennabi's father was affected by his son's associative activities in Paris<sup>247</sup>. Bennabi's involvement in dissident sections of students associations were said to have inflicted upon his 'innocent family wounds that did not heal and from which we did not recuperate'<sup>248</sup>.

As the number of self-funded migrants to Paris rose, the state increasingly resorted to police intervention, with more North Africans arrested, especially Algerians. Police reprisals were less severe in Paris than the colonies, so some militants did seek refuge in the city. For instance, Abderrahim Bouabid is said to have studied in France because he was

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<sup>244</sup> AN, F7 12907

<sup>245</sup> Bennabi, *Mudhakkirat*, p. 239

<sup>246</sup> Ouazzani, *Mudhakkirat*, Vol. 1, p. 451

<sup>247</sup> Bennabi, *Mudhakkirat*, p. 239

<sup>248</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 234

denied a teaching post in Morocco due to his militancy<sup>249</sup>. Some Algerian militants throughout the 1950s also hid in the French capital, including members of the OS such as Ahmed Mahsas, Mohammed Boudiaf, Mourad Didouche, Mohammed Maroc and Abderrahmane Guerras<sup>250</sup>. Yet with the escalation of the Algerian conflict, the repressive measures adopted by the French authorities became more severe, increasingly emulating that of the colonies<sup>251</sup>.

‘For the immigrants that we were, the gap between Algiers and Paris’ political climates was shrinking. Raids, racial profiling, detentions – which were not widespread among Tunisians and Moroccans – the transferring of militants to the Beni-Messous camp, a precursor to the internment camps which were to open in France proper, were a regular feature of our daily lives.’<sup>252</sup>

Police reprisals to manifestations of national sentiment throughout decolonisation, especially towards Algerians, was epitomised by the violent clamp down on Algerian protesters in October 1951, resulting in the death of allegedly over two hundred Algerians<sup>253</sup>.

Therefore colonial migrants did not experience freedom of artistic and intellectual production to the same extent as European and American migrants. They were attracted to the city’s social liberalism, but Parisian liberty was for them unattainable.

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<sup>249</sup> Ben Barka, *Mon frère*, p. 59

<sup>250</sup> Harbi, *Une vie*, p. 97

<sup>251</sup> For more on the development of police surveillance in Paris during this period, see Rosenberg, C. D., *Policing Paris: the origins of modern immigration control between the wars*, (Ithaca, 2006)

<sup>252</sup> Harbi, *Une vie*, p. 215

<sup>253</sup> Naylor, P., *North Africa: a history from antiquity to the present*, (Austin, 2009), p. 190

## Creative Clusters

Another spatial characteristic that both attracted migrants and affected cultural production within the city was the idea of creative spaces making up a creative city<sup>254</sup>. The fame of artistic communities in Paris, centred on small districts, created the impression that there was, firstly, something about those spaces that generated such creativity and secondly, that being in those spaces would transfer that creativity. These are what urban theorists Charles Landry and Allen Scott have called creative clusters or creative milieus<sup>255</sup>. The idea was that the geographical proximity of creative industries helped to generate original cultural production. This theory has been employed in relation to Soul music produced in Detroit's Motown<sup>256</sup>. This terminology has also been used to describe the development of the Reggae scene in Kingston<sup>257</sup>. There are several notable creative clusters in Parisian history and their fame was responsible for a great deal of Paris' urban identity. The 'Republic of Letters' as Dena Goodman calls it was clustered around the salons of the enlightened aristocracy<sup>258</sup>. French science was clustered around French pedagogical infrastructure, such as the *Collège de France* and the *Académie Française*. Parisian Bohemia was clustered around the small village of Montmartre and twentieth century Parisian literature was clustered within the Left Bank, especially the Latin Quarter and Saint-Germain-des-Près.

The outbreak of the First World War in Paris represents the relocation of Paris' cultural production from Montmartre to the Left Bank. This was historically the capital's university district where the *Collège de France* and the Sorbonne have stood for many

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<sup>254</sup> Clark, P., Hietala, M., 'Creative Cities' in *Oxford Handbook of Cities*

<sup>255</sup> Scott, 'Mainsprings of the Creative City', p. 291; also see Landry, *The Creative City*, p. 133

<sup>256</sup> Florida, R., Mellander, C., Stolarick, K., 'Music for the Masses: The Economic Geography of Music in the U.S., 1970-2000', *Environment and Planning A*, 42, (2010), p. 786

<sup>257</sup> Clark Hietala 'Creative Cities' in *Oxford Handbook of Cities*, p. 8

<sup>258</sup> Goodman, *The Republic of Letters*, p. 91

centuries. Along its streets lay cheap hotels resided by artists, students and intellectuals<sup>259</sup>. The cafes flanking the principle axis of Boulevard Saint-Germain and Boulevard Saint-Michel, most famously *Les Deux Magots* and *Café Flore*, were attended by Paris' intellectual elite, many of whom were migrants from French provinces, Europe and across the world. The district also housed much of Paris' publishing press, printing houses and journal offices. These included André Gide's *Editions Gallimard* and *Nouvelle Revue Française* on *rue Sébastien Bottin*. There was the *Editions de Seuil*, the offices of Emmanuel Mounier's *Esprit* and later Sartre's *Les Temps Modernes* on *rue Jacob*. The district also housed two culturally significant bookstores, Adrienne Monnier's *La Maison des Amis du Livres* for the Francophone intellectual milieu and Sylvia Beach's Shakespeare and Co. for Anglophone expatriates. Montmartre's famous jaunts were abandoned in favour of Montparnasse's jazz clubs, which became important hangouts for Parisian existentialists<sup>260</sup>. The physical proximity of these notable creative spaces is evident when plotted on a map (see Appendix B).

The productive and creative potential of these clusters account for much of Paris' international artistic celebrity, drawing intellectual migrants from around the world<sup>261</sup>:

'The legend of Saint-Germain-des-Prés as the intellectual centre of Paris had reached Persia by the end of the 40s and gradually spread among the young progressives. Through articles, photographs and films we learnt the topography of the area: a maze of cobble stoned streets clustered around the square, dominated by the abbey and its graceful eleventh-century tower – the oldest in the city. We know of the cafés Flore and Deux Magots, where Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, Albert Camus, and many other authors had written the

<sup>259</sup> Descriptions of accommodation in the Latin quarter and the students, artists and intellectuals resident in them, see Orwell, G., *Down and Out in Paris and London*, (Middlesex, 1982) or Guppy, *A Girl in Paris*

<sup>260</sup> Boris Vian produces a chronicle of St-Germain-des-Près, writing especially about the club *Tabou* and its regular existentialist clientele: Vian, B., *Manuel de Saint Germain des Près*, ed., Arnaud, N., (Paris, 1974)

<sup>261</sup> 'Les Deux Magots', a café frequently attended by Jaul-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir became a touristic landmark in the Latin Quarter. Features in Haqqi, Y., *Un égyptien à Paris*, trans., Naga, A. A., (Alger, 1973), p. 83 and in Shusha Guppy's *A Girl in Paris*, p. 52

books we read in translation. We had heard about Le Tabou where Juliette Greco had first sung the songs of Jacques Prévert and Raymond Queneaux, and launched the fashion for a pale complexion and disillusion. All you had to do was hop on an aeroplane and disembark in Paris, and there they would all be, waiting for you!<sup>262</sup>

As Stephane Cronin remarks in his biography of Paris, in the interwar period, the majority of Parisian artists were not French<sup>263</sup>. Paris between 1914 and 1962 instead attracted and launched the careers of some of the world's most famous artists including the German Max Ernst, the Spaniards Pablo Picasso, Juan Gris, Salvador Dali, the Japanese Tsuguharu Foujita, Russian Kandinsky, Italian Giacometti, and Belgium René Magritte. The fame and notoriety of these creative clusters continued to pull students and aspiring intellectuals well into the mid-twentieth, generating what Iranian writer Shusha Guppy called 'intellectual tourism'<sup>264</sup>.

Therefore Paris' spatial qualities, as a collection of physical attributes and artefacts, according to the criteria of urban theorists were important in attracting intellectual migrants not just from the north of Africa but also from the rest of the world. The extent to which these spatial qualities, together with the Parisian cultural milieu and urban identity, affected the experience of migrants and their cultural production within the city and upon their return home is the subject of the rest of this study.

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<sup>262</sup> Guppy, *A Girl in Paris*, p. 245

<sup>263</sup> Cronin, *Paris*, p. 94

<sup>264</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 246

## Part Two – The Polemics of Global Knowledge

## Chapter Four – An Apprenticeship in Modernity

The study of intellectual migration from the non-Western world to European metropolitan centres, especially in the early twentieth century, is embroiled in polemical disputes relating to global flows of knowledge and the global spread of modernity. Most intellectual migration took place under the premise of European intellectual and pedagogical supremacy and thus modern developments in the colonies were attributed to the spread of European norms and conventions abroad.

Intellectual migration from the north of Africa during this period is of no exception. The intellectual elite from Egypt and the Maghrib travelling to French metropolises were extremely conscious of undertaking an apprenticeship in order to fulfil the modern development of their home society. Furthermore France utilised this perception of apprenticeship to varying degrees in order to advance their interests in all of these territories. Insightful into the framework of international student mobility at the height of European colonialism, it is especially important when interpreting modern developments outside Europe. It gave place to an assumption about the European provenance and authority of what has been retrospectively been called the global rise of modernity; an assumption which inherently attributes a causal correlation between contact with Europe and the spread of European modernity. This section will explain how French policy relating to student mobility propagated this assumption, how it has come to dominate academic understandings of global flows of knowledge, before integrating it into the wider discourse regarding modern developments outside of Europe. It will finally try to illustrate how the assumed European authority over and non-European apprenticeship of modernity continues

to be a didactical error in narratives of non-Western development through the analysis of modern cultural production in the north of Africa by intellectual migrants to Paris.

### **The Policy of Forming the Intellectual Elite**

The French colonial and diplomatic authorities used education as a tool and strategy to maintain and expand its influence abroad. It controlled and tailored the education provided to a society's elite to create a sense of cultural affinity with France, wooing them with the heritage of French civilisation and the promise of progress in order to secure French influence among the ruling class. This strategy was first explicitly manifested in Egypt in the nineteenth century and by 1914 to 1962, it was an important strand of French policy in the north of Africa.

### **The Egyptian Precedent**

The Egyptian Student Missions created under the patronage of Mehmet Ali in 1826 were established with the explicit intention of sending members of the Egyptian ruling class to undertake a specially designed apprenticeship which would bring about the modern development of Egypt. The programme curator, Edme-François Jomart designed a bespoke curriculum which was intended to provide a pedagogical formula for modern development abroad<sup>265</sup>. Students were selected, if not conscripted<sup>266</sup> to undertake this rigorous boot-camp like programme of French education, despite often being of a relatively mature age and without any former experience of European education. They were intended to become

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<sup>265</sup> For more information on this curriculum, see Daniel Newman's Introduction to Tahtawi's memoirs and Jomart's article in *Journal Asiatique*

<sup>266</sup> Yacoub Artin Pacha, the Minister of Public Education from 1884, likened the recruitment of students to the recruitment of soldiers; Artin Pacha, Y., *L'Instruction publiques en Egypte*, (Paris, 1890), p. 73

Egypt's future administrators, professors and industry leaders who, equipped with this special modern formation, would pull Egypt into the modern world and in line with Europe<sup>267</sup>.

The early nineteenth century model of the Egyptian Student Missions, although not sustained in the twentieth century, used Paris' reputation as a 'progress generator'<sup>268</sup> to sell its pedagogical facilities as an exportable product. Paris' 'physical artefact', to employ Burke's terminology<sup>269</sup>, had become a product; the international reputation of its urban identity was in this respect its promotional material. The whole programme was utilitarian, tailored to the civic necessities of the Egyptian state and economy. Although its success was questionable<sup>270</sup>, it created a premise for Egyptian migration to Europe that continued into the first half of the twentieth century: that intellectual migrants from Egypt and other parts of the non-Western world travelled to European centres of knowledge to undertake an apprenticeship in modernity.

The Egyptian Student Missions however were not simply pedagogical commerce. They were also a diplomatic investment to secure French influence among Egypt's ruling elite and to combat British influence in the region. This is clear from correspondence relating to the Egyptian Student Missions held at the French diplomatic archives in Nantes.

Largely as a result of British occupation in 1882, Egyptian intellectual migration was by the late nineteenth century no longer exclusive to France. The French therefore tried to maintain its special function as Egypt's modern educators by managing the Egyptian missions to Europe. When the French direction of these missions was also threatened in the

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<sup>267</sup> Heyworth-Dunne, *An Introduction*, p.104

<sup>268</sup> Term employed by Rearick in *Paris Dreams*, p. 45

<sup>269</sup> Burke, 'Culture: Representations' in *The Oxford Handbook of Cities*

<sup>270</sup> Al-Tahtawi, *An Imam in Paris*, pp. 355-356

1880s by Artin Pacha, the then Egyptian Under-Secretary of State in Public Education, the French authorities reacted as though it was an important strategic loss:

‘[Artin Pacha] had hoped to bring an end to France’s privileged position that it has held until now in forming, almost alone, young Egyptians devoted to liberal careers.’

‘There is no doubt that maintaining a director in Paris at the head of the Egyptian mission is for us a guarantee that this institution will keep its core [...]. It attests in a public manner that, if a number of pupils have been sent by Egypt to some of our neighbours, it is still France that has played the leading role in the education of young Egyptians. The director lost, the mission loses its French character [...].’<sup>271</sup>

The French authorities bestowed so much importance to these student missions in maintaining French influence in the region that they spent over twenty years fervently resisting its dissolution. The management of intellectual migration to Europe was therefore an important part of France’s political relations with Egypt.

It continued to be important into the twentieth century, although it became increasingly difficult for the French consulate in Cairo to affect this strategy. As the French-led structure of the Egyptian Student Missions was dissolved, the French authorities had to find an alternative practice of forming the Egyptian elite. They continued to encourage Egyptians to study in France by offering scholarships to prospective students<sup>272</sup>. In the nineteenth century, students had been enrolled on the say-so of the diplomatic authorities<sup>273</sup>. However by the beginning of the twentieth century, rising numbers of Egyptian students coming to France either privately financed or from state sponsored

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<sup>271</sup> Letter from M. Saint René Taillandier to M. de Freycimet, Cairo, 'Maintien de la Mission Egyptienne en France', 21 Septembre 1885, CADN, AMB 51, Carton 167

<sup>272</sup> From Minister Plenipotentiary of France 'Chef du Service des Œuvres Françaises à l'Etranger' to 'Monsieur le Ministre de France au Caire', 'Séjour en France des boursiers du Gouvernement français', 19 April 1939, Article 28/3, CADN, AMB 51, Carton 167

<sup>273</sup> A long series of these requests and correspondences can be found at CADN in the box AMB 51, Carton 167 under the title 'Etudiants égyptiens en France (1885-1939)'

programmes meant that it was increasingly difficult for the French authorities to continue doing so<sup>274</sup>.

A conflict arose in the early twentieth century between the French diplomatic authorities and French institutions of higher education. The increasing pressure put on the academic infrastructure led to complaints about the standard of Egyptian students enrolled in French universities, which eventually refused to admit them. In a letter addressed to the French Minister Plenipotentiary in Cairo in 1912, the director of the National School of Agriculture in Montpellier shows clear frustration at the standard of international students appointed by the consulate:

'I would be equally annoyed if a student was sent several months after the start of term, as was the case for young Mohammed Abdel Samad, who arrived in Montpellier in January. Even if he had had a better grasp of the French language, it would have been impossible for him to catch up a whole trimester of work. Furthermore, a student must be perfectly fluent in the French language and have a scientific background equivalent to a bachelor of sciences in order to follow our classes.

I take the liberty to bring your attention to these various points [...] in order to avoid a repeat of this disappointing experience.'<sup>275</sup>

The Ministry of Diplomatic Affairs also faced further difficulties when a proposed entrance exam for international students formally prohibited French consulate intervention in the admission of international students, thereby curbing their influence abroad:

'Your recent correspondence of the 15<sup>th</sup> April to *M.M. les Recteurs* was brought to my attention concerning the examination which international students will have to undertake if they wish to enrol to the Faculties of France and whose countries of origins have a secondary education system which is

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<sup>274</sup> For instance, in a letter addressed to the Egyptian Minister of Public Works in July 1912, the French consulate in Cairo informed the Minister that despite their best efforts, they had failed to convince the French Ministry of Public Education to grant his son the necessary equivalent qualification to enrol at his desired school in France. Letter from Monsieur de France, Minister Plenipotentiary in Cairo to S. E. Sirry Pacha, Minister of Public Works, Cairo, 22 July 1912, CADN, AMB 51, Carton 167

<sup>275</sup> Letter from Director of the *École Nationale d'Agriculture*, Montpellier, to Monsieur Defrance, Minister Plenipotentiary of France, Cairo, 4 Mai 1912, CADN, AMB 51, Carton 167

structured in a way which is not equivalent to French secondary education. This correspondence, if its provision is interpreted in a restrictive sense, could pose serious inconveniences to our influence in Muslim and Arab nations, particularly Egypt, [...]<sup>276</sup>

These difficulties forced the French authorities to find a more sustainable way to educate the future elite and to incorporate them into France's pedagogical infrastructure via more normative means. This meant dealing with the question of qualification equivalency.

Some institutions offered their own solutions to these challenges. *L'Ecole des Hautes Etudes Commerciales* established foundation courses especially designed for international students whose qualifications were insufficient to gain admission to French Faculties. The school advertised their new scheme to the French consulate in a letter dated 6 May 1933:

'It is my pleasure to remind you of the Business Academy for International Students that has been established at the *l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes Commerciales*, a veritable Business University which is aimed exclusively at international students whose countries do not have the equivalent. [...] The Minister of Public Education, in a decree dated the 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1927, agreed that the students of this academy holding a Certification in Higher Business Studies could be admitted to normal classes, upon application, of the second year with the same title as students with diplomas from the *Ecoles Supérieures de Commerce de France*.<sup>277</sup>

Provisions such as these attest to the growing difficulty of the French diplomatic authorities in the twentieth century in exercising their *politique* of forming the intellectual elite. But they still continued to do so up until World War Two, after which the number of Egyptian students began to fall. Although Egyptian students continued to study in European universities, the political climate after the 1952 revolution increasingly distanced Egypt from foreign cultural influences<sup>278</sup>. Yet the Cultural Convention signed between France and Egypt

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<sup>276</sup> 'Président du Conseil, Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, à Monsieur le Ministre de l'Instruction Publique et des Beaux-Arts (direction de l'Enseignement supérieur)', 3 June 1921, CADN, AMB 51, Carton 167

<sup>277</sup> 'M. Burnieu, Ecole des hautes Etudes Commerciales', 6 May 1933, CADN, AMB 51, Carton 167

<sup>278</sup> This climate is expressed in Doria Shafik's memoirs

in 1968 attests to France's ongoing endeavour to sustain a cultural influence through intellectual migration in a post-colonial framework<sup>279</sup>.

The French authorities employed a similar tactic, albeit through less formal provision, in Iran, where the Iranian and French authorities were said to have 'maintained and developed close intellectual collaboration'<sup>280</sup>, explaining partly how the number of Iranian students in France had reached 428 by 1935. The French *politique* of forming the ruling elite in Egypt was also a precedent for colonial policy in French West Africa and the Maghrib.

### **Morocco and the Conquête Morale**

French colonial policy in the north of Africa, but also worldwide, has varied for centuries between Republican acculturating ambitions of the *mission civilisatrice* and the associative policies best summarised by the rubric of the *conquête morale*. The *mission civilisatrice* was for the most part a rhetorical tool to justify colonial expansionist policy both to French public opinion as well as to colonial subjects. It was an attempt by the newly formed Third Republic from 1870 to 'reconcile' its Imperial ambitions with 'the revolutionary slogans of human emancipation and individual equality'<sup>281</sup>.

In the Maghrib, it was most widely employed in Tunisia and Algeria. The French Protectorate in Tunisia was established at a time when Jules Ferry's republican civilising mission, which explicitly declared it a duty of all superior races to elevate the situation of

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<sup>279</sup> *Accord de coopération culturelle, technique et scientifique entre le gouvernement de la République française et le gouvernement de la République arabe unie*, Numéro de l'accord : 19680045, signed by France 19 March 1968

<sup>280</sup> Siassi, A.A., *La Perse au contact de l'Occident: étude historique et sociale*, Thèse pour le doctorat d'Université, Présentée à la Faculté des Lettres de l'Université de Paris, (Paris, 1931), p. 119

<sup>281</sup> Abi-Mershed, O., *Apostles of Modernity: Saint-Simonians and the Civilizing Mission in Algeria*, (2010), p. 9

poor and primitive indigenous populaces, was superseding the approach of Radicals such as Georges Clemenceau who were sceptical of colonial expansion and the logic of superior and inferior races<sup>282</sup>. Republican politics were used considerably at first by the Residency General in Tunisia, resulting in the establishment of the *Ecoles Franco-Arabes*<sup>283</sup>.

French policy in Algeria was also inspired by the *mission civilisatrice* as it placed the French acculturation of Algerian subjects as the dominant criteria for the political emancipation of Muslim autochthons. This is reflected in the policy of the *Code de l'Indigénat*, implemented first in 1848 and lasting until 1946, despite interim attempts at reform.<sup>284</sup> Subjects of the French Empire could only attain citizenship via naturalisation. Indigenous socio-political norms were dismissed as primitive and an individual's political status depended on their acceptance or rejection of traditional institutions in exchange for French acculturation, identity, and therefore civil rights.

Despite the acculturating ambitions of the *mission civilisatrice*, French Algerians feared the implications of colonial subjects acquiring French citizenship. Thus the civilising approach was not encouraged practically as the *politique des colons* restricted the provision of European style education. The French authorities did not need to form a new ruling elite. Algeria being a department of France, the French *colons* considered themselves to be the ruling class. They only needed intermediaries to 'manage the cohabitation'<sup>285</sup>. French education was therefore deliberately restricted, and the *refus scolaires* encouraged, for fear

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<sup>282</sup> Referring to Clemenceau's famous reply to Jules Ferry in July 1885, extracts can be found on the National Assembly website, '*Grands moments d'éloquence parlementaire, Clemenceau: la colonisation*', <http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/histoire/7ec.asp>, accessed 11 January 2016

<sup>283</sup> Vermeren, *Ecole*, p. 8

<sup>284</sup> Samson, J., *Race and Empire*, (Abingdon, 2005), pp. 54-55

<sup>285</sup> Colonna, F., 'Training the National Elites in Colonial Algeria 1920-1954', *Historical Social Research*, 33:2 (124), 2008, p. 289

of the *colons* losing their privileged status and control<sup>286</sup>. Consequently Algerians were only educated in so far as to be auxiliaries and intermediaries between the French ruling class and the indigenous masses. Furthermore, according to Fanny Colonna, it was not until the First World War that European style education began to become popular amongst Algerians<sup>287</sup>.

The *conquête morale* on the other hand professed a distinct set of values to the civilising mission. Yet it had comparable effects upon emerging intellectual migration. Instead of encouraging acculturation, *la conquête morale* sought to preserve the traditional personality or identity of a given region. It thereby restricted student mobility to avoid the cultural uprooting of the ruling elite, manipulating France's international reputation to advance its interests in the region. This attitude has been manifested in various forms throughout French colonial history. There were even proponents of moral conquest among Arabist militarists in Algeria who opposed assimilationist policy between 1840 and 1870<sup>288</sup>. It was best known however as the principal doctrine of Lyautey's Morocco.

Maréchal Lyautey was a celebrated French army general who had served in Indochina, Algeria and Madagascar before becoming the first Resident General of Morocco. After the pacification of Morocco and the establishment of the Protectorate in 1912, he laid out an associative policy quite distinct from the emancipatory principles exalted in Algeria. It was based on the respect of traditions and maintenance of customary political and social structures, intended to create a form of indirect governance<sup>289</sup>. Although the French authorities still endeavoured to reform many of the customary institutions, especially the

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<sup>286</sup> Smati, *Les Elites*, p. 194

<sup>287</sup> Colonna, F., *Instituteurs algériens, 1883-1939*, (Paris, 1975), p. 33

<sup>288</sup> Abi-Mershed, O., 'Moral Conquest', in *Apostles of Modernity*

<sup>289</sup> Rivet, D. R., *Lyautey et l'Institution du Protectorat Français au Maroc 1912-1925*, (Paris, 1996), p. 224

judicial system, there was an explicit endeavour to avoid the acculturating ambitions so prominent in Algeria:

'We are incorporating them without any of the familiar civilizational illusions of nineteenth century men'<sup>290</sup>

This associative approach applied to all aspects of colonial policy in the region, whether it was economic, political, military, administrative or cultural.

French educational policy in Morocco most characterised this alternative approach to colonial management. It specifically sought to avoid the cultural uprooting, or *déracination* of Moroccans, quite distinct from the principle of the *mission civilisatrice* as it was experienced in Algeria. At first, Lyautey adopted a more hands-off approach of non-interference to Moroccan education. However once the dust had settled from the First World War, the authorities in the Parisian *métropole* grew concerned about the Moroccan intellectual exodus to the Near East for education, most notably to Tetouan, Cairo and Palestine<sup>291</sup>. Consequently Lyautey established the General Direction of Public Education (DGEP) headed by geographer and colonialist Georges Hardy to direct Morocco's educational policy. The programme outlined was presented as an induction into modernity:

'Such are the solutions offered so far to the issue of Moroccan education, which can, in general, be reduced to these facts: providing natives with the means to continue living in the environment of the modern world, to develop their activities and provide formulas and tools necessary for that production, all while maintaining their ideas and their external habits as they see fit; invigorate without uprooting, enlighten without disorienting, [...].'<sup>292</sup>

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<sup>290</sup> Ibid., p. 223

<sup>291</sup> Vermeren, *Ecole*, pp. 28-29

<sup>292</sup> Hardy, G., 'l'Enseignement', in Résidence Générale de la République Française au Maroc, Rabat, *La Renaissance au Maroc – dix ans de Protectorat*, (Paris, 1920), p. 203

Conversely to French policy in Algeria, modern sciences were taught alongside traditional Arabic subjects<sup>293</sup>. The proselytising influence of French education, common in Algeria, was also omitted. If French policy in Algeria was relying on the stick of coercion, Lyautey's Morocco was trying to employ the carrot of cultural seduction.

In terms of international political relations, the objectives of the *conquête morale* were comparable to those of the Egyptian Student Missions. It sought to form Morocco's future ruling elite so they may establish a long-lasting relationship that would secure French influence in the region without reliance on military intervention and direct institutions of governance. Modern French education was therefore reserved for the Moroccan elite, particularly sons of notables. The schools of sons of notables, such as the College Moulay Idriss in Fes and College Moulay Youssef in Rabat, were established exclusively with this ambition. The rest of the Moroccan population were only provided a limited practical education, or 'pre-apprenticeship'<sup>294</sup>, suggesting tactical rather than altruistic incentives behind educational policy in Morocco.

But while the *conquête morale* has been remembered as part of 'Lyautey's Morocco', it is in fact a strand of colonial policy that was brought over from AOF by French colonialist, Georges Hardy. Hardy was elected as Director General of Public Education of AOF in 1912 by the then Governor General William Ponty at the early age of 26. Eight years later, Lyautey assigned him to the same post in Morocco. Hardy then went on in 1926 to be Director of the *Ecole Coloniale* and in 1932 Rector of the Algiers Academy<sup>295</sup>.

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<sup>293</sup> Ibid., p. 59

<sup>294</sup> 'pré-apprentissage'

<sup>295</sup> Little, J. P., 'Introduction', in Hardy, G., *Une Conquête Morale – l'enseignement en A.O.F.*, ed. J. P. Little, (Paris, 2005), p. vii

It is explicitly clear that Hardy's educational policy in Morocco was directly inspired by what he developed and practiced in AOF. In 1917, Hardy published a colonial pedagogical outline entitled *La Conquête Morale* that later formed the basis of Moroccan policy. France, possessing the secrets to modern development, would form the future indigenous elite in order to cheaply secure French influence in the region:

'To transform the primitive peoples of our colonies, to render them as devoted as possible to our cause and useful to our enterprises, we only have a very limited number of means at our disposition, and the most assured way is to take the 'native' from its infancy, to ensure from him a regular interaction so that he is subjected to our intellectual and moral traditions for several years in succession; in a word, to open to him our schools so that his spirit is formed according to our objectives.'<sup>296</sup>

The propaganda used to woo the Moroccans into accepting that influence was that French education would equip students with what was necessary to progress into the modern world:

'It is thus the taming of Muslims, dissipating their concerns about the consequences of modern education, convincing them that their children, who will live tomorrow in a very different Morocco than that of yesterday, must be prepared for a whole new existence.'<sup>297</sup>

In this way, it very much resembled French diplomatic ambitions in Egypt.

This approach was not completely original to Hardy. He was inspired by the philosophy of Governor General William Ponty<sup>298</sup>. Nor is there any evidence that Ponty or Hardy were influenced by Edme-François Jomard's approach to international relations, despite the objectives of the *conquête morale* resembling those of the Egyptian Student Missions. The *conquête morale* is therefore not the direct continuation of Jomard's strand

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<sup>296</sup> Hardy, *Une Conquête Morale*, pp. 6-7

<sup>297</sup> Morocco, *Direction générale de l'instruction publique des beaux-arts et des antiquités : historique (1912-1930)*, (Rabat, 1931), p. 51

<sup>298</sup> Little, 'Introduction' in Hardy, *Une Conquête Morale*, p. viii

of diplomacy via pedagogy. Yet it still attests to France's reoccurring political strategy of forming the intellectual elite to secure its influence abroad in the twentieth century.

### **Moroccan and Tunisian Foyers to France**

The policy of the *conquête morale* affected intellectual migration from Morocco to France up until the late nineteen forties most notably through the establishment of the North African *foyers* to France. A *foyer* in this case was a bespoke instructive and touristic trip to France organised by the French colonial administration for a select group of Moroccan sons of notables in order to inspire them with the glories of French civilisation. They were designed to seduce young Moroccans with the allures of France's attributes as a producer of modern progress. Like the Egyptian Student Missions, the Moroccan *foyers* employed Paris' international reputation as a centre of knowledge and contrived encounters with that environment in order to create a cultural attachment. Both these traditions were founded upon the principle that exposure to the spaces and mechanisms that produced modern civilisation would result in the spread of those forces worldwide.

Educational *foyers* to France, arranged by Maréchal Lyautey in 1922 and 1923 were the first formal instances of intellectual migration from Morocco under French Protectorate rule. These are not to be confused with student residences in Paris, such as the North African Foyer at 26 *rue Gay-Lussac*, fifth arrondissement, Paris, which were establishments designed to assist foreign students in France<sup>299</sup>. These provided information, facilitated the finding of affordable accommodation and generally provided a community of support and friendship. Although this latter *foyer* does provide some useful insight into French cultural

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<sup>299</sup> Term employed to refer to the *Centre Intellectuel de la Méditerranée* by Ray, 'Les Marocains en France', p. 349

colonial policy and is very pertinent to the experience of North African and Egyptian students in Paris, they are nevertheless quite distinct from the caravans of students in question.

The *foyers* organised by Lyautey were highly contrived experiences. Ten students were sent around France for five weeks on an itinerary designed especially to showcase France's intellectual and cultural assets and to stage its civilizational prowess. Paris in particular was showcased as France's crown jewel; it was also Paris that was said to have created the most lasting impression upon its students<sup>300</sup>. Their trips included visits to the *Jardin Zoologique* and the Louvre, as well as France's educative facilities like the Sorbonne and the *Bibliothèque Nationale*<sup>301</sup>. The French authorities were essentially presenting France's infrastructure as a model for Morocco's own economic and political development.

The structure of the *foyers* bore the mark of the French authorities' diplomatic intentions. The student delegations were often treated as diplomatic envoys. The 1923 delegation was met by the President of the Republic himself, by the then Minister of Foreign Affairs M. Raymond Poincaré, as well as by other 'top officials'<sup>302</sup>.

The *foyers*, like the Egyptian Student Missions, also sought to control the types of encounters produced by these visits. It was essential for the charm offensive's success that the types of encounters produced were positive and beneficial to the objectives of the missions. Conversely to expectations, contact with French students was most feared. The report produced by organisers of a 1939 excursion, Roger Le Tourneau and Lucien Paye, shows they feared candid interactions with real France:

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<sup>300</sup> Marty, P., *Le Maroc de demain*, (Paris, 1925), p.203

<sup>301</sup> Ibid., pp. 203-204

<sup>302</sup> Ray, 'Les Marocains en France', p. 241

'The concerns expressed by the Director of the University Tourism Office regarding the political atmosphere that reigned in youth hostels (predominantly of leftist orientation) proved to have been unfounded: and I must note that on this occasion, the youth hostel was frequented by very few French students and it is for this reason that the risk of detrimental political encounters was reduced.'<sup>303</sup>

This extract is uncannily similar to a report concerning the Egyptian Student Missions nearly a hundred years earlier:

'It is for that matter sensible that the young Egyptians are not put into contact with French students at too early a stage, since they are turbulent, rebellious, lazy and mocking.'<sup>304</sup>

The Moroccan *foyers* to France resembled greatly the incentives and measures of the Egyptian Student Missions. A statement made by Paul Marty, the then Director of the French-Muslim College Moulay Idriss in Fes, about the Moroccan *foyers* echoes the sentiments expressed by the French consulate regarding the French directorship of the Egyptian Student Missions to Europe:

'In the end, it is with us that they will undertake their 'humanity', for with who other than the Latin intellect would they be capable of forming sentiments of humanity and solidarity, of expanding their moral and social horizons? Moroccans, young and old, cultured or not, have come to realise this and are confident to open themselves up to us. [...] sometimes they happen to say, and it is with their words that I shall conclude this study: "blessed be Allah who, having imposed upon us, in order to regenerate us, this test of foreign domination, chose among all others the French to be its instrument! We know and admire the English, but what benefit would they bring us, so far, so distant, so cold? We know the Germans with their imperial brutality, their tricks and their bad faith. We know even better our Spanish neighbours; an understanding with them is impossible: an entire history of struggle and bloodshed, of crusades and holy war [...]. But the French, with their clear spirit, their loyal character, their fraternal soul, which is unprejudiced by race, their love of freedom, their noble and welcoming civilisation, the French are for us the best of all possible guides. Blessed be Allah who, having imposed

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<sup>303</sup> Le Tourneau, R., 'Un Foyer Marocain A Paris, 1939 ?'; CADN, Carton 687, 2<sup>ème</sup> Versement

<sup>304</sup> Hékékyan Bey, J., *Report on the Egyptian school in Paris*, 1849, Add. 37466, p. 113

upon us, in order to regenerate us, this test of foreign domination, chose among all others the French to be the instrument”.<sup>305</sup>

This is clearly propaganda; even if a Moroccan had made such a profession, it is no true representation of Moroccan attitudes towards France at the time. The Moroccan elite were by the mid-1920s, when this statement was made, quite reticent to educate their children in the French system<sup>306</sup>. It is rather what France wanted Moroccan perceptions of French education to be. It reveals that the French authorities involved in the education of the young Moroccan elite employed Paris’ urban identity and France’s international reputation as a progress-generator to secure its influence in the region.

Hubert Lyautey and George Hardy both left their posts in 1925. Yet the spirit of the *conquête morale* persisted in some strands of cultural colonial policy in Morocco, particularly the structure of Moroccan *foyers* to France. In 1939, Roger Le Tourneau and Lucien Paye organised a similar *foyer* to reward Moroccan students with the best results in that year’s baccalaureate. The caravan included Mehdi Ben Barka<sup>307</sup>. From the detailed reports produced by its organisers, these *foyers* closely resembled those of the 1920s in both form and purpose. They too organised a special itinerary that showcased Paris’ intellectual heritage and civic achievements; the Foyer’s organisers were also driven by very similar objectives:

‘A voyage which should be particularly seductive for this group of twenty young men taken from the elite of Morocco’s younger generation; it is important indeed that they remember their trip to our country as a rich, beautiful, confident and welcoming France.’<sup>308</sup>

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<sup>305</sup> Marty, *Le Maroc de demain*, p. 211

<sup>306</sup> Vermeren, *Ecole*, p. 26

<sup>307</sup> Mehdi Ben Barka listed in document ‘Liste des participants au foyer Marocain Juillet Aout 1939’, CADN, Carton 687, 2<sup>ème</sup> Versement; Participation confirmed in Ben Barka, *Mon frère*, p. 35

<sup>308</sup> Le Tourneau, R., ‘Un Foyer Marocain A Paris’, CADN, Carton 687, 2<sup>ème</sup> Versement, p. 4

These trips included the French provinces, in this case the Loire Valley, to demonstrate the possibilities of developing a modern industrial and agricultural economy, integrating local economies into the national economy while maintaining the cultural and traditional integrity of the region:

‘Our ambition was to present [...] the multiple aspects of economic, social and cultural life of our old province. We wanted our students to understand while on this trip to France that around our capital city, forums of provincial activity are still alive and prosperous and are integrated into the national community while maintaining their own lives and their originality.’<sup>309</sup>

Tours of provincial industries were arranged, including the somewhat dubious choice of a Cointreau factory in the Loire Valley. They also partook in local folk festivals, such as the Plantagenet festival at Fontevraud, home to the tombs of Richard the Lion Heart and Eleanor of Aquitaine. Traditional dances and costumes were displayed, reminding students of stories of the Three Musketeers and other romantic images of medieval France. Juxtaposing France’s economic production and traditional culture was designed to entice Moroccans by its culturally authentic model for development. These objectives again bear a striking resemblance to the objectives of the *conquête morale* as laid down by Georges Hardy.

Like Lyautey’s *foyers*, the student delegates in 1939 were treated with diplomatic significance. According to one of the students, they were met by top officials everywhere they went<sup>310</sup>, including Mayors, Prefects and Presidents of the Chambers of Commerce, Agriculture and Trades. Their visit was also reported in the local press and a couple of the

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<sup>309</sup> Ibid., p. 6

<sup>310</sup> ‘Compte rendu du séjour en France des élèves du foyer Marocain, rédigé par Alaoui Ahmed actuellement élève en Philosophie au Lycée de Fès.’ No. 190, 07 May 1940, in Ibid.

students were invited to participate in a radio broadcast on *Paris-Mondiale*<sup>311</sup>, bestowing upon the trip further diplomatic significance.

The 1939 Moroccan *foyer* shows how the spirit of the *conquête morale* persisted in Morocco beyond Lyautey and Hardy's office. Although Théodore Steeg's leadership brought French policy more in line with the direct forms of governance practiced in Algeria, the spirit of the *conquête morale* continued to shape some elements of intellectual migration to France until the Second World War through administrators sympathetic to Lyautey's vision such as Lucien Paye and Roger Le Tourneau.

Similar *foyers* were organised in Tunisia. In fact, Lucien Paye noted in his report that the 1939 *foyer* was inspired by a similar project organised in Tunisia by a certain Mme Carroi<sup>312</sup>. The spirit of the *conquête morale* therefore also affected Tunisian intellectual migration to Paris, despite French colonial policy in Tunisia being based more on the principles of the republican civilising mission. There were two further *foyers* organised by the *Association des Anciens Elèves du Lycée Carnot* in 1923 and 1939 in much the same fashion as the Moroccan Foyers. Among the students partaking in the 1923 caravan was Habib Bourguiba<sup>313</sup>. There are also documents in the French archives that indicate that another scheme was proposed for 1947; although there is no sign that it actually took

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<sup>311</sup> Le Tourneau, R., 'Un Foyer Marocain A Paris', *Ibid.*, p. 8

<sup>312</sup> Lucien Paye, 'Causerie – "Un Foyer Marocain en Anjou", faite le 18 Novembre 1939 aux Anciens Elèves du Collège Moulay Idriss à Fès', in *Ibid.*

<sup>313</sup> Bourguiba, H., 'Deuxième Conférence donnée par Le Président Habib Bourguiba (19 Octobre 1973)', <http://www.bourguiba.com/uploads/docs/pdf/fr/bourguiba-Conference-19-10-1973-2.pdf>

place<sup>314</sup>. This approach to student mobility however represented only a minor strand of colonial policy in Tunisia.

The less explicit presence of the *conquête morale* in the management of Tunisian student mobility explains how there were fewer attempts to avoid French culture infiltration in Tunisia than Morocco. It may also reflect the greater existing demand in Tunisia for a modern French education. There were many French *colons* in Tunisia who sought to turn Tunisia into another Algeria and restrict the political emancipation of Tunisians<sup>315</sup>. But Tunisia, like Morocco was officially a protectorate. Therefore officially France's relations with Tunisia were, like Egypt, as external territories, and therefore dealt with by the Ministry of the Exterior. This was also the case with Morocco. But Lyautey's particular model of protectorate relations with Morocco was very protectionist and reflected more the restrictive nature of the Egyptian Student Missions in the nineteenth century. It sought especially to contrive how Moroccans interacted with France, thereby restricting student mobility. French colonial policy in Tunisia on other hand was pulling in different directions, resulting in a much freer movement of students, writers, intellectuals and professionals in the interwar period, closer to that of Egypt in the twentieth century.

Strangely, despite opposing approaches to colonial policy in Morocco and Algeria, the result was very comparable; access to a further education was highly restricted, as was student mobility. This reflects to a large extent discrepancies between metropolitan colonialist ideologies and the 'practical realities' in the colonies which, according to Osama Abi-Mershed, led to 'a multitude of competing, even contradictory, proposals, opinions and

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<sup>314</sup> El-Annabi, M.A., President of the *Association des Anciens Elèves du Lycée Carnot*, 'NOTE - au sujet de l'Ouvre de la caravane des Etudiants Tunisiens en France, Paris' 9 June 1947, *Courneuve*, Paris, P4062, No. 232, Carton 45, Dossier 6, 10, 11, p. 70

<sup>315</sup> Vermeren, *Ecole*, p. 13

expectations<sup>316</sup>. Nevertheless in Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt more than in Algeria, the French authorities' cashed in on Paris' cultural capital in its colonial relations. France used Paris' reputation as the capital of enlightenment, progress generator and city of intellectuals as a tool in its *politique musulmane*.

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<sup>316</sup> Abi-Mershed, *Apostles of Modernity*, pp. 6-7

## Chapter Five – Cultural Production in the Modern Age

The political employment of Paris' international reputation as a producer of modern civilizational progress is a significant macro-process shaping migration from much of the colonised world. It is also a factor that conditioned cultural encounters resulting from migration. Most crucially, it is important for understanding the intellectual history of migration.

Although the French authorities' *politique* of forming the intellectual elite was clearly a rhetorical tool and colonial strategy, it is intrinsically tied to modes of representation connecting intellectual migration and modern developments outside of Europe. Intellectual migration in the early twentieth century took place at a time when cultural relations were largely framed by the assumed intellectual and pedagogical supremacy of Europe. It was a time when modern forms were developing outside of Europe and where intellectual developments worldwide, and especially in the Arab-Muslim cultural zone, were gauged by whether they were working towards or against the European other. Historical perceptions concerning the global spread of knowledge and modernity in the twentieth century are consequently highly Eurocentric.

### **The 'Diffusion' Narrative**

Migrants are generally thought, upon returning home, to have brought back the European modernity they had learned abroad as a form of social remittance. This relates to any number of phenomenon manifested in the modern era, including modern scientific and philosophical knowledge, modern artistic forms and modern culture, modern industry, a modern economy and modern social relations. In this sense the West is seen as the author,

producer and instructor of modern civilisation progress. This is the kind of historicist temporality of 'first in the West, then elsewhere' critiqued by post-colonialist Dipesh Chakrabarty<sup>317</sup>. Modern development in extra-European societies was seen as the spread of European modernity.

This interpretive framework is described by German global historian Sebastian Conrad as 'narratives of uniqueness and diffusion'<sup>318</sup>. Enlightened ideas are considered to have been 'diffused' from Europe across the globe; only Europe is seen as being capable of producing enlightened thought. Europeans, either through their commercial expeditions or colonial settlements, took their knowledge out into the world. Or, like the Egyptian Student Missions and Moroccan *foyers*, foreigners came to Europe to undertake a sort of apprenticeship in European civilisation.

In the modern history of North Africa, this dynamic is attributed to the modern educated class. In Tunisia and Algeria this relates to a generation known as the Young Tunisians and Young Algerians<sup>319</sup>. In Morocco it refers to graduates of the schools of sons of notables such as College Moulay-Idriss and in Egypt it denotes the generation of tarbush rather than turban wearing intellectual elite<sup>320</sup>. Their modern personality, their ideas and the political movements they led were considered the export of European political forms and theory. At face value, this is an easy assumption to make. They were Western educated; a good proportion of them had been to Europe, France especially to study. Especially in the case of Algeria, they were fluent in French, at the expense of Arabic, and

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<sup>317</sup> Chakrabarty, D., *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought & Historical Difference*, (Princeton, 2000), p. 6

<sup>318</sup> Conrad, S., 'Enlightenment in Global History: A Historiographical Critique,' *American Historical Review*, 117, p. 999

<sup>319</sup> A term frequently employed to denote a new generation of political actors, linking them rhetorically to the Young Turks movement.

<sup>320</sup> Kalmbach, H., *From turban to tarbush : Dār al-'Ulūm and social, linguistic, and religious change in interwar Egypt*, (Oxford, Thesis (D.Phil.), 2012)

they usually adopted Western styles of dress. In the eyes of European colonialists and orientalists, their cultural and intellectual production was an emulation of that coming from Europe.

This attitude dominated the perception of colonialists, historians, orientalists, government officials and the press. In the words of French colonial administrator and historian Roger Le Tourneau, Young Tunisians and the Moroccan intellectual elite imported European culture unchanged:

‘We can say that in general, European culture, French in the majority of cases, has been introduced in the Maghrib as is, hardly without any attempts to adapt it to this milieu which is so different to the one in which it grew up.’<sup>321</sup>

According to social historian Mahmoud Smati, Orientalists such as Edmond Doutté and William Marçais considered the Young Algerians capable of nothing other than ‘copying ideological currents imported from abroad’<sup>322</sup>. This historiographical presumption thereby stripped colonial subjects of any agency in the modern development of their country bar being the carriers of an imported culture.

As a result the movements led by these young French educated elites were dismissed as the undesirable spread of European political tensions. The ENA and CAM were perceived by the French intelligence services<sup>323</sup> and the French press as products of communist or socialist stirrings. Yet in their memoirs, their leaders insist that while they reached out to the Left for practical assistance, institutionally, intellectually and ideologically they remained autonomous.

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<sup>321</sup> Le Tourneau, *Evolution politique*, p. 39

<sup>322</sup> Smati, *Les Elites*, p. 230

<sup>323</sup> “L’Etoile Nord-Africaine, organisation contrôlée par le parti communiste, [...]”, ‘Rapport sur l’Association des Etudiants Musulmans Nord-Africains en France’, 7 June 1933, Sent by the Minister of the Interior to the Minister of Foreign Affairs ; *Courneuve*, Série K 15, P13681, f. 17

Messali Hadj's ENA had close ties with the PCF from the outset. One of the ENA's founding members Hadj 'Ali 'Abd al-Kadir was Moscow trained and a fully-fledged member of the PCF<sup>324</sup>. But the ENA's relationship with the PCF was fraught with tension precisely because of the dogmatic sort of adherence to communism that characterised its intellectual influence over members at the time.

Messali Hadj insists that his original enthusiasm for communism in the nineteen twenties resulted from it being the only realistic forum through which to advance international interest in the difficulties North Africans faced under French colonial rule. The French language communist journal *l'Humanité* was one of the only well-distributed papers to cover the Rif Wars in Morocco sympathetically. It became one of the principle sources of news from the colonies and covered political developments in Turkey extensively<sup>325</sup>. Yet as the nationalist momentum progressed, conflicts arose between the ENA and the PCF because the former resisted the imposition of the latter's agenda resulting in their separation in 1928<sup>326</sup>.

The same can be said about the Moroccan nationalist connection to the SFIO. Before becoming institutionalised as the CAM in 1934, early Moroccan nationalists, mostly notables from Fez, had very close ties with prominent French socialists who were sympathetic to their cause. These included Jean Longuet, his son Robert-Jean Longuet and Pierre Renaudel, the latter two both making important trips to Fez in the 1930s, staying with the Ouazzani family and holding meetings with nationalist movers in the city<sup>327</sup>. As a result

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<sup>324</sup> Hadj 'Ali Abdelkader: Algerian member of the PCF, ran as PCF candidate at the Parisian legislative elections in May 1924; Hadj, *Les mémoires*, p. 138

<sup>325</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 106

<sup>326</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 164-165

<sup>327</sup> Robert Jean Longuet visited Fes in March 1933 ; Pierre Renaudel visited in April 1934; Ouazzani, *Combats*, tome 1, p. 28 and p. 33 respectively

of these close ties and friendships, together with the European formation of Ouazzani, Belafrej and Omar Abdeljalil, the French press and colonial authorities accused Moroccan nationalists of being socialist adherents, discrediting their cause as another socialist agitation of indigenous politics.

Ouazzani strongly contested this narrative, arguing like Messali Hadj that strategic alliances were targeted to undermine the legitimate cause of their movement:

‘Contacts between socialists and nationalist leaders give our adversaries the opportunity to cast aspersions against us so that we may acquire the reputation of militants [...]. The press therefore, the spokesperson for our adversaries, is always full of assaults [...].’<sup>328</sup>

‘In their campaign against us, the colonialists accuse us of being “communists”, or “socialists”. They reproach us for supposedly “collaborating with foreigners” that is to say with Germany and Italy.’<sup>329</sup>

‘[...] we are neither communists nor socialists, but friends of liberal, enlightened nationalists, striving for the interests of our country, our people, our cause for a renaissance and a resurrection, liberty and honour. For this reason, we shan’t refuse any help or assistance by liberal foreigners. Being that we are persecuted, we are in need of allies and supporters. [...] We collaborate with those parties who have never imposed a thing upon us, whose aid is unprompted. They don’t ask us to espouse their doctrine, nor do they coerce us to their leanings, or to belong to their organisation.’<sup>330</sup>

There were some contemporaries who appreciated the pragmatic association of colonial activism to French left-wing politics. Charles-André Julien noted as early as 1920 that many colonial subjects ‘came to socialism less because of an intellectual membership to socialist principles than to find in Parliament [...] support against the exploitation of the *colons*’<sup>331</sup>. But the relationship between certain North African nationalists and French left-wing partisans was largely misunderstood at the time. These misunderstandings, deliberately

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<sup>328</sup> Ibid., p. 19

<sup>329</sup> Ibid., p. 20

<sup>330</sup> Ibid., p. 20

<sup>331</sup> Julien, C-A., ‘Lénine et la tactique coloniale’, *L’Humanité*, 2<sup>nd</sup> December 1920, in Julien, C-A., *Une pensée anti-coloniale: positions 1914-1979*, (Paris, 1979), p. 54

contrived or not to discredit their legitimate claims, have helped entrench a Eurocentric understanding of the development of North African political thought in the modern age.

The assumed diffusion of European modernity is intrinsically tied therefore to intellectual migration from North Africa. Anti-colonial ideas and movements in North Africa were seen as the result of nefarious imports brought over from France by political actors such as Messali Hadj and Mohamed Hassan Ouazzani who had undertaken an apprenticeship in modern politics and adopted Western political forms. There is little doubt that intellectual migrants did alter the tone of anti-colonial discourse. Many political movers in the region were greatly inspired by European literary heritage and political thought. Furthermore the acquisition of Western scientific education certainly affected local communities. But as Dipesh Chakrabarty notes in his essay on *Provincializing Europe*, Europe and its intellectual heritage is 'both indispensable and inadequate'<sup>332</sup> in understanding the rise of political modernity outside of Europe and America. The European influence cannot be summed up as the transference of a foreign form into a new milieu.

Although Eurocentric perceptions in colonialist history have been long rejected by post-colonial and post-modernist historiography<sup>333</sup>, there remains a lasting influence in much of global history. Many 'Western' historians, a term employed by Albert C. Smith to signify historians adopting Western historical methodologies but who are unconditioned by colonialist rhetoric<sup>334</sup>, state the seemingly simple and inoffensive fact that many of the first formal nationalist groups were created by the French educated elite. This of course is not

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<sup>332</sup> Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, p. 6

<sup>333</sup> For more on postcolonial historiography on North Africa in France, see Dueck, J.M., 'The Middle East and North Africa in the Imperial and Post-Colonial Historiography of France', *The Historical Journal*, 50:4, 935-949, (December 2007)

<sup>334</sup> Smith, A.C., 'North African Historiography and the Westerner: the Maghrib as Seen by David Gordon', *History in Africa*, 5, (1978), p. 188

entirely incorrect (although not entirely correct either), referring notably to the Young Tunisians and the Young Algerians at the turn of the century. Nor does it explicitly state that it was their French formation or their time in French metropolises that caused their involvement in politics. However, depending on the framing of such statements, it does imply it.

Moreover, it sweeps over the sociological and intellectual processes resulting in the advent of new political forms and dialogues in the region, leaving us with their common French connection as the only identifiable factor. This can be found even in the summaries of North African decolonisation by the likes of Ira Lapidus<sup>335</sup> or Phillip Naylor<sup>336</sup>. While there is no question of accusing either of these historians of harbouring euro-centric attitudes, they demonstrate how, with so little scholarship addressing causality, this narrative has become inadvertently entrenched in more general and apolitical narratives of decolonisation. It is the 'silent referent in historical knowledge'<sup>337</sup> reproduced whenever the modernity of the global provinces are invoked.

### **Modernity – Western Forms or Global Processes**

The idea that knowledge, culture and ideas move unchanged from one society to another with the movement of people is a simplistic understanding of global intellectual history. It is

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<sup>335</sup> Ira Lapidus invokes this narrative when discussing the politicisation of Moroccan students in Paris by stating that Moroccan workers in France were large in number and developed "Western lifestyle and political consciousness", Lapidus, I.M., *A History of Islamic Societies, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition*, (Cambridge, 2002), p. 608

<sup>336</sup> Phillip Naylor still invokes the diffusion narrative, despite readily highlighting the destructive effects of French cultural colonialism in North Africa: 'The hybrid profiles of native elites melded imported European ideologies, such as liberalism, constitutionalism and nationalism, as well as Islamism, notably the Salafiyya movement, which arose from Islamic modernism.', Naylor, *North Africa*, p. 168

<sup>337</sup> Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, p. 27

also a simplistic understanding of modernity. It assumes that modernity is defined and identified by form.

The issue therefore revolves around our understanding of modernity. To re-evaluate the concept of modernity is no doubt to rehash half a century of discourse, which started in the 1950s and has since been redressed in post-colonial, post-Cold War and even post-9/11 contexts. But it is practically impossible to discuss East-West encounters during this era without evoking the discourse on modernity. As Eisenstadt notes on his article on 'Multiple Modernities', the first six decades of the twentieth century was the principle era of modernity worldwide<sup>338</sup>. The 1920s and 1930s especially were a time when the social and political tensions characterising the age of modernity were most keenly felt in Europe and began to be felt in non-European communities<sup>339</sup>. The subject therefore crucially frames the study of intellectual migration from the north of Africa to Paris from 1914 to 1962.

Rhetorically, the category of modernity refers to a particular stage in Western civilisation and is characterised by the forms manifested by Western culture during this epoch. But as an analytical category, the term modernity is generally used in relation to an expansive series of forces and processes driving modern developments categorised under the umbrella of modernity. There is no escaping the fact that modernity is above all an abstract rhetorical category, not an analytical one. The conflation of the rhetorical understanding and analytical category of modernity is what continues to muddle narratives of cultural relations and render historians wary of engaging with modernity as a historical phenomenon.

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<sup>338</sup> Eisenstadt, S.N., 'Multiple Modernities', *Daedalus*, 129 : 1, Multiple Modernities (Winter, 2000), p. 16

<sup>339</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11

The spread of modernity is traditionally viewed as the spread of European forms. These include anything from European dress to legal codes. Modernization Theory of the 1950s and 60s for instance equates modernisation with the spread of Western institutional forms<sup>340</sup>. In this way, Modernization Theory<sup>341</sup> is an extension or permutation of the diffusion narrative. The Young Tunisians and Young Algerians were denoted by their Western dress, fluency in European languages and attachment to European political thought. Egyptian modernists were denoted by their adoption of European literary forms such as novels and dramatic theatre. Modern political movements in the north of Africa, as well as other parts of the world, were identified by their adoption of European political mechanisms such as partisan politics, manifestos and journalism.

The spread of European forms across the globe, and the socio-political significance of that spread, are certainly notable developments and a mark of twentieth century globalisation. Scholarship on the spread of those forms has provided interesting insight into global transformations that characterise the twentieth century. But intellectually speaking, the spread of Western forms is a comparable process to the popularity of Oriental forms in Europe, especially in the 1930s, that was categorised in European history as Exoticism. The spread or sharing of foreign forms, whether it be from Europe or from elsewhere, is a process in global modernization. It is also a process that coincided with the centralisation of international migration from the non-Western world in the twentieth century towards Europe<sup>341</sup>. However it is only a feature of modernization, not modernity itself.

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<sup>340</sup> Rostow, W. W., *The Stages of Economic Growth: a non-communist manifesto*, (London, 1960)

<sup>341</sup> Compare map 4.1 'Colonial migrations from the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries' with map 5.1 'Global Migration 1945-1973', in Castles, Miller, *The Age of Migration*, p. 72 & p. 89

Our Western interpretive framework biases perceptions of global developments in the modern age. It presumes a homogenous global modernity. Yet modern industrial economies looked different in different societies. As Israeli Sociologist Schmucl Eisenstadt explains, societies across the globe ‘all developed distinctly modern dynamics and modes of interpretation [...]’<sup>342</sup>. Nor was there for that matter a definitive European or Western modernity. Europe was by no means reconciled with modernity, whether that related to art, culture, social relations, capitalist economic systems or modern forms of governance. Nevertheless in history as in other fields such as political theory and comparative literature, the modern is still so often identified by its adoption of European forms, not the expansion of historical processes that bring about modern forms. As André Malraux mocks in his novel *La Condition Humaine*, Europeans ‘never understand of [the other] except that which resembles themselves’<sup>343</sup>.

Scholarship has emerged over the last two decades rejecting Eurocentric understandings of global intellectual and socio-political developments. The most notable example is Eisenstadt’s theory of multiple modernities. He wrote in 2000 that ‘modernity and Westernization are not identical; Western patterns of modernity are not the only “authentic” modernities, though they enjoy historical precedence [...]’<sup>344</sup>. Modernity is instead a society’s reaction to plurality and universality, contesting and reasserting regional and religious fundamental truths and redefining identities.

Eisenstadt’s concept of multiple modernities has contributed significantly to devolving global intellectual history of its Euro-centricity. So has Dipesh Chakrabarty’s

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<sup>342</sup> Eisenstadt, ‘Multiple Modernities’, p. 2

<sup>343</sup> Malraux, A., *La Condition Humaine*, (Paris, 1995), p. 110

<sup>344</sup> Eisenstadt, ‘Multiple Modernities’, pp. 2-3

*Provincializing Europe* project, which in the same year sought to, among other things, 'displace a hyperreal Europe from the centre toward which all historical imagination gravitates'<sup>345</sup>. Many of these post-colonial interpretations are process based. They focus on forces which globally characterise modernity, including industrialisation, mechanisation, socio-political upheaval and of course, capitalism. For instance anthropologist Gary Wilder, who adopts a 'multifaceted and global ... view of modernity' in his study of African and Antillean intellectual migration to Paris, sees modernity not as a European possession but as a series of processes that 'works through' the world as it did through Europe<sup>346</sup>. Jennifer Boittin who also studies Pan-African movements in Paris between the two World Wars employs a similarly, less Eurocentric view of 'modern' developments, believing that 'social changes are reflections of both worldwide patterns and local contestations'<sup>347</sup>.

Their interpretive frameworks are more akin to those employed in Migration Systems Theory, that is to say, a framework based on historical processes rather than formalistic analysis. For instance European imperialism often resulted in the spread of industrial style capitalist economies, introducing swathes of agricultural reform and exposing isolated districts to a global cash economy. This will have inevitably brought about certain modern developments. It changed the nature of the labour market, encouraged urbanisation and unprecedented numbers of displaced persons, altering social relations. This process is described by James McDougall as 'colonial modernity':

'Rather than being 'native' to Europe, and [...] transplanted elsewhere, modernity was inherently colonial, the product of the uneven development of

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<sup>345</sup> Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, p. 45

<sup>346</sup> Wilder, *The Imperial Nation-State*, p. 9

<sup>347</sup> Boittin, *Colonial Metropolis*, p. xxiii

capitalist penetration, extraction, production and circulation right across the globe<sup>348</sup>

Other processes grouped under the banner of modernity include greater communications networks, leading of course to greater levels of remote cultural encounters. As Ruediger Korff writes, 'if there is one feature of the global age that can definitely not be doubted, it is the global networks of communication and media'<sup>349</sup>. But while these processes do involve the expansion of a Eurocentric global economic system, that does not constitute the spread of a European modernity. They are the expansion of certain socio-economic processes that contributed to the onset of modernity in Europe and might do the same in other parts of the world, but not necessarily in the same way.

An important process affecting modern development is international migration. Emphasised by historian Jennifer Boittin, migration 'soon gave rise to an intellectual and political evolution that called into question' previous societal norms, including the subject of her analysis, 'the place of empire and women in modern life'<sup>350</sup>. That is to say, migration brought about intellectual developments, the discourse of which has broadly been classified as modern. Instead of spreading forms via the displacement of peoples, migration created new forms. As a result greater emphasis is placed on both the agency of migration and migrants on modern cultural production. Modernity is not just the spread of European forms by greater global connections; it is the product of global connectedness.

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<sup>348</sup> McDougall, J., *History and the Culture of Nationalism in Algeria*, (Cambridge, 2006), p. 6

<sup>349</sup> Korff, R., 'Local Enclosures of Globalization. The Power of Locality', *Dialectical Anthropology*, 27, (2003), p. 14

<sup>350</sup> Boittin, *Colonial Metropolis*, p. xxiii

## Paris and Modernism in Comparative Literature

The diffusion narrative and the Euro-centricity of historical writing are pertinent to interpreting cultural production outside of Europe and America. Moreover, it is pertinent to interpreting cultural products by intellectual migrants to France.

In Europe, modern cultural production refers to that which is produced in the modern age, relating primarily from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century<sup>351</sup>. Cultural production past the late 1960s in Europe is generally considered post-modern. In the extra-European context, modern cultural production on the other hand has come to denote a connection to European cultural forms, whether as a response to, influence from or emulation of. In his introduction, Paul Starkey defines Modern Arabic Literature as '[...] literature written after the Middle East and North Africa had begun to be exposed to large-scale Western and European influence towards the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century'<sup>352</sup>. M. M. Badawi and Pierre Cachia in their introduction highlight the 'borrowing of European form' as a defining 'departure' of modern Arabic literature from its classical antecedents<sup>353</sup>.

Yet if, as Eisenstadt states, modernisation is not to be seen as synonymous with westernisation, then characterising cultural production from the Arabic speaking world as responding to contact with Western cultural production is a distortion of cultural history. Indeed, neither M. M. Badawi nor Paul Starkey adopt reductionist approaches to their tomes on Arabic literature in the last two centuries. Both are heavily set within the centuries-long tradition of literary production in the region. But the immediate emphasis on

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<sup>351</sup> Huyssen, A., 'Geographies of Modernism in a Globalizing World', *New German Critique* 100, 34 : 1, (Winter 2007) p. 190

<sup>352</sup> Starkey, P., *Modern Arabic Literature*, (Edinburgh, 2006), p. ix

<sup>353</sup> Badawi, M. M., Cachia, P., *Modern Arabic Literature*, (Cambridge, 1993), p. 1

Western, particularly European influences on modern cultural production does result in the term 'modern' becoming short-hand for European influence. Similarly, the 'modern' denotes any departure from *indigenous* forms<sup>354</sup>, masking a large degree of cultural variety and evolution. As Iftikar Dadi explains in his study of Modernism in South Asia, it is well established in post-colonial scholarship that non-Western art is considered 'a belated and impoverished derivative response to Western modernism'<sup>355</sup>. That is to say it is responding not to the forces of modernity, but to European modernist forms.

This issue can be identified and potentially overcome when evaluating the work intellectual migrants to Paris from the north of Africa. There is no doubt that understanding the contacts and networks established between artists in places like Paris are hugely interesting to cultural history. Inevitably, a historian of ideas seeks to plot the spread of forms and ideas through the contacts established between cultural producers, a kind of transfer of cultural capital between notable figures. As Pierre Bourdieu notes, 'very few areas' of study glorify 'great men' as 'unique creators irreducible to any condition or conditioning'<sup>356</sup> than in the field of literary and artistic study. But as the following analysis will show, cultural producers are conditioned by their experience of Paris as a physical, social and cultural space. Similarly the impact of Paris is conditioned and determined by the individual's life trajectory, their 'sociological imagination' and the literary, artistic and cultural field in which they operate.

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<sup>354</sup> Dadi, I., *Modernism in South Asian Muslim Art*, (Chapel Hill, 2010), p. 13

<sup>355</sup> Ibid.

<sup>356</sup> Bourdieu, P., 'The Field of Cultural Production, or: The Economic World Reversed', *Poetics*, 12, (1983), p. 312

## Literary Modernism

In Europe and the USA, literary modernism refers to a body of writers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century who rejected the forms and themes of romantic era writers. This movement gained important currency in the Anglophone world after the Great War as there was greater exigency to break with the past. Paris was an important space for literary modernism, clustering writers from André Gide, Guillaume Apollinaire and Ernest Hemingway around the salon of Gertrude Stein, connecting this literary movement to other forms of cultural avant-garde centred on this city, in particular Surrealism and Cubism<sup>357</sup>.

Though not united in form, modernists shared a common approach. Creative novelty and experimentation tied much of Paris' literary and artistic production in the interwar period. Most Anglophone literary modernism in the 1920s broke away from traditional conventions in style, content and approach to writing, some going as far as dispensing with capital letters or punctuation. The highly international Surrealist milieu in Paris was another radical manifestation of the need to create afresh, exploring new techniques in literature and art such as automatism, decalcomania and the collaborative *Cadavre exquis*. As defined by the American journalist Janet Flanner, Surrealism was the latest 'intellectual revolutionary aesthetic movement such as Paris always ferments when the cerebral sap of the Gallic mind runs in two opposite directions at once, one aiming at the destruction of a present society and the other at setting up a utopia on which nobody can agree.'<sup>358</sup>

The surrealism of the *Années Folles* and modernism of the Lost Generation were the most famed and remembered cultural movements in Paris in the interwar period. There

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<sup>357</sup> For further insight into this literary scene during *Les Années Folles*, see Stein, G., *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, (London, 2001)

<sup>358</sup> Flanner, *Paris was yesterday*, p. xiii

were also French modern writers such as François Mauriac, André Malraux and Paul Valéry, among others also strove to move away from classical literary moulds, influenced by the Symbolist movement of Paul Verlaine and Stéphane Mallarmé. Modernism therefore in Paris represented not a form but rather an approach or an attitude that was shared by Paris' divergent creative communities; it turned the literary modernists, European Surrealists and the French avant-garde into a coherent, if not homogeneous artistic movement. Culturally, it became a symbol of Parisian modernity in the aftermath of the First World War.

Since in the European context there is no consensus on what constitutes a modernist style, definitions usually revolve around approach and attitude. It is a 'response to a perceived decline of values'<sup>359</sup>. It is 'denouncing the orthodoxy of current dominant literary conceptions'<sup>360</sup>; it is a 'protest against' modern developments in the West, a contradiction of 'prior beliefs' and a shock to 'literary sensibilities'<sup>361</sup>. The problem in relation to Arabic cultural production is that all that is not Classical or Neo-Classical is regarded as a break from the past, whether they are 'Romantic writers', modernists, or simply writers of the modern age. According to R. C. Ostle, Arabic Romantic Poets 'sought to break from the old moulds of thought and practice' calling for 'change, reform, renewal [...]'<sup>362</sup> which is much like the descriptions of Western modernist literature. This severing from previous forms is therefore not deemed to be the defining characteristic of literary modernism in the Arabic speaking world; rather it is a sign of their literary modernity.

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<sup>359</sup> Brooker, P., Thacker, A., 'Introduction – Locating the modern', in *Geographies of Modernism – literatures, cultures, spaces*, ed. Brooker, P., Thacker, A., (Abingdon, 2005) p. 2

<sup>360</sup> Sapiro, G., 'Comparativism, Transfers, Entangled History: Sociological Perspectives on Literature' in *Blackwell Companion to Comparative Literature*, ed. Behdad, A., Thomas, D., (Chichester, 2011), p. 230

<sup>361</sup> Janyusi, S. K., 'Modernist Poetry in Arabic', in Badawi, Cachia, *MAL*, pp. 132-134

<sup>362</sup> Ostle, 'The Romantic Poets', in *MAL*, ed. Badawi, Cachia, p. 83

Literary modernism proper in the Arabic speaking world is used to designate poets conditioned by the 'catastrophe' of 1948 employing specific innovations in poetic constructs<sup>363</sup>. Arabic Romantic writers are characterised by their sentimentality and individualism, which resembles to a greater degree the Romantic poets of Europe; modernist poets by their employment of free verse and anti-heroic tone<sup>364</sup>. Therefore it is assessed by form more than by approach, unlike European literary modernism. There are writers who break from the past, explore and develop new mediums and therefore considered part of Arabic literary modernity, yet are not generally considered modernists<sup>365</sup>. These include Taha Husayn and Tawfiq al-Hakim with their contributions to the development of Arabic prose and dramatic form in Egyptian literature.

Here lies the difficulty of comparative literature, or any other forms of comparativism in cultural production from different cultural zones. It is all too easy to assess cultural production within the framework in which we understand and categorise our own cultural production. References and identifiers are transferred onto cultural production from a different zone. So are timeframes and periodisation. This is evident in the analysis of Arabic modernist poetry by Salma Khadra Jayyusi:

'Within a mere five decades or so, Arabic poetry had passed through almost all the phases of development which Western poetry experienced over three centuries.'<sup>366</sup>

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<sup>363</sup> For more details on Arabic modernist poetry, see Jayyusi, 'Modernist Poetry', pp. 132-179 or Starkey's chapter 'Poetry: the Modernists', in Starkey, *MAL*, 79-98

<sup>364</sup> See Jayyusi, S. K., 'Modernist Poetry', 132-179

<sup>365</sup> Khoury calls Hussein and his contemporaries 'modernists' but this is intended to designate the modern generation of Arabic writers, Khoury, R. G., 'Taha Husayn (1889-1973) et la France, Notes bibliographiques commentées', *Arabica*, XXII : 3, p. 254; Cachia calls Al-Hakim a 'modernist' but with a strong synonymy to western influence, Cachia, P., 'Introduction', *The Prison of Life*, p. v

<sup>366</sup> Jayyusi, 'Modernist Poetry', p. 138

This results in a sort of teleological vision of global cultural production, similar to that of economic development, that under-developed regions of the world in their retardation are catching up with the west and therefore are undergoing the same trajectory of cultural transformation as the West, only later.

This methodological pitfall of some comparative literature, identified by Behdad and Thomas in their overview of the field, is a form of consolidation of 'the idea of Europe in literary and cultural terms, to be distinguished formally, and once and for all, from all other societies and their literary and cultural creativity'<sup>367</sup>. This is what art critic Greta Kapur refers to as the Imperialism of Modernism: 'Imposed on the colonized world via selective modernization, [...] it offers a universality while obviously imposing a Eurocentric (imperialist) set of cultural criteria on the rest of the world'<sup>368</sup>. Therefore all art and culture produced outside of the West are not seen as contemporaneous to that produced in Europe or America. This is another manifestation of the diffusion narrative. It is the 'solidification of a world literary system in which the collective cultures of "the West" have functioned as the centre, the interpreter, and the point of reference for all others'<sup>369</sup>.

Art, culture and ideas as a whole are inherently a response to the circumstances which the producer experiences, whether individual or collective. Thus the fact that these parts of the world have all had very different experiences of modernity means that their cultural production is responding to a different set of circumstances than their comparator. They have a different 'field of cultural production'<sup>370</sup> and therefore interpreting their cultural history along a teleological trajectory is inappropriate. As Chakrabarty explains, this

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<sup>367</sup> Behdad, Thomas, 'Introduction', *Comparative Literature*, p. 6

<sup>368</sup> Cited in Dadi, *Modernism*, p. 3

<sup>369</sup> Behdad, Thomas, 'Introduction', p. 6

<sup>370</sup> Title of Pierre Bourdieu's seminal work on the sociology of literature

universal point of reference or comparator results in non-Western cultural production being seen as lacking or 'grievously incomplete'<sup>371</sup>. It never satisfactorily reproduces that which it is seen to emulate. But because experiences of modernity differ, and that non-European modernist products do not align fully with those in Europe, should not mean that they are not comparable if there are comparable mediating forces within their own context.

European cultural production did have a growing impact on that from the Arabic speaking world since the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. This is in part due to the uneven power relations which permeate through cultural production. Where there were opportunities for contacts between different cultures, cultural exchanges were often 'asymmetrical'<sup>372</sup> and cultural conversations were somewhat unidirectional. As Chakrabarty notes, the ongoing asymmetries of global knowledge is a product of the imperialism of Western thought across the globe:

'[...] a third-world historian is condemned to knowing "Europe" as the original home of the "modern", whereas the "European" historian does not share a comparable predicament with regard to the pasts of the majority of humankind.'<sup>373</sup>

With the growing international mobility of the extra-European elite after the First World War, there is no reason not to compare the common circumstances that different parts of the world were, for the first time, experiencing together. It is a time of cultural convergence (exposure and familiarity to cultural production from other cultural zones) and of globalization (increasingly experiencing the same global forces via their local specificity). Therefore the point is instead to question why cultural producers and products from the

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<sup>371</sup> Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, p. 40

<sup>372</sup> Behdad, Thomas, 'Introduction', p. 229

<sup>373</sup> Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, p. 42

non-Western world are not treated as contemporaneous to those of the West when they inhabited the same physical, imaginary and literary spaces.

The idea is not to rewrite the periodisation of Arabic cultural history, but to move beyond a teleological vision of non-Western cultural production based upon Europe's own trajectory. Let us take literary modernism for example. Arabic modernist poetry designates post-1948 writers who employ a high degree of innovation and experimentation in form, style and language. They are also described as modernist due to their break from Arabic Romantic content and their anti-heroic stance and attitude. Yet the circumstances in which they write, with the disillusionment of 1948, then 1967, of the failure of the Arab Union and of the day to day police brutality and militarism experienced by artists and intellectuals in the region and the sense of hopelessness felt by several generations of writers, is totally unparalleled in European history, with no equivalent in the trajectory of European cultural history.

Conversely, there are Egyptian and Maghribi writers, artists and thinkers that lived in comparable circumstances to their Western contemporaries, sometimes inhabiting the same spaces and frequenting the same artistic milieu, yet producing quite different cultural products. As the following analysis will show, this is because those same processes were exerted on individuals operating within a different field of production. From 1914, most migrants already had a formation in European scholarship from their education abroad. They also often by this stage had a degree of familiarity with European culture due to the spread of Arabic language journalism and translated texts, especially in Egypt. The focus therefore is not to view how European culture was transferred. Rather, how the urban

modernity of metropolises like Paris, alien even to French provincials, interacted with ‘system of relations’<sup>374</sup> specific to Egypt or the Maghrib.

Spaces and geographies of cultural production are increasingly being studied in European cultural history<sup>375</sup>. They are, as explained in Chapter Three, an important factor in the production of art and culture. But when it comes to migrant artists, writers and students from outside of the Western cultural sphere, spaces like Paris, or rather contact with spaces like Paris, are stripped of the creative agency and attributed to a reproductive role. They are instead presented as a museum where European culture can be exhibited, viewed and encountered, then regenerated or emulated. By looking at intellectual migrants from the North of Africa like Taha Husayn, Tawfiq al-Hakim and Malek Bennabi, it is possible to understand how Paris was significant for these migrants and their subsequent cultural production in the context of their personal trajectory and their wider circumstances.

### **Taha Husayn and Tawfiq al-Hakim**

Taha Husayn and Tawfiq al-Hakim are considered the ‘grand old men’ of Egyptian literature<sup>376</sup>. They are recognised for their development of unfamiliar forms in Arabic literature, most notably the novel and dramatic theatre. Since novels had an extensive precedent in European literature, and given that these two writers spent very formative years in Paris, there is an assumed connection between their adopted literary forms and their experience of Paris. In this respect they may be right, although these forms were already being developed in Egypt by other writers due to the spread of translated novels

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<sup>374</sup> Sapiro, ‘Comparativism’, p. 227

<sup>375</sup> *Geographies of Modernism – literatures, cultures, spaces*, ed. Brooker, P., Thacker, A., (Abingdon, 2005)

<sup>376</sup> Ketman, G., ‘The Egyptian Intelligentsia’, in *The Middle East in Transition: Studies in Contemporary History*, ed. Laqueur, W. Z., (New York, 1958), p. 483

and plays<sup>377</sup>. The novel form was used increasingly by writers like Salim al-Bustani and Marrash in the Levant in the nineteenth century, and Jurji Zaydan and Muhammad Husayn Haykal in Egypt in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century<sup>378</sup>. It is possible that they may have adopted these styles regardless of their time spent in Paris. As al-Hakim reportedly noted himself, the Western influence on modern Arabic literature is 'limited to superficial characteristics'<sup>379</sup>. Furthermore, since European literary modernism is characterised mainly by approach rather than form, the adoption of the novel as a literary medium would be poor criteria to classify these writers as modernists.

Firstly, while these two Egyptian intellectuals studied in Paris, they were not part of the literary modernist and surrealist circles on the Left Bank. When discussing the work of Gertrude Stein, T.S Eliot, Scott F. Fitzgerald and Hemingway, it is important to take into account the intimate physical and emotional connections between many of these writers. These connections had impacted on their cultural production.

Tawfiq Al-Hakim was exposed to avant-garde theatre while in Paris. He attended plays by Bernard Shaw and Ibsen when their productions were struggling to draw audiences in Europe:

'I followed a new direction, with a different caravan of playwrights, authors, and producers who were affecting an innovative revolution against the other, successful way. It was the caravan of Ibsen, Pirandello, Bernard Shaw, Maeterlinck, playwrights and authors who encountered extreme difficulties in holding a large public at the time, because they had turned their backs on the usual ways of earning applause in order to blaze new trails.'<sup>380</sup>

<sup>377</sup> Cachia, 'Translations and Adaptations, 1834-1914', in *Ibid.*, p. 25

<sup>378</sup> See Allen, R., 'The beginnings of the Arabic novel', Badawi, Cachia, *MAL*, pp. 180-192; for Moroccan antecedents to the novel form, see Lahbabi's article 'La Nouvelle au Maroc', *African Arts*, 2 : 2, 28-29+70-71, (Winter 1969)

<sup>379</sup> Cited in Hutchins' introduction to *Plays, Prefaces & Postscripts of Tawfiq al-Hakim, Vol. 1, 'Theatre of the Mind'*, trans. Hutchins, W. M., (Washington DC, 1981), pp. 13-14

<sup>380</sup> Al-Hakim, *Prison of life*, p. 157

Al-Hakim explicitly acknowledges that he was inspired by these productions to develop a more serious, dramatic theatrical tradition in Egypt:

'[...] I wanted to return to writing for the theatre, but in a new way and in a different direction, producing works of substance now that I had seen, experienced, and studied and had benefited from my cultural contacts with art and literature abroad.'<sup>381</sup>

It instilled in him an interest in avant-garde theatre, leading him to put on a string of plays that, as he noted, would have been challenging to European audiences. He did so by establishing the National Company in 1935<sup>382</sup> with Khalil Mutran and Zaki Tulaymat<sup>383</sup>.

Unsurprisingly the project was unsuccessful for fault of being too ambitious for its audience:

'In reality, the fault lay in putting all these difficult plays before a wide public one after the other, something which had not been done even in Europe.'<sup>384</sup>

Here, al-Hakim was literally importing European avant-garde theatre to Egypt. But if employing Bourdieu's framework of analysis, the structure of relations between the cultural product and those receiving it differed to the point of rendering the product alien and unsuccessful. Yet al-Hakim's own work was neither alien nor unsuccessful in Egypt.

While al-Hakim was certainly influenced by the literary avant-garde he experienced in Paris, his own literary modernism was not rejecting Romantic literary forms as European modernists were:

'For better for worse, I now live in Europe, this milieu of intellectual disorder, of which there has never been the likes; this Great War has brought to the arts and literature this revolution, which they call "modernism"; for it is incumbent to be influenced by it, but I - at this time - am an Easterner who has come to see Western culture at its source; I am now, as you can see,

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<sup>381</sup> Ibid., p. 190

<sup>382</sup> Ibid., p. 158

<sup>383</sup> Zaki Tulaymat studied theatre in Paris in the late 1920s, *Biographical Dictionary of Modern Egypt*, p. 215

<sup>384</sup> Al-Hakim, *Prison of life*, p. 158

dispersed between the classic and the modern. I am not able to say with the revolutionaries: “down with the old”; for these “old” are also new to me...<sup>385</sup>

As this extract from a letter to a friend explains, he could not reject a previous movement in European literary history as the whole body of Western culture was a recent discovery to him.

But his cultural production did mark a break from literary tradition, from what had come before within his own national context. His writing in Egyptian dialect and his simplification of the Arabic language all characterise a break from traditional approaches to cultural production in that region, although not entirely original<sup>386</sup>. To write in dialect and speak *fus’ha* on stage were all inversions of linguistic and literary conventions, ones that undermined the hierarchical relations between language and social class. It was a rejection of bourgeois cultural conventions in Egypt and of the literary status quo, a new ‘*prise de position*’ in relation to the literary field.

So was for that matter his choice of medium. According to William Maynard Hutchins, who has translated considerable quantities of al-Hakim’s work into English, drama was considered ‘less respectable in Arab literary circles than the short story’<sup>387</sup>. Essentially, his very choice to pursue a literary career was a rejection of his own bourgeois conditioning and familial expectations. Undertaking doctoral studies in Paris was supposed to be a ‘salvation’ from a life as an artist and *adib*, though that plan seems to have backfired<sup>388</sup>. So, bar the repertoire he established at the National Company, al-Hakim’s modernism did not

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<sup>385</sup> Al-Hakim, T., Letter Six, *Zahra al-‘amr*, p. 32

<sup>386</sup> Egyptian dialect used in dialogues in Muhammad Husayn Haykal’s novels; Allen, ‘The Beginnings of the Arabic novel’, p. 192

<sup>387</sup> Hutchins, ‘Introduction’, *In the Tavern of Life & Other Stories*, trans., Hutchins, W.M., (London, 1998), p. 1

<sup>388</sup> Al-Hakim, *A Prison*, p. 206

import existing European and American modernism. It was a modernist rebuttal of its own local context.

Egypt's own history and trajectory produced the conditions for a modernist approach. This historical trajectory was by no means the same as that of Europe; Egypt's experience of the First World War was not the same, but neither was that of America, and yet Anglophone modernism is treated generally as one category. The Egyptian literati were responding to a period of prolonged contact with extra-national cultures which opened up Egyptian culture to alternative modes of thought. This in turn brought about considerable social change. They also experienced political upheaval in the form of the Egyptian nationalist movement, culminating in the 1922 uprising. Such political upheaval also resulted in social upheaval; women from elite families, formerly secluded to their harems, took to the streets, participating, organising and rallying at public protests<sup>389</sup>. Former conventions, both socio-political and cultural, were increasingly being brought into question, which would naturally pave the way for a new generation of writers and writing. Elite, educated Egyptians were, like Europeans, bracing themselves for a new world. So while the circumstances of contemporary European and Egyptian writers are not homologous, the *prise de position* is comparable.

Tawfiq al-Hakim's experience of Paris was shaped both by personal inclinations as well as the circumstances in which he was migrating. As a privately funded student, he had the freedom to engage with Paris' artistic milieu at the expense of his education. Like in Alexandria and Cairo, al-Hakim profited from the relative freedom of metropolises to develop his love for the theatre and cinema. Paris, being a centre of the avant-garde,

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<sup>389</sup> For more on Egyptian women's participation in the 1922 Revolution, see Huda Shaarawi's memoirs, *Harem Years*

provided him with an opportunity to further develop his artistic tastes. It did not trigger his artistic career, but essentially 'put off' his pragmatic professional trajectory for a few more years, providing him with a formation in Western culture before re-rooting himself in the Egyptian context.

Therefore Tawfiq al-Hakim was a contemporary of literary modernism in the Egyptian art world. Tawfiq's own participation in the Parisian art world contributed to the development of modern art forms in Europe by being a member of their audiences. His own literary production does not resemble or necessarily echo the modernist movement in Paris by form, yet his *prise de position* within Egypt's literary field is comparable to say, that of Scott F. Fitzgerald's in the American bourgeois context. It is for this reason that Pierre Cachia in his introduction to al-Hakim's memoirs writes that the playwright 'belongs to a generation of Arab writers remarkably bold in their questioning of the values inherited from their immediate past [...]'<sup>390</sup>. Yet Cachia and his contemporaries like Roger Hardy continue to assess his 'pioneering a form of modernism' through 'the example of Western Europe'<sup>391</sup> or as 'that of the Westernized liberal intellectual'<sup>392</sup>. While this is by no means a definitive argument for al-Hakim to be reconsidered an Egyptian literary modernist, if he were to be considered a modernist, he would be by Western standards a modernist, rather than a modernist by his association to the West.

Taha Husayn on the other hand, according to his memoirs, does not appear to have been influenced in any notable way by European avant-garde literature while in Paris, except for maybe André Gide, whose novel Husayn translated. He was extremely influenced

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<sup>390</sup> Cachia, P., 'Introduction', *The Prison of Life*, p. v

<sup>391</sup> Ibid.

<sup>392</sup> Hardy, R., 'A Note on Tawfik al-Hakim', in *Maze of Justice - diary of a Country Prosecutor*, (London, 1989)

by European literature, philosophy and scholarship, most notably that of August Comte and naturally his thesis supervisor, Emile Durkheim. This is evident in his literary production and political thought, being an advocate of secularism especially in education<sup>393</sup> and sociological approaches to the study of Egyptian and Arabic civilisation. He also rated highly the learning of European literature in Egypt when Minister of Education between 1950 and 1952<sup>394</sup>.

Much of what is written on Taha Husayn seeks to highlight the nature and degree of European influence on his work<sup>395</sup>. But there is little mention or indeed evidence of his being inspired by European modernist or avant-garde literary movements while in Europe during the First World War, although this may also be due to the fact that he was in Paris a little ahead of the modernist movement there. But again, his *prise de position* was comparable to European literary modernism.

In Taha Husayn's case, he was seeking to break from the intellectual and cultural restrictions of traditionally conservative religious societies. According to Bourdieu's Field Theory, these conservative forces were a mediation of literary production. These include institutions like al-Azhar, which essentially censored works and persecuted writers for unorthodox ideas, or ongoing social expectations, conventions and taboos. Breaking free from this mediation was for Taha Husayn the very appeal of European scholarship.

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<sup>393</sup> For more on Taha Hussein's ideas on Secularism and Education, see Hussein, T., *The Future of Culture in Egypt*, (New York, 1975)

<sup>394</sup> Hourani, *Arabic Thought*, p. 338

<sup>395</sup> Khoury, 'Taha Husayn (1889-1973) et la France'

European scholarship and intellectual culture were to some Egyptian writers like Taha Husayn a new 'space of possibilities'<sup>396</sup> from which to overcome the strangling effect of religious and social conservatism on literary production:

'The University environment also afforded me a type of learning which itself generated a new temper of mind, not perpetually engrossed in grammar, *fiqh*, logic and *tawhid*, but ranging into a diversity of school of thought in literature and history, all undreamed of on my part until then.'<sup>397</sup>

Struggling against this mediating force was also the reason for his experimentation with and reforming of the Arabic language:

'There is still one other obstacle [to the modern renaissance of Arabic literature] to be pointed out [...]. I mean the restraints caused by a religion badly understood by people long condemned to ignorance and withdrawn into gross conservatism. People believed, a little naïvely, that the Arabic language, since it was the language of the Koran, was a sacred language. Now, a sacred language controls those who speak it and leaves little liberty to those who make use of it. It becomes forbidden to invent. Therefore the Arabs, instead of using their language, became its docile slaves. All innovations in expression was looked upon with a prejudiced eye and labelled near-heresy.'<sup>398</sup>

Therefore though not resembling European modernist writers at all, Taha Husayn was rejecting the religious conservatism of al-Azhar as a literary institution and socio-political group which dominated literary conventions.

Unlike al-Hakim, Taha Husayn did not adopt Egyptian dialect in his linguistic and literary struggle. According to David Semah in his book on Egyptian literary critics, Husayn still looked down upon Egyptian dialect and harboured an artistic preference towards a simplified form of traditional Arabic, criticising al-Hakim for his 'linguistic and grammatical

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<sup>396</sup> Sapiro, 'Comparativism', p. 228

<sup>397</sup> Hussein, *A Passage*, p. 34

<sup>398</sup> Hussein, T., 'The Modern Renaissance of Arabic Literature [1955]', *Word Literature Today*, 63 : 2, 250<sup>th</sup> Issue, 249-256, (Spring, 1989)

errors<sup>399</sup>. This may be in part due to the fact that he was rejecting the al-Azhar type of mediation, rather than mocking bourgeois conventions and class pretensions, as al-Hakim was.

The fact that Taha Husayn wrote journalistic pieces before and after studying in France, together with his efforts to simplify the Arabic language, would make him comparable to his contemporary Ernest Hemingway or later George Orwell. But their comparability is not a connection between these 'great men', who never met or whose literary production bears very little resemblance. Their comparability lies in their sense of exigency to reform the literary employment of their respective languages. Husayn was not simply following the European example, for his favourite Enlightenment writers, including Comte, were far from economical in their expression. Nor was he inspired by the European avant-garde in Paris, for which he leaves little evidence of. Rather, he can be regarded as a product of the intersection of his personal circumstances, those of Egypt and those of Arabic literature at the time. Egyptian culture was opening up to the world, permitting frustrated artists, writers and scholars like Taha Husayn to reject and struggle against the shackles of institutions and powers that continued to impose cultural norms, a process comparable to the European modernist rejection and struggle against what they considered to be bourgeois conventions. Opening up to foreign literary conventions was a new 'space of possibility' for Arabic language literary production from the north of Africa, including Egypt.

In Taha Husayn's case, Paris in particular gave him the opportunity to engage in what he considered to be the highest form of intellectual scrutiny available to him at that time; that is to say to undertake and succeed at the French licentiate then doctorate. Paris' role

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<sup>399</sup> Cited in Khoury, 'Taha Husayn (1889-1973) et la France', p. 253

in his life trajectory was vastly different to those of American writers and European artists coming to Paris to seek refuge in the anonymity and hedonism of the French capital. Nor did he seek to launch his career in the cultural capital of the world. For Taha Husayn, as explored in Chapter Three, Paris acted as a temporary refuge from the conservative forces that had limited his space of possibilities, giving him a place to develop his critical mind.

There was one Egyptian on the other hand who was integrated in European avant-garde circles in Paris; that was Georges Hénein, the Egyptian surrealist. He established with Ramsis Yunan and Anwar Kamil among others, the *al-Funn wa'l hurriya* movement in Egypt. Georges Hénein was himself a student in Paris in the 1930s. There he met and was said to have become friends with the French surrealist André Breton<sup>400</sup>. According to Ondřej Beránek, Hénein 'coordinated' the activities of *al-Funn wa'l hurriya* with other surrealist movements across Europe. Yet despite being unarguably a contemporary of European surrealism, its existence is barely recognised in the history of the surrealist movement<sup>401</sup>.

In the Maghribi context, Kateb Yacine was also integrated within the Parisian avant-garde art scene, influenced by Surrealism<sup>402</sup>. But unlike Taha Husayn or Tawfiq al-Hakim, neither Yacine nor Hénein produced memoirs, so it is not possible to fully discuss the impact of Paris' avant-garde scene on their work. They were both genuinely contemporaries of the French avant-garde scene. But as Beránek notes, there are essential differences between Egyptian Surrealism and that which was made famous in Paris; the kinds of differences that naturally occur among contemporaries participating in decades-long artistic movements. They were not a copy-cat movement, or a case of mimicry; an interpretive framework that

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<sup>400</sup> Beránek, O., 'The Surrealist Movement in Egypt in the 1930s and the 1940s', *Archiv Orientální*, 73, (2005), p. 204

<sup>401</sup> Ibid

<sup>402</sup> Ibid., p. 205

acts according to Dadi as a 'methodological straitjacket in purportedly accounting for the work of all modern non-Western artists'<sup>403</sup>. Instead, they are a sign of the growing internationality of artistic movements and cultural production in the twentieth century.

The international or transnational character of cultural production in the modern era has been increasingly emphasised by the likes of Iftikar Dadi when explaining the relationship between cultural products from different regions of the world in the twentieth century<sup>404</sup>. He presents modern art forms abroad as an opening up to new modes and conventions in cultural production, the development of an international cultural discourse and the creation of transnational movements. According to Liliane Karnouk Egyptian modern art began 'at the point when Egyptian artists adhered to international art; whether they chose a classical or modern style was a matter of preference and not historicity'<sup>405</sup>.

Paris' agency in that modern cultural production therefore lies more in helping to open North African writers, artists, theorists and musicians to international movements. Similarly, it helped to create international movements by gathering artists and writers from across the globe. Paris was not just a platform for French culture, it was a space in which international artistic movements were either formed or experienced. The Surrealist movement in Paris was not French, though André Breton was seen somewhat as its ambassador. It was Parisian, but consisted of practitioners from Switzerland, Belgium, Spain and Eastern Europe. But while a Spaniard introduced to and developing modern art in Paris will be seen as authentic (for instance, Juan Gris), an Egyptian is seen as a copyist, an inauthentic departure from his own cultural sphere.

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<sup>403</sup> Dadi, *Modernism*, p. 3

<sup>404</sup> 'modernism as inherently transnational', *Ibid.*, p. 2

<sup>405</sup> Karnouk, L., *Modern Egyptian Art 1910-2003*, (Cairo, 2005), p. 1

This therefore boils back down to the perceived European cultural propriety over all things modern and the contemporaneity of writers inside and outside the Western world. A Spaniard is seen as having greater ownership of European thought, even if it were produced in a foreign land several centuries before, than a Moroccan who has been educated in the heritage of European thought at the same time as that Spaniard, maybe even in the same school. As Chakrabarty notes, '[...] we treat fundamental thinkers who are long dead and gone not only as people belonging to their own times but also as though they were our own contemporaries'<sup>406</sup>. This attitude has persisted into an age when intellectual and cultural heritage has become increasingly international (although asymmetrical). Consequently Egyptian Surrealists are regarded as copyists of, rather than a spur from Parisian Surrealism.

Similarly Egyptian existentialism is considered an exportation of French existentialism. Yet its principal proponent, Abderrahman Badawi, developed his existentialist philosophy from its German source and through his Masters mentor, Alexandre Koyré, who was an important figure in bringing German philosophy not just to Egypt but also to France in the 20s and 30s<sup>407</sup>. According to his memoirs, Badawi encountered a great many notable contemporary writers, theorists and academics in both Egypt and throughout his travels across Europe<sup>408</sup>. Yet his non-European quality stripped him of his contemporaneity to existentialist thought, despite his moving in existentialist spaces during the period in which these ideas were developing. The provenance of Badawi's existentialism is comparable to that of Sartre, who had been a student of Heidegger, yet no one ever questioned the authenticity or French character of his literature.

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<sup>406</sup> Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, p. 5

<sup>407</sup> Di-Capua, 'Arab Existentialism', p. 1066

<sup>408</sup> See memoirs for an account of these travels, Badawi, A., *Sirat Hayati*, 2 Vols.

In fact, despite Sartre's eminence in the Arab world in the 50s and 60s, Badawi's existentialism was not only independently formed from that of the Frenchman, but it was not aligned with that of French existentialists. They both drew from the German philosophical currents in the interwar period. Sartre spent a year in Berlin in 1933 while Badawi spent a summer in Munich in 1937. Yet they created quite different schools of existential philosophy that were at odds on crucial matters like that of *commitment* and mysticism<sup>409</sup>. Badawi is said to have accredited Europe as 'the source' from which he could 'draw and build an Arab existentialism'<sup>410</sup>. But Badawi notes in his memoirs that he did not even know about Sartre or his connection to existentialism until 1945<sup>411</sup>. Sartre may have become the 'leader of existentialism'<sup>412</sup>, but he and Badawi both independently formed their own brand of existentialism from the German phenomenological source based on the circumstances of their intellectual production. As the Algerian nationalist Mostefa Lacheraf notes when reflecting upon his encounters with Badawi in Paris, Badawi's existentialism was a product of the man, the personality, his life trajectory and the socio-political circumstances in Egypt which conditioned his literary field:

'The world (and not just Europe) was coming out of an atrocious war, fertile for germinating allsorts and full of changes determining our future; a conflict of which none had until then seen the likes and which, afterwards, ensued a painful re-evaluation of conscience.'<sup>413</sup>

Lacheraf was therefore inviting an 'indirect comparatism' of Badawi's existentialism to that of Sartre's. As Yoav Di-Capua explains, Arab existentialism was not a 'copy-cat' of the European form<sup>414</sup> or a 'poor application' of a European intellectual phenomenon but 'a

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<sup>409</sup> Di-Capua, 'Arab Existentialism', p. 1069

<sup>410</sup> Badawi, A., *Quelques figures et thèmes de la philosophie islamique*, (Paris, 1979), p. 56

<sup>411</sup> Badawi, *Sirat Hayati*, Vol. 1, p. 183

<sup>412</sup> Ibid.

<sup>413</sup> Lacheraf, *Des noms*, p. 104

<sup>414</sup> Di-Capua, 'Arab Existentialism', p. 1061

salient characteristic of transnational thought [...], in which ideas are made legible across cultural borders and rendered culturally functional through creative translation, and not through intellectual fidelity to provenance<sup>415</sup>. Badawi is an existentialist and a contemporary of existentialism; his writings are a product of the globalisation of knowledge and intellectual migration to and from Egypt.

Within this interpretive framework, Paris was an opportunity to access and contribute to an international cultural discourse. It is that process which, according to Egyptian Surrealist Ramsis Yunan, helped to create modern art in Egypt:

'It is often said that modern art became international as a result of colonialism, which culturally as well as militarily invades the colonized countries, thus destroying their traditions and their art. However, we should realize that modern European art had been influenced by Eastern and African art before any Eastern or African artist was influenced by European art. Therefore, cultural invasion is not the issue; it is rather cultural response, expressed in breaking out of the boundaries of national tradition into international heritage. True Egyptian art will not exist unless our past heritage is allowed to react with the international heritage; only that will lead us to establish the foundations of our modern art'<sup>416</sup>.

And that is exactly what happened.

Therefore, it can be argued that the sociological position of Tawfiq al-Hakim and Taha Husayn's literature render them literary modernists, despite the fact that their literary styles do not resemble literary modernists in Europe. As Brooker and Thacker note in their introduction to *Geographies of Modernism*, there are sometimes 'antagonistic relations between the forms of literary 'modernism' and the signs of social and economic "modernity"<sup>417</sup>. Therefore inconsistencies in style and form are not relevant markers for comparing contemporary literature in different cultural zones. Their contemporaneity

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<sup>415</sup> Ibid., p. 1064

<sup>416</sup> Cited in Karnouk, *Modern Egyptian Art*, p. 35

<sup>417</sup> Brooke, Thacker, 'Introduction', p. 4

should be rather determined by whether or not they are affected by and responding to similar global processes; or by their contact with international artistic movements and intellectual currents. The fact that they also share an experience of the same cultural milieu, notably Paris, is also significant. That is to say, their modernism shares to a certain extent in their geography, even if their subsequent literary production was created in a different literary field.

Therefore this study is essentially promoting a 'relational approach' presented by Pierre Bourdieu in his Field Theory, rather than a comparativist approach. This is inherently a process-based analysis, more akin to Migration Systems Theory. And while a formalistic approach is necessary for intertextual analysis, especially in poetry and art, for a historical understanding of the evolution of literary production in a given culture, especially in the context of growing contact and exposure to another culture, the result is a more meaningful understanding between literary production and processes like migration on a writer's formation and products. The subject of intellectual migration to Paris thus contributes to the wider sociology of literature.

Paradoxically, centring a global history of cultural production on Paris goes against attempts by the likes of Chakrabarty and Dadi to push European modernist centres to the peripheries of international culture. Yet due to the imaginary of European cultural supremacy and asymmetrical relations of power, the vectors of intellectual international mobility were centred on metropolises like Paris. It was this very international quality to Paris that made it a centre of modern culture, not its Frenchness or European quality. As Andreas Huyssen notes regarding geographies of modernism, it was the opportunity for

people from across the globe to encounter each other in the same spaces that pushed ideas and culture forwards:

‘It was often the encounter of colonial artists and intellectuals with the metropolis’s modernist culture that supported the desire for liberation and independence. And it was the reciprocal through a symmetrical encounter of European artists with the colonial world that grew into the turn against bourgeois culture.’<sup>418</sup>

Therefore it was not Paris’ European quality that influenced modernism or other forms of artistic avant-garde. Rather it was its international quality, its opening up to what lies beyond the local that helped to make it such an important centre for modernist cultural production. That is the comparable element to their modernity, the opportunity of an elite minority, both in North Africa and Europe, to engage and participate in an international scene via a nexus of international intellectual migration like Paris.

### **Malek Bennabi and his Modern Brand of Salafism**

Another important North African writer whose literary production was noticeably marked by his experience of Paris was the Algerian essayist Malek Bennabi. He wrote extensively on North African civilisation and the Islamic revival. In this way he heralds from a long line of *nahda* writers treating the perceived decline of Islamic civilisation and its reinvigoration in the wake of contact with Europe. While not a religious theorist, he was a sociologist of Islam and engaged in civilizational studies of the Muslim world, particularly the Maghrib.

In Egypt and Algeria, Islamic Modernism and Reformism are often conflated. Muhammad ‘Abduh, disciple of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, the ‘real father’ of Islamic

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<sup>418</sup> Huyssen, ‘Geographies of Modernism’, pp. 189-190

modernism<sup>419</sup>, was Egyptian and naturally became an important figure in Egyptian religious thought. He also travelled to Algeria in 1905 and influenced Sheikh Abdelhamid Ben Badis, who is accredited with the Islamic Reformist movement in the Maghrib. So al-Afghani's Modernism turned to Reformism by the time it had reached Algeria, despite Reformism purportedly being the precedent to Modernism.

The Algerian thinker Malek Bennabi was first exposed to the Reformist movement of Ben Badis in Constantine. His own writing, which began during World War Two, was clearly influenced by the Reformist movement in Algeria and his time in Paris. His writings and thoughts are influenced by German phenomenologists like Nietzsche and Heidegger, notable especially in his *Phenomenology of Islam*. He was exposed to European philosophy while in Paris through his Algerian friend Muhammed Ben Saï who was studying philosophy<sup>420</sup>. Yet Bennabi was especially influenced by his meeting of other Algerians studying in Paris. It led him to reinterpret the narrative of Islamic Reformism less as a pre- and post-Nahda periodisation and more as a continuum of intellectual and cultural revival.

In his book *La Vocation de l'Islam*, Bennabi introduces the idea of colonisability and of the *post-Almohadian* man. Echoing the ideas of Muhammad 'Abduh<sup>421</sup> and the reformist currents of Ben Badis<sup>422</sup>, Bennabi applies reformist logic to North African history by creating a schema that traces the decline of Islamic civilisation from the twelfth century, which in North African history corresponds with the era of the Almohad Dynasty<sup>423</sup>. Thus Bennabi

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<sup>419</sup> Rahman, F., 'Islamic Modernism: Its Scope, Method and Alternatives', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 1 : 4, (October 1970), p. 318

<sup>420</sup> Bennabi, *Mudhakkirat*, p. 240

<sup>421</sup> Bennabi, *Mémoires*, p. 78

<sup>422</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 106

<sup>423</sup> Bennabi, M., *Le Problème des Idées dans le Monde Musulman*, (Beirut, 2006), p. 59

coins the term ‘the post-Almohadian man’, signifying North Africans who had lost their ‘civilizing momentum’ and by this he meant a man’s capacity to create<sup>424</sup>.

Bennabi was influenced by reformist thinkers like Muhammad ‘Abduh and Mustafa ‘Abd al-Razik<sup>425</sup>. But unlike those reformist precedents, Bennabi extended his critique to the attitude of contemporary, modern-educated Muslims, the modern ‘post-Almohadian man’. This aspect of his literary critique was shaped by his experience of intellectual migration to Paris.

In traditional reformist thought, the decline of the Muslim world was usually blamed on illiteracy, mysticism, or *bid’a*. Yet Bennabi instead directed his criticisms to his contemporaries, to literate Algerians:

‘This ghostly image from the past haunts generations today, seen in the sympathetic and innocent form of the *fellah*, sedentary and easy going, in the nomadic pastor, austere and generous, but also in the deceptive form of sons of millionaires, the degree holder who has apparently adopted all aspects of modernity. His baccalaureate or the millions of his father sometimes gives him the appearance of a modern man but if we scrutinise his manners, his sensibilities and his thoughts, it is clear that this person is nothing other than a post-Almohadian man.’<sup>426</sup>

Thus Bennabi believed that adopting Western forms and undertaking a European curriculum of education did not solve the Muslim world’s ‘colonisability’, thereby making an important distinction between Western cultural products and Western civilizational drive.

Islamic modernist thought is generally considered the reinvigoration of Islamic civilisation by incorporating modern methods of analysis, interpretation and reason when studying Islamic society, religion, the history of the Islamic world and the Arabic language.

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<sup>424</sup> Bennabi, M., *Vocation de l’islam*, (Paris, 1954), p. 31

<sup>425</sup> Bennabi, *Mudhakkirat*, p. 51

<sup>426</sup> Bennabi, *Vocation*, p. 32

Bennabi like Taha Husayn did look to Europe to inspire Algerian intellectual reinvigoration. However unlike the Egyptian, he makes an important distinction between emulating the products of Western culture and emulating their intellectual drive and productive spirit. In making this distinction he was at times quite cutting:

‘[...] it is clearly more difficult to know and to create a civilised man than it is to construct a motor or to accustom a monkey to wearing a tie [...].’<sup>427</sup>

Ignorance of European knowledge was not the issue, but the lack of innovative or inquisitive spirit that prevented Algerians and other Muslims from making those discoveries themselves. The material outcome of Western intellectualism was determined by that region’s history and social conditioning: ‘In all cases, the thoughts and actions of an individual are developed according to the framework one inherits’<sup>428</sup>. Islamic societies should not copy the outcome of European intellectual culture; instead they should copy their drive<sup>429</sup>.

Progress was not just a question of education, as presumed by the practice of studying in Europe; it was an attitude to self-cultivation. Malek Bennabi was very critical of contemporary Algerians, especially leaders of the FLN. He developed a new vocabulary, coining words such as ‘*alpha-bêtisme*’ and ‘*intellectômane*’<sup>430</sup> so that the renewed reformist narrative of Muslim decline may be applied to educated yet ignorant young Algerians lacking the necessary drive to achieve national glory<sup>431</sup>.

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<sup>427</sup> Ibid

<sup>428</sup> Ibid., p. 29

<sup>429</sup> Ibid., p. 59

<sup>430</sup> Bennabi, M., *Discours sur les Conditions de la Renaissance Algérienne: le problème d'une civilisation*, (Alger, 1949), p. 91

<sup>431</sup> Bennabi, *Le Problème des Idées*, p. 94

The connection between Bennabi's neo-reformist ideas and his experience of Paris is evident by situating his memoirs alongside his literary repertoire. He distinguishes himself fervently from the temperament of hoop-jumping, intellectually un-inclined North Africans who fail to grasp the significance of European civilisation, preferring to indulge instead in luxury and convenience:

'The modernist movement consists essentially of insignificant elements learned in indigenous schools. The student youth acquired a few other elements in their bourgeois milieu, undertaking also a short trip to Europe, without having for that matter the aim of getting to know European civilisation.'<sup>432</sup>

Algerians studying abroad he felt were distracted by the more superficial, controversial, even scandalous products of European civilisation:

'He enrolls himself generally to a faculty of a certain capital city. The Latin Quarters are the same everywhere; one can find there the literary and controversial elements of that culture or its superficial aspects, its distractions and its pleasures.'<sup>433</sup>

This veneer he felt, overshadowed important but less illustrious elements of French life<sup>434</sup>:

'He does not see the woman who picks up a brace of rabbits but the woman who paints her nail, dies her hair and smokes a cigarette on the café's terrace. He does not see the artisan or the artist bent over his work laying out his ideas on one issue or another.'<sup>435</sup>

An individual's approach to cultural encounters reflected their intellectual attitude. Bennabi considered the majority of migrants to be intellectually stagnant and their contacts with Europe superficial. The superficial approach to cultural encounters adopted by Algerians in France was responsible, according to Bennabi, for the continued enslavement of Muslim societies, especially Algeria, despite the spread of European education.

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<sup>432</sup> Bennabi, *Vocation*, p. 58

<sup>433</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 60

<sup>434</sup> El-Enany, R., *Arab Representations*, p. 83

<sup>435</sup> Bennabi, *Vocation*, p. 60

Bennabi's memoirs, written retrospectively, appear to be an attempt to redress this problem. The second volume especially reads like a manual in the art of cultural encounters. Unlike the first volume of his memoirs pertaining to his childhood in Tebessa, the second volume recounting his Parisian experience was written in Arabic rather than French. It was thereby clearly intended for a different audience. The two volumes also differed in approach. The first instalment is a narrative of influences and experiences:

'I was thereby exposed to a number of influences which directed, regulated and stimulated my spirit.'<sup>436</sup>

The second volume is a narrative of observations and perceptions. He describes the way he engaged with the environment, he analyses the way in which he perceived things, the way he responded to foreign situations, the way he responded to people and the way they responded to him.

The second volume of his memoirs is not only a story of encounters; it is a guide to encountering. From the outset, Bennabi lays out his approach to interpreting his experiences in Paris. He starts with a stereotypically scandalous observation:

'So this is how I was greeted by Paris, with a façade of girls in frivolous clothing, with nudity, exhibiting their goods and their honour without feeling any sin.'<sup>437</sup>

But he goes on to condition that observation with the following clause:

'But Paris has other façades which a person does not discover when first stumbling upon it.'<sup>438</sup>

He could only have made that point retrospectively. But he is nonetheless keen to instruct his reader to withhold judgment until he 'discovers' these other façades.

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<sup>436</sup> Bennabi, *Memoirs*, p.78

<sup>437</sup> Bennabi, *Mudhakkirat*, p. 204

<sup>438</sup> Ibid

Each of Bennabi's experiences and encounters are recounted as a lesson or a revelation. Trips to museums are not tourism, but an opportunity to contemplate and reflect upon issues of civilisation and culture. For example on his first trip to the *Musée des Arts et Métiers*:

'[...] my exploratory interests and travels of discovery [...] took me that day to the "*Musée des Arts et Métiers*", close to the gates of St. Denis, where I stopped that evening and thought for the first time about the technological side of civilisation, and I witnessed inside this wonderful museum the first train carriage to be powered by steam and the plane in which Blériot crossed the channel.'<sup>439</sup>

He also describes French attitudes to learning more than French learning itself:

'The French people [...] love to pass their time patching things up and making things themselves with whatever means they have at home; and the fact is that a Frenchman, no sooner does he leave his office or bank than he becomes at home a carpenter, a blacksmith, an electrician and a locksmith, hammering or piercing holes into walls. And he may thereby make something at a greater cost than had he bought it new, or assigned it to specialist tradesman, but in doing so he proves that he is a man of the technological civilisation which has split the atom and which launches rockets. And there is no doubt that children are brought up in this way since their youth, as the first gift they get from their families is a Meccano set.'<sup>440</sup>

Each time, Bennabi is struck by the French popular creative and productive spirit. For instance when describing the Union of Young Christians in Paris, *rue Trévize*:

'[...] amongst those union members who were reading, they preferred when dinner was produced to continue reading than to pursue the line of newcomers to the crowded restaurant, [...]'<sup>441</sup>

Bennabi's contemplative spirit therefore affected the way he perceived his encounters and the way he conceptualised his observations. By juxtaposing Bennabi's approach to his

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<sup>439</sup> Ibid., p. 205

<sup>440</sup> Ibid., p. 221

<sup>441</sup> Ibid., p. 210

memoirs with the ideas expressed in his literature, Paris' formative influence on his ideas is visible. It qualified his understanding of cultural relations and Islamic Modernism.

It is very difficult to ascertain how successful he was in influencing Algerians via his memoirs. The number of copies originally distributed is unknown, but the Arabic volume of his memoirs is practically the only text by Bennabi not to have been republished, suggesting there was little demand for it. Furthermore, Bennabi's status within Algeria is not straightforward. Unlike many of the travellers of the nineteenth century, he was not an *'alim* and therefore did not reserve the same kind of social status as many former travellers. Nor did he belong to, or see eye to eye with, the leaders of the Algerian nationalist movement<sup>442</sup> and he was often subjected to censorship by the Algerian authorities after independence<sup>443</sup>. So it is difficult to determine the extent to which Bennabi succeeded in influencing the way in which Algerians approached cultural exchanges through his memoirs. But the fact that Bennabi sought to reach younger generations in this manner in order to promote a better approach to the reinvigoration of national culture only serves to show that Bennabi felt there was something particular about his experience of French intellectual culture that would benefit Algerian society. So Bennabi's experience of Paris was instrumental in shaping his ideas about the modern 'post-Almohadian man'. There is a traceable causality through the qualifying material he produced. He developed an original perspective to Islamic discourse based on his life experiences and observations.

Malek Bennabi is not alone in drawing such reflections from his time in Paris. Badawi viewed some of his compatriots and their experience of Paris' existentialist milieu in

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<sup>442</sup> For further details on Bennabi's culture of critique, see article by Sellam, S., 'Le FLN vu par l'écrivain Malek Bennabi (1905-1973) – Les relations malaises d'un penseur non conformiste avec le pouvoir algérien naissant', *Guerres mondiales et conflits contemporains*, 208, 133-150, (2002)

<sup>443</sup> Interview with Mustafa Brahim, Geneva, (6 July 2011)

a similar way. As Di-Capua notes, existentialism in Paris was not just a system of thought or a philosophy, but it increasingly became a lifestyle, a form of exhibitionism<sup>444</sup>. Naturally, there were many who were more taken by the societal product of existentialism than the philosophical underpinnings, resulting in what Di-Capua calls 'comical' attempts at literary renewal. As Badawi exclaimed, there were contemporaries of his who enjoyed living the existentialist lifestyle in Paris but whose literary production was devoid of 'ideas or any real feelings'<sup>445</sup>. This is comparable to Bennabi's critique of Algerians in Paris who 'adopt the appearances and not the content' of European culture<sup>446</sup>.

Therefore Malek Bennabi was both influenced by his experience of Paris and his experience of Algerians in Paris. He was influenced by the degree of intellectual fervour in French/Parisian culture, as well as by European philosophy. But the main spatial impact of the French metropolis was experiencing the way in which cultural encounters were undertaken, in seeing what Algeria's contact with Europe was producing. Through the material he provides in his second memoir, it is possible to situate his ideas of colonisability and the post-Almohadian man within his experience of the Parisian cosmopolitan milieu.

## Conclusion

In discussing the work of Taha Husayn, Tawfiq al-Hakim and Malek Bennabi, the purpose has not been to undergo intertextual analysis, as is commonplace in comparative literature. To do so would necessitate a full and in depth knowledge of the field in which these were

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<sup>444</sup> Di-Capua, 'Arab Existentialism', p. 1073

<sup>445</sup> Referring to an account of 'Abde al-Rahimal-Shalabi who spent considerable time 'showing' himself to be an existentialist, bringing a 'large leather bag' filled with French literature like Boris Vian to Café Dupont, yet according to Badawi produced a poor attempt at a modern Arabic text upon his return to Syria. *Sirat Hayati*, Vol. 1, pp. 194-195

<sup>446</sup> Bennabi, *Vocation*, p. 59

produced, that is to say Egyptian literature or Algerian reformist circles. Rather, it is to situate the 'historicity' of texts, to employ Edward Said's term<sup>447</sup>. It is to understand the relationship between intellectual migration which was so common place among North African writers and intellectuals during this period and the cultural modernity which is so often attributed to this European connection. It is to begin to write a sociology of literature emanating sometimes from similar geographies but within very different, culturally specific, sociological contexts. Moreover, it is a way in which to understand how narratives of diffusion were formed, how they were sustained, how they still persist in our understanding of global cultural production and how they mask the true nature of modernist art and the true agency of spaces like Paris in cultural production.

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<sup>447</sup> Referring to Said's *Culture of Imperialism*, cited in Behdad, Thomas, 'Introduction', p. 9

## Part Three – Paris as a Global Political Centre

### Part 3

Paris between 1914 and 1962 was undeniably an important centre in world politics. There was also an important connection between Paris and the development of political movements in the north of Africa during this period (more so for the Maghrib than Egypt). Algeria's first independence movement, the ENA, was born in Paris. Many of the Maghrib's militant nationalists were educated in France, as were many of North Africa's first post-independence statesmen. As discussed in the second section of this study, the appearance of European political forms and mechanisms in the north of Africa are not necessarily the result of intellectual migration. Nor is it an especially interesting aspect of global intellectual history resulting from cultural encounters. Yet Paris did have agency in the development of North African political thought and independence movements. Similarly the presence of intellectual migrants in Paris also had considerable agency in the development of global political thought, especially in relation to anti-colonialism. This agency relates to the externalisation of local political struggles in the colonies, the impact of transmigrant networks on transnational identity formation and cultural definitions of national membership, and the universalisation of resistance politics, both across colonial societies and Europe.

## Chapter Six – Political Migration

Between 1914 and 1962, many North Africans came to Paris to undertake politics because of opportunities that were to be found in the city. This process in turn began to change the nature of local politics, especially in the Maghrib, as well as structures of international relations.

### **Centre of International Governance**

As of 1919, intellectual migrants from across the world came to Paris as a global political centre. Home to the newly created League of Nations, Paris' leading role in the new world order was marked by its hosting of the post-World War One negotiations. It was an event which gathered politicians, journalists and intellectuals from all over the world to see how the new global political landscape would turn out. According to journalist and author E. J. Dillon:

'The Paris of the Conference ceased to be the capital of France. It became a vast cosmopolitan caravanserai teeming with unwonted aspects of life and turmoil, filled with curious samples of the races, tribes, and tongues of four continents who came to watch and wait for the mysterious to-morrow.'

'Chinamen, Japanese, Koreans, Hindus, Kirghizes, Lesghiens, Circassians, Mingrelians, Buryats, Malays, and Negroes and Negroids from Africa and America were among the tribes and tongues forgathered in Paris to watch the rebuilding of the political world system and to see where they "came in."'<sup>448</sup>

This 'temporary capital of the world' gathered migrants from various colonial territories including Tunisia, Egypt and Indochina hoping to advocate the British and French authorities

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<sup>448</sup> Dillon, E. J., *The Inside Story Of The Peace Conference*, (New York, 1920), accessed 21/04/2015 at Project Gutenberg, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/14477/14477-h/14477-h.htm>

for better terms. Ho Chi Minh, already living and working in Paris under the alias of Nguyen Aï Quoc, led an Annamite delegation, presenting an eight point programme of moderate social and political reform in southern Indochina<sup>449</sup>, distributing six thousand copies of the document across Paris' socialist milieus<sup>450</sup>.

Egypt's Wafd Party sent a delegation led by Sa'ad Zaghlul to present their demands for independence to the British authorities in front of the international political community. After being detained and temporarily exiled to Malta, Sa'ad Zaghlul and his fellow delegates, which included Egyptian journalist and intellectual Ahmad Lufti al-Sayyid, eventually reached Paris in April only to find the doors of negotiation 'closed to them'<sup>451</sup>. The Hashemite Prince Amir Faisal, who led the Arab Revolt against the Ottomans alongside T. E. Lawrence, came to Paris to plead for the independence of Arab states in the Levant and the Hijaz to the Supreme Council<sup>452</sup>.

The Young Tunisian movement, from which the Destour Party evolved, also sought to petition a restructuring of French-Tunisian relations under the new order. 'Abd al Aziz Tha'albi was sent as a representative, redacting in Paris his famous tract *La Tunisie Martyre*<sup>453</sup>, translated into French by friend and colleague, a Tunisian lawyer in Paris called Ahmed Sakka. The Algerian decorated war hero Emir Khaled, though he did not travel to Paris, saw the conference as an opportunity to improve the condition of Algerian autochthones, writing to President Wilson asking for him to plead their case to the French authorities<sup>454</sup>. While these colonial delegations were not successful in their petitioning of

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<sup>449</sup> Lacouture, *Cinq Hommes et La France*, (Paris, 1961), p. 20

<sup>450</sup> *Presse et mémoire*, p. 71

<sup>451</sup> Hussein, *A Passage*, p. 137

<sup>452</sup> Rogan, E., *The fall of the Ottomans: the Great War in the Middle East, 1914-1920*, (London, 2015), p. 399

<sup>453</sup> Tha'alibi, A., *La Tunisie martyre – ses revendications*, (Paris, 1920)

<sup>454</sup> Meynier, G., *Histoire intérieure du F.L.N. 1954-1962*, (Paris, 2002), p. 51

international powers, their presence in Paris symbolises the beginning of a new global political reality; that the global political arena was increasingly subject to the scrutiny of non-Western political communities, even if the Big Four at this stage tried their best to deny it.

Despite France's waning international diplomatic significance after World War Two in favour of Anglophone regions, Paris still hosted many crucial institutions and events of international diplomatic significance. It remained the seat of UNESCO, formerly the IICI, as well as that of The Carnegie Peace Foundation. It also hosted part of the third session and all of the sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly in 1948 and 1951/52.

Colonial migrants in Paris thus still had the opportunity to engage with and petition mechanisms of international relations. For instance, Ben Barka submitted a deposition to the UN General Assembly at the time of its Third Regular Session regarding human rights and civil liberties in Morocco<sup>455</sup>. Messali Hadj was also said to have travelled to Chantilly to follow the events of the sixth session, held at the Palais de Chaillot<sup>456</sup>.

This approach of advocating the international political community in person at diplomatic gatherings was at the time not an uncommon method to shape the ethics of international relations or governance. The Polish lawyer Raphael Lemski for instance incessantly advocated delegates at the Nuremberg Trials and the United Nations upon the conclusion of the Second World War until it established the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in 1948. Advocates would cluster in these centres of international power to relate their local grievances to external processes, thereby

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<sup>455</sup> *Mehdi Ben Barka, De l'Indépendance marocaine à la tricontinentale*, ed., Gallisot, R., Kergoat, J., (Paris, 1997), p. 175

<sup>456</sup> Harbi, *Une vie*, p. 99

shaping the international system, bringing into question the legal and ethical framework governing political relations. Thus Paris in its capacity as a centre of international politics provided colonial migrants with the space, as historian Jennifer Boittin explains, to ‘challenge the political [...] status quo [...]’<sup>457</sup>.

### **Home to the Central Authorities**

Paris was also the political centre of the French Empire. It gathered migrants from the colonies seeking to petition both the central authorities and French public opinion. For example, between 1919 and 1924 there had been three separate Tunisian reformist delegations to Paris. The first was the aforementioned trip made by Tha’albi in 1919. The second delegation was led by the Destourian Tahar Ben Ammar in December 1920 and consisted mainly of lawyers, landowners, agriculturists and local representatives<sup>458</sup>. They met several officials at the Quai D’Orsay, including the new Resident General, Julien Saint and distributed across Paris a petition signed by over 30,000 Tunisians<sup>459</sup>. The third was in November 1924, led by Ahmed Essafi<sup>460</sup>.

In 1934 Moroccan nationalists in Fez sent a delegation to Paris. Ouazzani’s journal *L’Action Marocaine* had just been banned because of the supposedly overwhelming quantity of demands contained within it. So he formulated a concise programme of reform for the Moroccan Protectorate entitled *Le Plan de Réformes Marocaines*<sup>461</sup>. A delegation

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<sup>457</sup> Boittin, *Colonial Metropolis*, p. xv

<sup>458</sup> *Le Temps*, No. 21699, (29 December 1920), p. 2, accessed 15/04/2015 at Gallica, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k244239h/f2.zoom>

<sup>459</sup> ‘Pétition’, accessed 15/04/2015, at Tahar Ben Ammar website <http://www.taharbenammar.com/ArtDetail.php?IdArt=352>

<sup>460</sup> Document No. 2, ‘Chronologie rédigée par le Dr El Materi et destinée probablement à servir de canevas à ses Mémoires’, El Materi, *Itinéraire*, p. 199

<sup>461</sup> Ouazzani, *Combats*, tome 1, p. 42-44

was sent to present the proposed reforms to the Sultanate and the General Residency in Morocco while Ouazzani and Omar Abdeljalil were assigned to present the *Plan* to the French government in Paris. They rented an apartment at *rue Passy* where they met journalists and public figures whom they were put in touch with by Robert-Jean Longuet. Essentially, they set up a forum in which to present and discuss their proposed reforms<sup>462</sup>. Here they reformulated over the next few months the text of the *Plan* from their consultations and created a patronage committee, which included the French writer André Viollis, journalist François De Tesson and the radical-socialist politician Jean Piot<sup>463</sup>. The delegation and patronage committee presented these reforms together to Pierre Laval of the Ministry of the Exterior on the 1<sup>st</sup> December 1934<sup>464</sup>.

The election of the Popular Front in May 1936 triggered another wave of political migration to France from the colonies petitioning the new Left Wing government. At the French Socialist Congress on 31<sup>st</sup> May 1936, Mohamed Hassan Ouazzani, Messali Hadj, the Lebanese nationalist Riyad Solh and the Senegalese Lamine Gay were all present to petition France's *Gauchistes* for reform<sup>465</sup>. Habib Bourguiba of the Neo-Destour, who had supported the election of the Popular Front, undertook two trips to obtain the support of Pierre Viénot, new secretary of state at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, resulting in a declaration recognising Tunisian independence as an ultimate objective of the French Protectorate<sup>466</sup>. Ouazzani also managed to secure a rendezvous with Viénot on 7 July 1936 to discuss French

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<sup>462</sup> Ibid., p. 44

<sup>463</sup> Ibid., pp. 46-47

<sup>464</sup> Ibid., p.48

<sup>465</sup> Ibid, p. 53 and p. 60

<sup>466</sup> Bourguiba, H., 'Cinquième Conférence donnée par le Président Habib Bourguiba au Palais des Congrès de Monastir le 16 Novembre 1973', <http://www.bourguiba.com/uploads/docs/pdf/fr/Habib-bourguiba-Conference-5-1973.pdf>, p. 15

policy in Morocco<sup>467</sup>. Representatives of the *prépondérants* were to do the same, for whom the election of the Popular Front was considered an unmitigated disaster<sup>468</sup>.

Political migration to Paris from the colonies was by no means exclusive to the north of Africa. Nor was it limited to the interwar period. There was for instance an *Istiqlal* delegation, consisting of Ben Barka and Abderrahim Bouabid in 1948<sup>469</sup>. Yet in the late 1940s and 1950s, many leaders of independence movements were either in exile, arrested or risked being arrested if they were to stage such a public manifestation of their criticisms or demands for independence. But though the nature of political migration to Paris evolved, the city continued to act as a political epicentre for the colonial elite throughout this period.

### **Home to the 'True French'**

Paris' importance as a political centre did not only revolve around the presence of national and international political institutions. Due to the fractious dynamics between the *colons* and the colonised, the French *métropoles* represented an external entity that might be able to resolve political impasses at the local level. Colonial migrants not only came to France to petition the French metropolitan authorities. As a democracy they sought to affect policy by swaying French public opinion.

There was since the First World War considerable hope among North African subjects, especially those with a French education, that in France lay the true French; the French of the Enlightenment who lived according to the thoughts and philosophies of Voltaire, Victor

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<sup>467</sup> Ouazzani, *Combats*, tome 1, p. 64

<sup>468</sup> Berque, J., *Le Maghreb entre deux guerres*, (Paris, 1962), p. 296

<sup>469</sup> Ben Barka, *Mon frère*, p. 67

Hugo and Rousseau. This expectation, widespread among the French educated Maghribi elite, is frequently evoked in the memoirs of intellectual migrants to Paris, like this extract written by Gisèle Halimi:

‘In my country, we learnt French at school and the whole history of France. I dreamt of it, home to the rights of man, home to the magical frontispiece: liberty, equality, fraternity. In Tunisia, the fact that this motto has been trampled by the *pied-noir colons* is just about passable....but by the French, in France! Impossible! Inconceivable!’<sup>470</sup>

The popular glorification of the French in France lies partly in the imaginary of French culture discussed in Chapter Three. Many French educated Maghribi nationalists, despite their dedication to the nationalist cause, often expressed a deep attachment to French literary and scientific culture, a feature that has been frequently referred to as a remarkable show of objectivity in the prefaces to their memoirs<sup>471</sup>. As Ferhat Abbas wrote in 1981, ‘one can be the implacable enemy of French colonialism and remain the most faithful friend of its culture’<sup>472</sup>.

In the Tunisian case, Mahmoud El-Materi defended French culture against waves of populist anti-French reactions within their national movement when discussing Tunisia’s restrictive education policy in *La Voix du Tunisien*<sup>473</sup>. In this corrective article, he expresses his regret that readers were mistakenly attributing the ‘hateful attitude’ of the *prépondérants* to the lofty republican ambitions of France’s *mission civilisatrice*. While el-Materi was well-known as a moderating force in the early Neo-Destour movement, such an

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<sup>470</sup> Halimi, *La cause*, p. 47

<sup>471</sup> See A. Demeersemar’s Preface to Tahar Sfar’s memoirs, *Journal d’un exilé – Zarzis 1935*, (Tunis, 1960) Also remarked by Abdelkader Ben Barka about his brother, Ben Barka, *Mon frère*, p. 91

<sup>472</sup> Abbas, F., *Le Jeune Algérien – de la colonie vers la province (1930) suivi de rapport au maréchal pétain (avril 1941)*, ed. Rebahi, A., (Alger, 2011), p. 22

<sup>473</sup> Document N.9, ‘Article du Dr El Materi paru dans “La Voix du Tunisien” du 19 sept. 1930 et intitulé « Résultats d’une mauvaise politique »,’ *Ibid.*, p. 220

unsolicited public assertion of France's 'moral prestige'<sup>474</sup> within the Tunisian nationalist movement testifies the extent to which the ideal of French culture remained disassociated from Imperial policy, or rather that Imperial policy continued to be seen as a distortion of France's cultural ideal.

This disassociation can be attributed to migrants' direct experience of France. As Maurice Violette, co-author of the Violette-Blum Proposal, wrote in 1931, 'the native Arab always feels the difference between the French of France and the French of Algeria. In metropolitan France he feels like any other Frenchman, in Algeria he feels at the bottom of the hierarchy'<sup>475</sup>. Algerian nationalist Ahmed Taleb-Ibrahimi, despite coming from a traditional '*ulama* background, described his two years in Paris as being of an '**immeasurable richness and fertility** in all domains', whether it be in relation to his 'studies, general culture or political activities [...]'<sup>476</sup>. Fellow FLN militant Mohamed Harbi wrote:

'I was leaving a country whose language and culture had become an integral part of me. It was that other France, with its revolutionary tradition, where I had extrapolated those ideas that validated and elucidated my battle [...].'

'Evidently, there were two Frances and one of them had profoundly penetrated my story to better denounce the other.'<sup>477</sup>

Given that Harbi had a full French education in Algeria underlines the importance of travelling to France in disassociating French culture from colonialism. Yet Ferhat Abbas did not travel to France as a student but held similar views:

'It is thanks to this culture that I could fight the fiefdoms of money that had seized power in Algeria, and which acted as the enemies of our people and of Islam.'<sup>478</sup>

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<sup>474</sup> Ibid., p. 221

<sup>475</sup> Violette, M., *L'Algérie vivra-t-elle ?* (Paris, 1931), p. 392

<sup>476</sup> His emphasis, Taleb-Ibrahimi, *Mémoires*, p. 86

<sup>477</sup> Harbi, *Une vie*, p. 224

<sup>478</sup> Abbas, *Jeune Algérien*, p. 29

Nor were all experiences of French culture in the colonies inherently discriminative. Many migrants recall very positive interactions with *colons*, especially their teachers, as do Mohamed Harbi<sup>479</sup>, Malek Bennabi<sup>480</sup>, Messali Hadj<sup>481</sup>. What can be said however is that especially among the French educated elite, there was such a disassociation, and this disassociation affected the way in which nationalist advocacy was conducted, especially in the interwar years.

### **Targeting the ‘True French’**

Many North Africans and colonial subjects of other nationalities came to Paris to advocate European popular opinion, hoping these more liberal and tolerant French men and women were open to colonial grievances regarding oppression and discrimination. In Paris, there were famous Orientalists like Louis Massignon and, especially at the time of the Popular Front, there were politicians calling for freedom and liberty. It was widely believed that these metropolitans would intervene if they only knew of their situation abroad and of the conduct of the French *colons*.

The opportunity to establish contacts with France’s liberal metropolitan population was frequently cited as the objective of political migration. Messali Hadj, in a speech made to *La Fraternité Musulmane* when he first arrived in Paris, explained:

‘I left my country and came to France because I thought that, in Paris, one could find deputies and men of good will who would intervene with the authorities so that they may take our situation into consideration.’<sup>482</sup>

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<sup>479</sup> Harbi, *Une vie*, p.29

<sup>480</sup> Bennabi, *Mémoires*, p. 24

<sup>481</sup> Hadj, *Les Mémoires*, pp. 71-72

<sup>482</sup> *Ibid*, p. 134

The contacts that he established with French left-wing partisans were key, he noted, to advocating public opinion:

‘[...] there were opportunities at the heart of the left to advocate our cause to the public opinion.’<sup>483</sup>

Migrants therefore wrote articles, pamphlets and sometimes even created papers with the expressed purpose of informing French metropolitan audiences. Tahar Ben Ammar for instance, when leading the Young Tunisians’ second delegation to France, distributed his article *‘la vérité sur les revendications tunisiennes’* among the Parisian press to counter the slanderous propaganda in right-wing papers regarding the foreign influence of Tunisia’s nationalist movement. Among those papers to publish it was *Le Temps*, one of France’s major daily newspapers and precursor to the globally esteemed *Le Monde*<sup>484</sup>.

Malek Bennabi distributed in Paris with his friend Muhammad Ben Saï an informal ad-hoc paper produced by a French convert to Islam called Muhammad Sharif in Algeria. They posted the pamphlets that protested against the restricted activities of the *Association des Ulémas* in Algeria into letter boxes across the Latin Quarter. The intention was once again to inform otherwise ignorant Parisians as to the plight of Muslims in Algeria:

‘And no doubt Parisian men and women, not knowing a thing about the Association of Ulama, Islam or Reformism, were surprised by the presence of our publication in their letter-boxes that morning.’<sup>485</sup>

Several journalistic endeavours were created by North Africans in Paris. In addition to Tha’albi’s *Tunisie Martyre*, the French language paper *Maghreb* was also produced in the 1930s. Its primary objective was to:

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<sup>483</sup> Ibid., p. 136

<sup>484</sup> *Le Temps*, No. 21730, (30 January 1921), p. 2, accessed 15/04/2015 at Gallica <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k244270g.image.langEN>

<sup>485</sup> Bennabi, *Mudhakkirat*, p. 243

'[...] inform the French as objectively as possible and without discriminating opinions, about the condition of indigenous peoples, certain that justice and liberty have never being wanting for supporters in France.'<sup>486</sup>

Although officially directed by French left-wing advocates like Robert-Jean Longuet, Moroccan former students in Paris Ahmed Belafrej, Omar Abdeljalil and Mohamed Hassan Ouazzani contributed significantly to the journal.

As anti-colonial movements radicalised across the colonies, greater restrictions were imposed on publishing and distributing critiques of the French colonial order. The French language and Arabic North African press were strictly censored during this period in the Maghrib<sup>487</sup>. Alternative indirect approaches in reaching French public opinion were thus developed. Informal flyering often took place, especially in student milieus. Here is an example of a pamphlet produced by Moroccan students in 1954 and intercepted by the authorities:

'We are approximately 250 Moroccans who have been lucky enough to undertake our higher education in France, [...]. Together with university life, we have another obligation, to make our conditions, our aspirations and the struggles of our people known to French popular opinion, which is very often badly informed and no less often understanding and receptive when we endeavour to present the grievances of our country to them. We have the power and the duty to help Moroccan patriots by alerting the academic milieu, through them the whole French nation, of the politics and policies practiced by the supposed French representatives in Morocco, a policy contrary to the reciprocal interests of the two countries.'<sup>488</sup>

Formal propaganda services were devised at the heart of nationalist movements in Paris. The FLN's FdF for instance established the *Comité de la Presse et d'Information* in

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<sup>486</sup> Ouazzani, M.H.O., 'Les Aspirations du Maghreb', *Maghreb*, No. 1, (July 1932) in Ouazzani, *Combats*, tome 1, p. 263

<sup>487</sup> For more on censorship of Maghribi press, see Souriau-Hoebrechts, *La Presse Maghribine*

<sup>488</sup> Pamphlet distributed among Moroccan students and intercepted by French authorities, May 1954, Paris, CADN, Série M 582, Carton 45, Dossier 10

which Mohamed Harbi, Abdelmalek Benhabylès and Ahmed Taleb-Ibrahimi were engaged<sup>489</sup>. They not only justified their militancy to the French press, but also sent members to represent their movement at national and international conferences. Mohamed Harbi was for instance assigned by the FdF to attend the annual congress of the Fourth International, meetings of the *Union Internationale des Étudiants* and events at the *Hôtel des sociétés savantes*<sup>490</sup>.

Therefore the political potential of French liberal opinion was an important component to North African nationalism. The presence of the 'true French' in France as an intermediary force drew political migrants to France throughout this period, consisting for the most part of the intellectual elite, as well as mobilising existing colonial communities in the region.

### **Overinflated Expectations**

In the interwar years, the *Maghreb* journal was probably the most successful initiative, not necessarily in effecting change but by reaching an internationally notable readership. According to great-grandson of Karl Marx and anti-colonial lawyer, Robert-Jean Longuet, the journal counted Winston Churchill, the writer H. G. Wells, the renowned British journalist Sir Wickam Steed and Italian Minister Comte Sforza<sup>491</sup> among its subscribers. Most colonial advocates targeting French and international public opinion in Paris, especially in the interwar years, were however disappointed by the lack of impact their efforts had on changing stereotypes and rallying public support for their proposed reforms. Despite the

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<sup>489</sup> Harbi, *Une vie*, p. 187

<sup>490</sup> Harbi spoke at a conference at *salle des sociétés savantes* in 1956, *Ibid.*, p. 184

<sup>491</sup> Longuet, R-J., 'Préface', Ouazzani, *Combats*, tome 1, p. 12

occasional article appearing in mainstream papers, the Parisian press offered limited support for North African advocacy and did little to counter the volume of representations from a pro-colonialist stance. Bennabi for instance noted with bitter disappointment the complete absence of any repercussions in the French papers to his leafleting. The fact that nationalists continually felt the need to counter mainstream derogatory representations of their movements throughout the period testifies to the persistent war of disinformation during the decolonisation struggle.

Furthermore the discrepancy between French metropolitan and *colon* attitudes was overemphasised. There is little doubt that the general attitude of French settler communities in North Africa towards the *indigènes* was notoriously racist. However the majority of metropolitan attitudes were generally quite dismissive of colonial grievances, bar the odd exceptions. Popular opinion was shaped primarily by stereotypes<sup>492</sup>; stereotypes constructed and displayed at events like the *Exposition Coloniale* in 1931, through official colonial publications such as *Bulletin de l'Enseignement Public au Maroc*<sup>493</sup> or popular literature such as Pierre Loti's *Aziyadé* and *Désenchantées*<sup>494</sup>. They were not immune to racial prejudice, the realisation of which often came as a blow to intellectual migrants from the north of Africa, as it had been to Gisèle Halimi: '[...] I had just discovered that racism existed among the French. It hurt me a great deal'<sup>495</sup>.

Paris' liberal appeal for colonial migrants had more to do with the *laissez-faire* attitude of the metropolitan *avant-garde* than the absence of racial stereotyping. The exaggerated

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<sup>492</sup> Blanchard, P., Deroo, E., El-Yazami, D., Fournié, P., Manceron, G., *Le Paris Arabe, Deux siècles de présence des Orientaux et des Maghrébins*, (Paris, 2003), p. 7

<sup>493</sup> Hardy, G., Brunot, L., 'L'Enfant Marocain – Essai d'Ethnographie Scolaire', *Bulletin de l'Enseignement Public au Maroc*, No. 63, (January 1925)

<sup>494</sup> Loti, P., *Les Désenchantées*, (Paris, 1906), Loti, P., *Aziyadé*, (London, 1989)

<sup>495</sup> Halimi, *La cause*, p. 47

expectations that North Africans had in French metropolitan opinion, together with the disappointment felt by advocates upon realisation, is best summarised by Messali Hadj in his memoirs where he recounts a meeting at the local *zawiya* in Tlemcen:

‘They wanted to know what the French in France, especially those in Paris, thought of the situation in Algeria, the advent of Mustafa Kemal and the Rif insurrection. In truth, my compatriots expected generally a great deal from the French in France, especially since the end of the First World War. It was difficult to put them right and to disappoint them.’<sup>496</sup>

As will be discussed in Chapter Eight, French liberal opinion began to open up to North African advocacy after the Second World War. By the 1950s, there were many notable French figures campaigning to change popular attitudes towards decolonisation. But in the twenties and thirties, there was a lack of interest or sympathy within metropolitan France regarding the plight of colonial subjects.

Even when Maghribis did find sympathetic exponents in Paris, the central authorities, especially during the Popular Front, were unable to enact even moderate reform due to the objection of *colons* lobbyists like Antoine Gaudiani and Emile Morinaud<sup>497</sup>. This helped to radicalise nationalist movements. As Guy Pervillé<sup>498</sup> and Benjamin Stora<sup>499</sup> note, perpetual political impasses such as failure of the Blum-Violette Bill to satisfactorily resolve colonial grievances such as the *Code de l’indigénat*, drove campaigners to push for more secessionist solutions. For instance Habib Bourguiba was incensed when the Minister of State refused to meet with him in Paris. According to el-Materi ‘Albert Sarraut’s refusal to receive [Bourguiba] was for him a great slight to his self-esteem’ and spurred an unreserved journalistic tirade from the Tunisian lawyer, despite

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<sup>496</sup> Messali, *Les mémoires*, p. 146

<sup>497</sup> Berque, *Le Maghreb*, p.295

<sup>498</sup> Pervillé, *Etudiants*, p. 88

<sup>499</sup> Stora, B., *Les Sources du Nationalisme Algérien – Parcours idéologiques, origines des acteurs*, (Paris, 1989), p. 40

calls for moderation from within his own party<sup>500</sup>. As moderate calls for reform were continuously rebuffed and exclamations of their grievances continued to be ignored by metropolitan France, hope of resolving their political grievances within the colonial system quickly slipped away and drove nationalist movements to more violent resolutions.

This did not however end North African hope in a more receptive French metropolitan opinion. In an article published in *La Voix du Tunisien* on the 25<sup>th</sup> of June 1931, Habib Bourguiba defended his continued petitioning of the French authorities in France to combat any potential defeatism among Tunisian nationalists:

‘When a month ago we decided to embark on the boat that would take us to France in order to make our voices heard and to alert [public] opinion against the Protectorate and the policy it has always adopted towards the Tunisian contingent, many of our friends were sceptical as to the efficacy of our actions.

Experience had taught them not to count too much on France to achieve anything whatsoever in favour of Tunisians.

Yet we did not for a moment hesitate, because we were firmly convinced that French public opinion could not *not* be in support of us and our struggle against inequality and favouritism, for the ideal of justice and fraternity.<sup>501</sup>

The use of propaganda towards French and European public opinion continued to be a key strategy in combatting colonialism all the way to independence. Thus despite setbacks and disappointing outcomes, the political potential of French public opinion continued to draw intellectual and political migrants to Paris throughout the period and affect the character of anti-colonial advocacy.

### **Implications to Lobbying the French**

In bypassing the local colonial authorities, overly subject to the lobbying of French settlers, local grievances were increasingly framed within the context of national discourse and

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<sup>500</sup> El-Materi, *Itinéraire*, p. 133

<sup>501</sup> Bourguiba, *Ma Vie*, pp. 234-235

international relations. This by consequence externalised local politics and began to alter the tone of anti-colonial discourse. While it would be exaggerating to say that intellectual migration to Paris from the colonies caused the internationalisation of anti-colonial politics, Paris as a political space was certainly a factor in that process, and a medium through which such developments can be viewed.

For a start Paris held a population group with political potential, a population group that was defined largely by an urban imaginary, but which none the less had considerable political agency. The political potential of that constituent shaped the way much of North African advocacy was conducted. It allowed nationalists to bypass the Residency General by addressing the central French authorities directly. This had considerable impact on the tone and conduct of their anti-colonial critiques.

Reformist and anti-colonial Maghribi French language journalism developed considerably in the interwar period, despite restrictions imposed upon them. They were produced for the most part by nationalists who had studied for a time in France. *La Voix du Peuple* was founded in 1930 by Chadly Kairallah. *L'Action Tunisienne* was founded in 1932 by a committee that included Mahmoud El-Materi, Bahri Guiga, and Habib Bourguiba, joined later by Tahar Sfar<sup>502</sup>. *L'Action du Peuple* and *La Volonté du Peuple* were founded in Morocco in March 1933 and December 1933 respectively by Mohamed Hassan Ouazzani. Sahli-Mohamed Cherif, Abdelmalek Benhabylès and Mohamed Harbi all wrote for *El-Ouma* and/or *La Résistance algérienne*. Mostefa Lacheraf directed MTLD-PPA's *L'Etoile*

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<sup>502</sup> El-Materi, *Itinéraire*, p. 44

*algérienne*<sup>503</sup>. Ferhat Abbas, who wrote for *Le Trait d'Union* and *L'Entente*, though not a migrant to France, was a graduate of the French University of Algiers.

While only the *Maghreb* review was produced in France, most Maghribi nationalist papers in the interwar period were addressing French audiences. The objectives *L'Action du Peuple* as stated in its first edition were to combat misunderstandings and slanderous accusations in the press towards Moroccan advocates and their cause:

‘It is no less of a shame that, while our Moroccan public opinion is totally deprived of its legitimate means of expressions, a certain press embarks [...] on a heinous campaign against us inspired by all sorts of vile sentiments almost exclusively engendered by two prejudices: race, a fanaticism borne of a political or religious order, and the demands of a violent colonialism, [...]’<sup>504</sup>

Suffice to say that *L'Action du Peuple* [...] plans to defend the cause of the Moroccan people, to track down abuses, wrongs and errors which it denounces without fail [...].

Our task is, without doubt, to dissipate the causes of friction which currently hinder the realisation of an understanding between France and Morocco.<sup>505</sup>

Since very few Moroccans at this stage read French, and given its emphasis on improving French-Moroccan relations by dispelling ‘noxious’ myths, its target audience was French or international.

The same can be said for Emir Khaled and Ferhat Abbas’ articles published in Victor Spielmann’s *Le Trait d'Union* or Dr Bendjelloul’s *L'Entente*, some of which were subsequently republished in 2011 as *Le Jeune Algérien*<sup>506</sup>. As Ferhat Abbas reflected in 1981, Maghribi nationalists counted on the intervention of metropolitan politicians to counter the influence of the French settler community in Algeria: ‘For the Muslim elite of this era, the choice seemed obvious: challenge the colonial power of Algiers and appeal to

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<sup>503</sup> *Presse et Mémoire*, p.112

<sup>504</sup> Ouazzani, *Combats*, tome 2, p. 30

<sup>505</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33

<sup>506</sup> Abbas, *Jeune Algérien*, p. 11

Liberal France, to its lofty principles and to the Declaration of the Rights of Man<sup>507</sup>. His articles thus engaged with material published by French journalists, rejecting and correcting statements made in the French press and in French orientalist scholarship<sup>508</sup>. Like Ouazzani and Tahar Ben Ammar, he sought to show through his journalism that their movement and demands were legal, legitimate and friendly to the spirit of France.

This was less the case for Tunisian nationalist French language papers prominent in the interwar period, such as *La Volonté du Tunisien* and *L'Action Tunisienne*. These were targeting to a much greater extent Tunisian audiences, which had by this point a greater French language readership. According to founding member el-Materi, *L'Action Tunisienne* had an extensive dual readership. Articles or sometimes entire editions were said to have been translated into Arabic by the Arabic language press<sup>509</sup>. These papers were connected to popular uprisings and unrest, triggering considerable support among the masses. For instance when El-Materi wrote an article to protest the dispersal of his fund raising gala in aid of Tunisian students in France, he not only doubled the paper's readership but also spurred a wave of donations from across the country<sup>510</sup>. Their articles regarding the burial of naturalised Tunisians in Muslim cemeteries also triggered large protests<sup>511</sup>.

Therefore Tunisian nationalist papers, while written and led by Tunisia's French educated intellectual elite, most of whom studied in France, had a comparatively populist readership. It was not on the whole seeking to improve French-Tunisian relations. Instead they were mobilising opposition to the colonial status quo. The same could be said for the

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<sup>507</sup> Ibid., p. 25

<sup>508</sup> Abbas, 'l'Intellectuel Musulman', in Ibid., pp. 57-95; originally published in *Ettakadoum* in response to articles published in *Echo d'Alger* and *Figaro* by Orientalist Louis Bertrand in August 1926 stating that all Muslim students were communists and lazy.

<sup>509</sup> El-Materi, *Itinéraire*, p.42

<sup>510</sup> Ibid., p. 41

<sup>511</sup> Bourguiba, *Ma vie*, p.120

ENA's *El-Oumma* and MTLD-PPA's *L'Etoile algérienne*, considered more seditious outlets. So not every French language Maghribi nationalist paper was addressing French audiences; but whether they were trying to establish an entente or simply demonstrate to the French the potency, urgency and representivity of their claims, they were taking their local struggles and grievances outside of their borders to a wider audience, which inherently externalised their movement.

The fundamental cleavage between French enlightenment values promoted in France and that practiced in the colonies eventually came to be a pivotal issue in the Algerian war for independence; a cleavage that has led some to interpret the conflict more as a sort of French civil war. Pressure from the central authorities for the *prépondérants* to lessen their grip in Algeria and to conform to central metropolitan politics culminated eventually in the Generals' Putsch of 1961. It no doubt also contributed to the formation of the ultra-nationalist terrorist organisation OAS which targeted French anti-colonial advocates and supporters of North African nationalism, including French attorney Pierre Popie.

Friction between colonial and metropolitan authorities was nothing new. In the Tunisian context, Viénot famously acknowledged on French radio that the interests of Tunisian *colons* were not aligned with those of France<sup>512</sup>. This remark was seconded by Tunisian born socialist Elie Cohen-Hadria, who remarked that for 'French nationalists' in Tunisia, the role of the *métropole* was to 'support the French in Tunisia, having neither the capacity to understand nor the right to judge'<sup>513</sup>. Journalist Jean Lacouture made a similar remark regarding the behaviour of the *prépondérants* in Morocco. When discussing in Paris

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<sup>512</sup> Ibid., p. 128

<sup>513</sup> Cohen-Hadria, *Du Protectorat français*, pp. III-IV

the deposition of Muhammad V in April 1953, he states that you could 'barely believe that these functionaries belonged to the same administration, the same country, as those who strove to form policy in Paris'<sup>514</sup>.

In Algeria the issue escalated to the point where the Algerian authorities seemed to be as much at war with France as with the FLN. When she was herself detained in Algeria for defending suspected Algerian militants, Gisèle Halimi witnessed first-hand the extent of this separation. This is an account of her trying to follow national administrative procedures during her detention:

'The officer fingers the official beige paper as if surprised by this procedure. "Coty? What the bloody hell is that to do with me?"

"But.....Colonel, the President of the Republic..."

"What Republic?" asks the Colonel. He bursts out laughing, quite good-naturedly, then turning serious adds, "All that's past history now. ... The army's in power... and it's the army that's going to put some order into these rotten politics." I try to argue. He interrupts. "Your Coty, he's of no account now. Get it?"'<sup>515</sup>

A pivotal element to this conflict was the use of torture in Algeria. Despite Malraux's assertion that torture was no longer employed in Algeria<sup>516</sup>, it continued to be used secretly across the Algerian army<sup>517</sup>. Bringing these military abuses to light became the focus of Algerian and anti-colonial advocacy, especially by anti-colonial lawyers like Gisèle Halimi in

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<sup>514</sup> Lacouture, *Cinq Hommes*, p. 219

<sup>515</sup> Halimi, *Milk*, p. 244

<sup>516</sup> *Le Monde*, 26 June 1958, in Thénault, S., Branche, R., 'Le secret sur la torture pendant la guerre d'Algérie', *Matériaux pour l'histoire de notre temps*, 58, (2000), p. 63

<sup>517</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 57-63

the Al-Halia and Djamila Boupacha cases<sup>518</sup>, as well as Jacques Vergès in the Djamila Bouhired trial<sup>519</sup>.

Therefore Paris was important in externalising critiques of colonialism from the colonies because it was perceived as an authority that was not entirely aligned with the interests of the local authorities, that is to say the General-Residencies. Paris was important because its population was a mediating force against the *prépondérants* due the French government's need, for the most part, for a social license. This dynamic, founded on real and mythical characteristics of its populace and structures, contributed to the evolution of anti-colonial advocacy.

### **Space or Mobility**

Paris had considerable agency in externalising local Maghribi struggles; but that does not mean that intellectual migration from the north of Africa in itself affected that agency. Paris was important because of its real and imagined features. It also acted as an international meeting place and platform. Intellectual migration, with its higher proportion of circular migration, helped to raise awareness of that dynamic which in turn affected the nationalist strategy of targeting French metropolitan and international opinion.

Furthermore the opportunity that the colonial elite had to experience, engage with and petition national and international political opinion in Paris was certainly unprecedented. Like Ouazzani they could seek out an academic formation in political theory, international relations, journalism and international law. These opportunities in

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<sup>518</sup> For more information on these cases, see her memoirs, as well as her book Beauvoir, S., Halimi, G., *Djamila Boupacha*, (Paris, 1962); Caroline Hupert, *Pour Djamila*, (2012)

<sup>519</sup> Barbet Schroeder, *L'Avocat de la terreur*, (Les Films du Losange, 2007)

Paris attracted some students to the city. Bourguiba post-rationalised his decision to study in Paris as a deliberate measure to obtain a political formation by being at the heart of the colonial administration:

‘It is in Paris that I wanted to pursue my studies, to get to know France, its ways of living and governance, to penetrate the secrets of its administrative, political and parliamentary organisation.’<sup>520</sup>

Migrants, by being in France, were more in tune with the public mood and therefore more aware of its limitations. They were also aware of the degree of misinformation regarding North African reforms<sup>521</sup>.

Intellectual migrants in Paris on the whole had an appreciation of the international context framing their local struggles. Abdelkader Ben Barka claimed that his brother acquired during his voluntary exile to Paris a ‘deeper understanding of the international situation’, which in turn allowed him to ‘situate his struggles in Morocco within a much wider context’<sup>522</sup>. Travelling to Paris marked ‘his entry into the world of international organisms’ from which the Third World could coordinate their struggles for independence<sup>523</sup>.

Intellectual migrants to France appeared more inclined to move away from the local political sphere and employ their skills as lawyers and men of science to structure their advocacy in an internationally comprehensible way. As James McDougall points out in relation to Messali Hadj and Emir Khaled, militants who were integrated into international mechanisms of relations and discourse used the ‘norms [...] of international politics’ in representing the needs and demands of the people they represented<sup>524</sup>. For instance

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<sup>520</sup> Bourguiba, ‘Deuxième Conférence’

<sup>521</sup> For instance, Harbi, *Une vie*, pp. 151-152

<sup>522</sup> Ben Barka, *Mon frère*, p.167

<sup>523</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 168

<sup>524</sup> McDougall, *History*, pp. 46-47

Ouazzani draws upon French political idioms in *Crime de lèse-nation* to denounce the Protectorate model<sup>525</sup>. His articles frequently referred to French political theorists such as Louis Bartou and Marcel Homet, addressing contradictions in French Moroccan policy, the hypocrisy of France's proclaimed standards on individual liberties and the infringement of international law<sup>526</sup>. In a defiant letter from exile to the Resident-General, Habib Bourguiba evoked French enlightenment author Victor Hugo to defend his resistance: 'I accept the bitter exile, be it without end or term; I live in exile yet stand on my own two feet'<sup>527</sup>. There is no doubt that their French education formed their sensibilities and cultural references. Practically it also made their advocacy more intelligible to European audiences.

There does appear to be a correlation between the growth in intellectual migration to metropolitan centres like Paris and the externalisation of colonial critiques. This correlation is not necessarily causal. Nor is it ubiquitous, but it shows how local movements were increasingly conducted at the international level. This in part is due to the fact that nationalist movements in the Maghrib did radicalise over this period into independence movements, therefore inherently concerning matters of international relations. Nevertheless with the exception of the ENA, Maghribi nationalism evolved into independence movements through a process which integrated their grievances within a much more universal socio-political, economic, cultural and even religious discourse. It may be worth therefore exploring that connection not in terms of causality, but inclination.

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<sup>525</sup> Ouazzani, M.H., *Le Protectorat, Crime de lèse-nation, Le case du Maroc*, (Fes, 1992)

<sup>526</sup> 'Liberté', *Maghreb*, No. 8, (February 1933) in Ouazzani, *Combats*, tome 1, p. 276

<sup>527</sup> Bourguiba, 'Cinquième Conférence', p. 9

## Ouazzani

There were several intellectual migrants who pursued international solutions to their local struggles. Let us take Mohamed Hassan Ouazzani's contributions to Moroccan nationalism as an example. From the 1930s to Moroccan independence in 1956, Ouazzani channelled his critique of French colonial policy in Morocco through mechanisms that helped to integrate his advocacy into international political discourse, both intellectually and practically.

Ouazzani was a prolific critical political writer and activist. He published material that progressed the intellectual premise for anti-colonial sentiment in Morocco, resulting in his exile from 1938 to 1945. As well as contributing to Shakib Arslan's *La Nation Arabe*, he founded an extensive array of publications and papers, including *L'Action du Peuple*, *La Volonté du Peuple*<sup>528</sup>, *La Démocratie*, *Ad-Dastour*<sup>529</sup> and *As-Siyassa*<sup>530</sup>, as well as having a hand in establishing *Maghreb* in Paris in 1932. His articles ranged from critiquing educational provisions in Morocco, direct mechanisms of administration and Lyautey's legacy, but he wrote most virulently against the *Dahire Berbère*<sup>531</sup>. He published protests against the prohibitive measures of the French authorities, particularly relating to matters of freedom of expression and freedom of association. These articles integrated Moroccan (local) grievances into more universal (global) political discourse<sup>532</sup>, consistently relating local micro-level complaints to macro-level concerns.

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<sup>528</sup> 14 editions published in Fes in French between Dec 1933 and March 1934, after the French authorities shut down *L'Action du Peuple*.

<sup>529</sup> Founded in Fes in 1962

<sup>530</sup> Founded in Fes in 1967

<sup>531</sup> Barbari, M., *Tempête sur le Maroc ou les erreurs d'une 'politique berbère'*, (Paris, 1931)

<sup>532</sup> Copies of Ouazzani's articles are published in Ouazzani, *Combats*, tome 1 & 2

Ouazzani's efforts to internationalise Moroccan nationalism were political as well as intellectual. As a student Ouazzani was involved in international student organisations. He was a founding member of the AEMNAF and joined Messali Hadj's ENA in 1929<sup>533</sup>.

In CAM, Ouazzani was at the forefront of externalising the Moroccan question. According to his memoirs, most members of CAM in 1935 and 1936 were disillusioned and pessimistic, wanting to curb the growth of their movement and the extent to which it advocated the international political community:

'[...] a bad political climate is brewing among the nationalist movement, [...].'

'We are striking against what you could call a 'passive resistance' among some of our friends. They are confined to silence under the pretext that the movement's 'interests' are not best served by the expansion of the ruling class. [...] They reckoned in fact that the circumstances did not allow for anything other than sending the occasional note or telegram...'<sup>534</sup>

'I try to convince them of the necessity for CAM members to be present in Paris at this crucial moment alongside those leaders representing nationalist movements in Lebanon and Syria (*Comité National*), Algeria (*PPA*) and Tunisia (*Neo-Destour*) to help each other, work together and thereby serve our common cause.'

My colleagues persist in their refusal. Faced by this attitude, I abandon them.

I resolve to undertake the journey to Paris off my own steam, serving thereby the cause of my country even if this displeases those who are 'immobile' and 'stagnant'. I do not for a moment doubt that they would change their attitude once they learn of the results of my Parisian activities.'<sup>535</sup>

He therefore obtained funding from his parents to undertake the trip alone, despite opposition from other CAM members, including his former companion in France Omar Abdeljalil. Once in Paris he collaborated closely with Robert-Jean Longuet among others on

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<sup>533</sup> Ouazzani, *Mudhakkirat*, Vol. 1, p. 443

<sup>534</sup> Ouazzani, *Combats*, tome 1, p. 54

<sup>535</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 53-54

France's Left, distributing summaries of the *Plan de Réformes Marocaines*, along with other tracts written especially for that occasion<sup>536</sup>.

Ouazzani therefore can be seen somewhat as a pioneer in externalising the Moroccan nationalist struggle in the 1930s. It was crucial to him, even in the early stages, to reach outside audiences in order to address internal issues. It was in his opinion the only way to resolve their grievances:

'... We cannot insist enough [...] that our most urgent demand is to grant Moroccans the liberty of expression in their two languages, French and Arabic, so that they may legally externalise their grievances and their legitimate aspirations. It is [...] not only an imperative necessity, but also the indispensable condition for the achievement of our mutual understanding...'<sup>537</sup>

Ouazzani's international approach to North African nationalism continued throughout decolonisation. Between 1951 and 1957, he spent the majority of his time abroad, in what his son calls a 'voluntary exile' from Morocco, to plead the case of Moroccan nationalism on the international arena, travelling across the Middle East, the United States, Europe, the subcontinent and Indonesia<sup>538</sup>. He was said to have engaged extensively with political networks wherever he went<sup>539</sup>.

A crucial tenet of Ouazzani's advocacy concerned renegotiating Moroccan alignment on the international political arena. Intellectually, Ouazzani showed from the outset considerable affinity with the idea of Arab Unity, developing close ties with Arab nationalist Shakib Arslan in Geneva and helping to found the Association of Arab Unity in Paris with its

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<sup>536</sup> Ibid., p. 54

<sup>537</sup> Ibid, p. 48

<sup>538</sup> Ouazzani, I.M.H., *Entretiens*, p. 310

<sup>539</sup> He is said to have mapped intellectual and political movements in Cairo and its networks before posting them to Robert-Jean Longuet in Paris; Longuet, R-J., 'Préface', Ouazzani, *Combats*, tome 1, p. 12

leader, Mohamed Salah Eddine. But Ouazzani also felt that the establishment of special political relations between Arab nations was strategically important in negotiating the demands of Moroccan nationalism on the international political arena. He was one of the earliest voices calling for North African unity in the struggle for independence<sup>540</sup> and an early advocate for Arab unity outside of Syria or Egypt.

But unity was not for Ouazzani a homogeneous cultural identity and community, in the sense of an evolving globalism, but an alignment of cultural zones that would help to decentralise the international political arena. Unity of Arab nations in international relations strengthened colonised regions of the world in their collective resistance to European colonialism:

‘[...] these constituents collaborated as populations fighting a same superior in the area of governance or in the field of national struggle – so that the people’s issues benefited positively from that fraternal collaboration, especially political collaboration at the international level.’<sup>541</sup>

Ouazzani’s student days in Paris did facilitate this approach. It was in Paris that he was first acquainted with Muhammad Salah al-Din and Dr Farid Zayn al-Din<sup>542</sup>, contacts that later helped Ouazzani secure Egypt and Syria’s support for the Moroccan nationalist cause in the UN General Assembly<sup>543</sup>, support necessary in order to raise ‘The Question of Morocco’ at the General Assembly’s Regular Sessions<sup>544</sup>.

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<sup>540</sup> On 16 Dec 1928, at the General Assembly of the AEMNAF, he calls for the imperative for North Africans to unite; Ouazzani, I.M.H., *Entretiens*, p. 306

<sup>541</sup> Ouazzani, *Mudhakkirat*, Vol. 1, p. 442

<sup>542</sup> Ouazzani, ‘Télégramme adressé de Ceuta le 25 août 1953 à Farid Zeineddine’, Ouazzani, I.M.H., *Entretiens*, pp. 329-330

<sup>543</sup> Ouazzani, *Mudhakkirat*, Vol. 1, p. 442

<sup>544</sup> The Moroccan question was discussed after the matter being raised by 13 member states, UN Resolution 612 (VII), ‘The question of Morocco’, 13 January 1953, access 01/09/2015 [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/612\(VII\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/612(VII))

Ouazzani was also involved in the non-alignment movement, speaking at the Bandung Conference in 1955 on behalf of the PDI. However again here it is clear that by non-alignment Ouazzani in fact sought a re-alignment away from post-colonial spheres of influence like the Common Wealth or the *Union Française*. In his speech at said conference, he exclaimed

'The Afro-asiatic countries have not ceased to exert great efforts at the UN in favour of the Moroccan question. This enables the international opinion to know the just Moroccan cause in relation to its judicial and diplomatic concerns.

Even though the Moroccan problem continues to play out on the international arena, this does not prevent those who support it to continue to look for useful means with which to resolve it at the biggest gathering of those Afro-asiatic countries, that is to say this actual conference.'<sup>545</sup>

It has been noted by many conference goers, including Mohamed Harbi, that many of those participating at the Bandoeng Conference were in fact already aligned within the Cold War conflict<sup>546</sup>. Instead many participants considered it more as the cementing of Third-World collaboration and post-colonial alignment, as was the case for Mohamed Hassan Ouazzani. Ouazzani was not concerned about Cold War blocs of influence, but colonial blocs.

It is clear therefore that Paris provided Ouazzani with an entry into the global political arena, as did Cairo, Geneva and later on in his career, Washington DC. Entering that arena internationalised local Moroccan grievances while at the same time helping to decentralise mechanisms of international relations. Yet Belafrej and Omar Abdeljalil also studied in Paris and yet resisted Ouazzani's continued push to externalise the Moroccan question at the time of the Popular Front. Furthermore, Moroccan nationalists like Allal al-Fassi who after the Second World War also took the Moroccan question onto the

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<sup>545</sup> 'La traduction du mémoire du 7 Avril 1955 présenté par Mohamed Hassan Ouazzani au nom du PDI et destiné à la Conférence de Bandoeng.', Doc. No. 5, Ouazzani, I.M.H., *Entretiens*, p. 337

<sup>546</sup> Harbi, *Une vie*, p. 304

international political arena, did not study abroad; though he did travel to France on numerous occasions to negotiate with the French authorities.

Therefore Paris was not necessarily the reason Ouazzani pursued an international solution to the Moroccan question. Yet it could be said that rising levels of international mobility provided politically inclined colonial subjects the opportunity to engage with mechanisms of international relations and governance as they were developing. And these mechanisms were developing because the likes of Ouazzani were travelling to Paris advocating systematic reforms. There is therefore a correlation between nationalists pioneering international approaches to local nationalist movements and intellectual migrants in France, though that correlation is not necessarily causal.

### **Shafik**

Another notable intellectual migrant who conducted her socio-political struggle at an international level is Doria Shafik, who internationalised Egyptian feminism like no other. There has been little mention so far of Egypt in relation to Paris' character as a political centre. Naturally, not being a French colony like its Maghribi counterparts, it did not benefit from petitioning the French authorities for reform in the same way, except at the Paris Peace Conference. Nor did Egypt have a conservative French *colons* community with which to contrast French metropolitan opinion. French encounters in Egypt beyond the Napoleonic era have primarily been with scholars, intellectuals, academics and technocrats. There are nonetheless noteworthy comparable processes, such as the Egyptian feminist movement of Doria Shafik.

Doria Shafik spent nine years in France studying philosophy<sup>547</sup>. Upon her return to Egypt she dedicated her career to 'improve the living conditions of women and elevate the level of their existence'<sup>548</sup>. Whether in printed form or through her activism, her methods were inherently international. She believed that improving the condition of women in Egypt was inextricably linked to increasing the rate and quality of cultural encounters. She wanted to both open Egyptian women up to the marvels of international culture and to challenge Western stereotypes regarding Egyptian women.

These objectives are expressed in her first feminist tract *La Femme nouvelle en Egypte* written in 1944:

'The social situation of the Egyptian woman is in a general way very little understood in the world. Westerners are still impressed by the writings of those early travellers, who first probed the East. These very unscientific writings might, through a great stretch of the imagination, provide a portrait of the Egyptian woman on which the West bases its views today. She has evolved so fast that one can hardly recognize her. Compared with her sister at the beginning of the twentieth century the Egyptian woman of today is a totally different woman with new ideas, different habits and unlimited ambition. It is with the particular goal of clarifying this issue that I have written this book.'<sup>549</sup>

This ambition of educating Egyptian women, putting them 'in touch with the rest of the world' and 'awakening their consciousness'<sup>550</sup> continue to be expressed throughout her journalistic career, whether as the editor-in-chief of Princess Faiza's *La Femme Nouvelle*, or in her own Arabic language edition, *Bint Al-Nil*:

'*La Femme Nouvelle* reappears today, as if resurrected, with a great role to play – that of reflecting our present renaissance, of putting us in touch with

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<sup>547</sup> Nelson, *Shafik*, pp.xxiii-xxiv

<sup>548</sup> Shafik, D., 'Editoriale', *La Femme Nouvelle*, March 1949

<sup>549</sup> Nelson, *Shafik*, p. 113

<sup>550</sup> *Ibid.*, p 125

other countries, and thus serving as a bond between ourselves and the rest of the world.’<sup>551</sup>

To that effect, Shafik used her magazines to act as a cultural bridge, deliberately juxtaposing articles on Egyptian and Persian styles with Parisian fashion:

‘The East is abandoning its isolation to mix with the rest of the world. Across time and space, different civilisations clasp hands, agree, coalesce and complete each other.

The “Femme Nouvelle” bears witness to these unions, often unexpected, yet so harmonious. In it we shall find “Feminine Head-dress in Ancient Egypt” side by side with “Feminine silhouettes of the Persian Epos” and the latest creations of Parisian Fashion. [...].

And so, our magazine reflects the East as it is today, rich not only in an incomparable past but also in its many links with the civilisations of our time.’<sup>552</sup>

Her Arabic language paper, *Bint al-Nil*, was followed by the creation of the Bin al-Nil Union in January 1948, which aimed to a greater extent at the social, economic and political emancipation of women in Egypt. This movement focused on the intellectual and material development of women in Egypt, organising literacy classes, a social education program, recruitment aid for Egyptian women and frequently a source of financial relief, often provided by Shafik personally<sup>553</sup>. It was also a platform from which to propagandise the cause of Egyptian women internally and externally. Shafik registered the Union with the International Council of Women in 1949 with the explicit aim of integrating female Egyptian representatives in international institutions:

‘Our disaster is that the civilized world knows nothing about us and knows nothing about the position and great role of women in creating a new generation and contributing to the foundation of modern Egypt. That is why I

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<sup>551</sup> Ibid., p.134

<sup>552</sup> Shafik, D., ‘Editorial’, *La Femme Nouvelle*, Numéro Spécial, décembre 1949

<sup>553</sup> Nelson, *Shafik*, p. 174

decided to register Bint al-Nil Union with the International Council of women and to announce to the world the relevant history of the Egyptian woman and the significant role that she plays in the life of the Nile Valley during the modern era. [...]. I recommend that a group of intellectual women should accompany our delegates to participate in international conferences as their appearance in such meetings or conferences will define our country as a member of those nations who respect and know the importance of women's role in the life of nations.'<sup>554</sup>

When in 1948 she founds the Bint al-Nil Party, she once again adopts highly internationalist solutions to her struggle for the political emancipation of Egyptian women. In 1951 she stormed the gates of parliament demanding women's suffrage. In 1954 she undertook a hunger strike with eight of her colleagues demanding that women be on the new constitutional committee after the overthrow of the Egyptian monarchy in 1952. Adopting high profile forms of protest inherently increased pressure on the Egyptian authorities, opening them up to international attention and potential criticism.

Shafik sought to capitalise upon these events, putting herself further in the limelight by undertaking a world tour to promote the cause of Egyptian women. In October of the same year of her hunger strike, Shafik travelled the world speaking at press conferences, international conferences and meeting statesmen the world over, including Jawaharlal Nehru. Therefore Doria Shafik, more than any other Egyptian feminist at that time, took the internal socio-political struggle for the emancipation of women in Egypt to the world stage. Despite speaking at events in the French capital, Paris had nothing seemingly to do with her advocacy. It wasn't the stage; instead she was making stages all over the world from which to affect international opinion.

An observation worth noting in this case is that Doria Shafik seemed to have more sympathetic audiences abroad than she did at home. Shafik was socially alienated in Egypt,

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<sup>554</sup> Ibid., p. 158

either for being too bourgeois for communist feminists such as Inji Aflatoun<sup>555</sup>, or too modern for the conservative milieu of the Muslim Brotherhood. Upon returning home to Egypt with a doctorate from the Sorbonne, she was refused a position in the University of Cairo because she was deemed too modern, an objection that also apparently afflicted the Egyptian writer Dr Zaki Mubarak<sup>556</sup>. While her magazines and journalistic exploits were successful in reaching large audiences, selling up to 10,000 copies per edition<sup>557</sup>, she continued to receive mixed reviews in Egypt, with criticisms mostly aimed at her person<sup>558</sup>, culminating in a press of ridicule after her final hunger strike against Nasser's dictatorship in 1957.

In this way she was somewhat of a disenfranchised Egyptian, a *dépaysé*. While she did personally state that her marriage to her cousin was intended as a 'reconciliation' with her home country<sup>559</sup>, as was her decision to conduct her life work there, Egyptian society never saw her as their own, considering her a foreign agent despite working continuously for her country<sup>560</sup>. The characteristic that made her so well suited to externalise Egyptian women's struggle for social, political and economic emancipation actually discredited her movement. She was deemed too French, despite Shafik's continuous endeavours to reconcile with her home country.

There is no doubt that Shafik felt more at home in Paris' intellectual environment than she did straddling high society and progressive movements in Egypt: 'I had the feeling that what I was leaving behind me, the International House, the Latin Quarter, the

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<sup>555</sup> Ibid., p. 165

<sup>556</sup> Ibid., p. 99

<sup>557</sup> Ibid., p. 125

<sup>558</sup> Ibid., p. 149

<sup>559</sup> Ibid., p. 82

<sup>560</sup> Ibid., p. 144

Sorbonne, was much closer to me than what I was going to find at home'<sup>561</sup>. When speaking about the prospect of returning home, she said that she was 'somewhat apprehensive about this new contact' with her country; 'Many events had created a huge abyss between Egypt and me'<sup>562</sup>. But that milieu she was leaving, though including some French acquaintances, was primarily international. The friendships sufficiently notable to be recalled in her memoirs were with Greek, Georgian, Martiniquais, Iranian and Moroccan girls at the International House<sup>563</sup>.

Therefore Shafik was culturally conditioned and inclined towards international solutions. Egyptian women she felt should be women of the world. Her attachment to French culture, instilled throughout her French education in Egypt and her studies in Paris, no doubt formed in part her international perspective. But it also made international audiences, especially in the Western world, very open to her, making her a highly suitable and effective medium through which to internationalise Egyptian feminism.

Ouazzani and Shafik are not the only intellectual migrants in this study to have adopted internationalist solutions to their local struggles. Moroccan professor of international relations and futurist Mehdi Elmandjra presents Mehdi Ben Barka as an 'Internationalist' for his participation in international institutions such as the Bandung Conference of 1955 and the Tri-continental Conference in Havana in 1966. Tahar Sfar, in his private dairies written in exile also shows him to have been an internationalist at heart. He evokes internationalism as a positive, if not ultimate objective of all independence

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<sup>561</sup> Ibid., p. 52

<sup>562</sup> Ibid.

<sup>563</sup> Ibid., p. 47

movements; personal sacrifice for the liberation of ones people would pave the way for the 'internationalism and fraternity of races'<sup>564</sup>.

That is not to say that all militants who adopted international approaches to their struggles were internationalists in the geo-political sense of the word, as Tahar Sfar seems to have implied by stating that Tunisian nationalism was 'on the verge of internationalism'. Rather for the most part, they were open to international solutions and equipped with the necessary vernacular to be at home with international discourse. Nor were all internationalists intellectual migrants. It leaves us only to discuss questions of inclination. Some intellectual migrants internationalised their struggles because they saw the problem as so inextricably linked to international relations that they could only envisage a solution via international mechanisms, like Ouazzani. For some intellectual migrants, their formation bestowed them a certain sociability that meant that they could interact easily with people from different milieus, cultures and classes, as with Doria Shafik.

There is also a surprising correlation between militant intellectual migrants to Paris from the north of Africa and institutions of international relations. Quite a number of intellectual migrants listed in Chapter Two became ambassadors, negotiators of treaties and representatives at international institutions, including a large number of UNESCO representatives. Tawfiq al-Hakim was Egypt's representative to UNESCO in 1959-1960<sup>565</sup>. Dr Boutros-Ghali was UN Secretary General from 1992 to 1996<sup>566</sup>. Mahmoud Messadi was Tunisia's UNESCO representative between 1974 and 1985<sup>567</sup>. Mostefa Lacheraf in his post-independence career served as a UNESCO delegate for Algeria as well as Ambassador in

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<sup>564</sup> Sfar, *Journal*, p. 10

<sup>565</sup> Hutchins, W. M., *Tawfiq al-Hakim: a reader's guide*, (London, 2003), p. xv

<sup>566</sup> *Biographical dictionary of Egypt*, p. 38

<sup>567</sup> Tunisia profile, UNESCO website, <http://www.unesco.org/eri/cp/cp-nav.asp?country=TN&language=E>

Latin America<sup>568</sup>. Mongi Slim was elected in 1961 the sixth president of the General Assembly of the UN<sup>569</sup>. Gisèle Halimi represented the feminist group *Choisir* at two UNESCO sessions in 1979 and 1984, and was the French legate to UNESCO between 1985 and 1987<sup>570</sup>. Needless to say there were also many UNESCO delegates who had not been intellectual migrants to Paris. The statement is not therefore about the proportion of international actors who were migrants but the proportion of intellectual migrants who were international actors. Being an intellectual migrant seemed to predispose that section of the colonial elite to international institutions and to international solutions.

There is therefore a connection between intellectual migration to Paris between 1914 and 1962 and the internationalisation of local socio-political movements in the north of Africa. But that connection is not explicit in the sense that it does not mean that that process was carried out only by intellectual migrants or that intellectual migrants all necessarily turned to international solutions. It relates rather to the space of Paris and its position as an external, yet determining political entity to their local struggle. The impact of petitioning an external public opinion changed the nature of local political discourse and integrated it into a national and international one.

Then there is the matter of inclination. Maybe those who had travelled and who already had experience of mechanisms of international relations were well equipped, especially in the interwar period, to take their grievances to the central authorities and international political community. They were in this sense, as described by Pierre

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<sup>568</sup> *Presse et mémoire*, p. 112

<sup>569</sup> Profile of Mongi Slim, UN website, <http://www.un.org/ga/55/president/bio16.htm>

<sup>570</sup> Blair, D., 'Introduction' in Halimi, *Milk*, p. 4

Vermeren, pioneers of Maghribi nationalism. The fact that such a large number of intellectual migrants studied in this analysis became UN and UNESCO representatives is quite telling. It does not mean that intellectual migrants necessarily adopted internationalist philosophies. Rather, it made the external more accessible, both in providing a platform from which to communicate to outside audiences and by bestowing a vernacular that facilitated that communication, affecting the tone of some advocacy, as well as the framework of their demands.

## Chapter Seven – The ‘Colonial Metropolis’

There is a natural propensity when studying cultural encounters to focus on interactions and exchanges between any two given cultures. Migration studies tend to revolve around the dichotomy of the sending and receiving cultural zones. Yet because of Paris’ highly international character, the circular nature of most intellectual migration and certain particularities of the Parisian milieu, one of the most striking products of intellectual migration to Paris from the north of Africa is somewhat independent of France’s cultural sphere.

A crucial feature of Paris in the first half of the twentieth century affecting global intellectual and political developments was its propensity to gather or congregate peoples from across the globe in one particular locality. It thus created opportunities for discourse, interaction and collaboration, helping to create a migrant, colonial civil society. As seen in the introduction to this thesis, the rate of intellectual mobility from the non-Western world increased after the First World War and grew at an even greater rate after the Second World War. Paris’ cultural capital generated a particular draw for intellectual migrants. So did its qualities as a global political centre. But migrants during this period did not simply experience Paris; they came into contact with a global community.

### **A Colonial Civil Society**

The growing rate of intellectual and economic migration to Paris since 1914 resulted in the development of social, cultural and even political structures specific to those new

communities. These newly founded private and public institutions, societies, associations, residential and commercial zones, shops, restaurants, papers and even political parties formed what anthropologist Gary Wilder calls an 'alternative public sphere'<sup>571</sup>, making Paris a sort of 'colonial metropolis'<sup>572</sup>.

In addition to the influx of North African migrants after World War One, there were a large number of students that came from other parts of the Muslim world. By 1935, there were 238 Iranian students in Paris alone, 193 from Turkey and 164 from Syria and Lebanon. There were also growing numbers from other parts of the non-Western world. In 1914, there were only 8 Japanese students in France, 3 Indochinese and 57 from across the African continent (excluding the Maghrib and Egypt)<sup>573</sup>. In 1931, the 'height of the French Empire'<sup>574</sup>, the number of Japanese students had risen to 47 in an academic year and there were as many as 420 students from Indochina. Only the number of African students seems to have dropped off slightly to 45 in a year, although it could easily be due to an inconsistency in what constituted 'other African countries'<sup>575</sup>. By 1960, the number of 'Indochinese' students (that is to say, by that time, from Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia) amounted to 1540 and the total number of Africans, excluding Tunisians, Moroccans and Algerians, was 2975<sup>576</sup>. There were also a significant number of students from Martinique

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<sup>571</sup> Wilder, *The Imperial Nation-State*, p. 5

<sup>572</sup> Boittin, *Colonial Metropolis*

<sup>573</sup> 'Tableau 1. – Relevé général des étudiants français et étrangers par nationalité en 1914, 1915 et 1916', AS, Vol. 34, (Paris, 1916), p. 41

<sup>574</sup> Berque, *French North Africa*, p. 215

<sup>575</sup> 'Tableau 1 – Relevé général des étudiants au 31 Juillet 1931, par nationalité', AS, Vol. 47, (Paris, 1931), p. 42

<sup>576</sup> 'Tableau XXXV- Etudiants étrangers inscrits dans les universités' and 'Tableau XXXVI - Etudiants originaires des pays de la zone franc inscrits dans les universités', AS, Vol. 68 (Paris, 1962)

and the Antilles, yet as Claude Liauzu notes, it is hard to find reliable and consistent statistics for this particular population group<sup>577</sup>.

The first half of the twentieth century also saw the rapid development of France's associative culture, especially national and international student associations. Communities of intellectual migrants, not always consisting exclusively of students, began to organise themselves into cultural societies and associations of mutual aid, addressing the material and moral needs of foreign communities in Paris whose requirements were quite distinct from those of migrant workers.

In 1927, the *Association des étudiants guadeloupéens* was formed. Students from the French West Indies formed the *Association des Etudiants Martiniquais en France*, founded by Aimé Césaire in 1936 on 20 *Rue des Carmes*. It published a journal entitled *L'Etudiant Noir*. By 1937, there was also *l'Association des étudiants antillais*, *l'Association des étudiants Sénégalais* and *l'Association des étudiants de l'Ouest-Afrique*<sup>578</sup>. After the Second World War, African students united under the *Association Générale des Etudiants Africains de Paris* in 1946, which turned into the highly politicised *Fédération des étudiants d'Afrique noire en France* in 1950<sup>579</sup>. There was also a highly active press associated to these organisations, from *Le cri des nègres* (1931-1936), *La Revue du monde noir* (1931-1932) and *La dépêche africaine*, (1928-1938). Most of these were run and written by intellectual migrants to France and published in Paris.

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<sup>577</sup> Liauzu, C., *Aux origines des Tiers-mondismes, colonisés et anti-colonialistes en France 1919-1939*, (Paris, 1982), p.141

<sup>578</sup> *Ibid.*, p.152

<sup>579</sup> For details on this organisation, see Traore, S., *Fédération Des Etudiants D'Afrique Noire En France*, (Paris, 1985)

Students from Indochina formed the *Association générale des étudiants Indochinois de Paris* (AGEI) in 1927, a student branch of the *Association mutuelle des Indochinois*<sup>580</sup>, which targeted economic migrants. The statutes of the AGEI, published in *L'Echo Annamites*, stated their intention to encourage amicable links between students, offer prizes and bursaries for students and provide a network of support<sup>581</sup>. Syrian and Lebanese students formed the *Association des étudiants syriens de Paris* that became in 1936 the *Association des étudiants arabes*, intended to group students from North Africa, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, the Hijaz and Palestine but which apparently retained its largely Levantine character<sup>582</sup>.

North African students were represented primarily through AEMNAF, founded in 1927. There was also *Association des Etudiants Musulmans Algériens* at 16, *rue Rollin* between 1930 and 1937, before merging with the AEMNAF<sup>583</sup>. There was also the *Union Générale des Etudiants Tunisiens* founded in 1952, the *Union Générale des Etudiants Musulmans Algériens* in 1955 and eventually the *Union National des Etudiants Marocains* in 1956. Until the 1950s however, the AEMNAF was the principle representative of Moroccan and Tunisian students. Algerian students in the interwar years preferred the AEMA because of Moroccan and Tunisian antipathy towards naturalised Muslims.

The purpose of the AEMNAF, as expressed in its statutes, was:

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<sup>580</sup> Goebel, M., *Anti-Imperial Metropolis, Interwar Paris and the Seeds of Third World Nationalism*, (Cambridge, 2015), p. xi

<sup>581</sup> 'Association Générale des étudiants et anciens étudiants Indochinois – Statuts Définitifs', *l'Echo Annamite*, No. 869, (6 May 1927)

<sup>582</sup> 'Lettre de l'Inspecteur des Étudiants des États du Levant sous Mandat Français à Monsieur le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, Paris', 21 March 1936, Courneuve, Série K 15, P13681

<sup>583</sup> It is worth noting at this stage that French security services reporting on the AEMNAF seem to conflate it with the AEMA by falsely claiming that the AEMNAF's premises are on 16, *rue Rollin*, rather than 115, *Boulevard Saint-Michel*

- a) To strengthen ties of friendship and solidarity between members by the creation of a group, a library, a review and by organising periodic meetings.
- b) To encourage our compatriots to come and continue their further education in France.
- c) To facilitate their stay in France by creating bursaries and founding a Student House<sup>584</sup>.

They turned a former boutique on 115, *boulevard Saint-Michel* into their premises with a lecture theatre, a library and a canteen<sup>585</sup>. It became an important centre for North African intellectual migrants in Paris, including Egyptians. It features in the memoirs of every single Maghribi migrant surveyed in this study.

There were also political groups that published journals for intellectual migrants. The *Section Universitaire* of the FdF produced *L'Etudiant algériens*, which focused less on militancy and more on Algerian culture<sup>586</sup>. There was a Lebanese student paper called *La Revue du Liban et de l'Orient Méditerranéen* run by M.M. Ibrahim and Emlie Maklouf in 1936, as well as another entitled *Orient-Paris*, with its premises on 39, *rue Pascal*, run by M. Toufik Wehbé<sup>587</sup>.

Egyptian students were less syndicalised in Paris than Maghribis during this period. This was in large part due to the infrastructure of the Egyptian Student Missions which fulfilled many of the welfare needs that these students associations were seeking to

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<sup>584</sup> 'Statuts de l'Association des Etudiants Musulmans Nord-Africains en France', *Courneuve*, Série K 15, P13681, f. 116

<sup>585</sup> 'Bulletin Trimestriel – Association des Etudiants Musulmans Nord-Africains en France, April – May – June – 1933', *Courneuve*, Série K 15, P13681

<sup>586</sup> Harbi, *Une vie*, p.107

<sup>587</sup> Report from L'Inspecteur des Etudiants des Etats du Levant sous Mandat Français' to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, 21 March 1936, *Courneuve*, Série K 15, P13681

address. There is mention in one report of an Egyptian '*missions scolaires*' on 24, *rue des Ecoles* though details on this are scarce<sup>588</sup>. Many Egyptians were involved in student associations, but usually under less national auspices than their Maghribi counterparts.

It is worth noting at this stage that intellectual migrants played a leading role in establishing this infrastructure. But unlike Indochinese or Antillian communities in Paris there was considerable division between North African intellectual and economic civil society. The North African press in France was first pioneered by economic migrants working in industry or commerce. Some of the first Algerians to contribute to communist led papers *Le Paria*, *Al-Alam* (1926), *Al-Ahman* (1926), *Al-Raiat Al-Hamra* (1929) were economic, rather than intellectual migrants<sup>589</sup>. According to *Génériques'* edition on the foreign press in France, it was not until the arrival of Moroccans like Mohamed Hassan Ouazzani and Mohamed El Kholti, Tunisians such as Ahmed Ben Milad and Hédi Nouria and Algerians such as Sahli-Mohand Chérif that students started to contribute to the North African press in Paris<sup>590</sup> (although that study omits the fact that Chadly Khairallah founded in 1926 the ENA's first journalistic enterprise of the same name). But for the most part, the majority of the associative and journalistic activities of North African intellectual migrants were centred on the Left Bank, where they developed an infrastructure that reflected the growing importance of this emerging migratory trend.

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<sup>588</sup> 'Note relative au IIIème Congrès des Etudiants Musulmans Nord-Africains', *Courneuve*, Série K 15, P13681

<sup>589</sup> *Presse et mémoire*, p. 110

<sup>590</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 111

**An 'Alternative Public Sphere'<sup>591</sup>**

As many migrants undertaking intellectual and cultural pursuits tended to reside on the Left Bank, so did many of the institutions serving their needs. Much like the Parisian cluster on the Left Bank, when plotted on a map they are visibly clustered around the axis of *Boulevard Saint-Michel* and *Boulevard Saint-Germain*, though a bit further eastwards (see Appendix C). It would be very natural to assume that, being centred on the city's most culturally creative district, this colonial civil society would be inherently engaging with Paris' cultural milieu, generating further cultural production as per the principle of a creative cluster. During the interwar years however, this was not the case. As already stated, Parisians in general were largely uninterested in colonial cultural production except for that based on stereotypes or on their penchant for the exotic<sup>592</sup>. On the flip side, this lack of interest was seconded by a deliberate isolationism on behalf of some colonial migrants, especially from North Africa.

During the interwar years especially North African students in Paris experienced predominantly a temporary and multicultural diaspora. This feature of colonial intellectual migration is reflected in the memoirs of migrants and in material relating to them in the French archives. Ouazzani as early as the 1920s described student migration to France as an opportunity not just to mix with the French milieu, but also with 'the Oriental and international milieu which Paris was a meeting place for'<sup>593</sup>. Doria Shafik notes that most of her friendships in the thirties were with international students, usually from extra-European countries. In her student residence at the International House, she was '[...] surrounded by

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<sup>591</sup> Wilder, *The Imperial Nation-State*, p. 5

<sup>592</sup> Blanchard, Deroo, El-Yazami, Fournié, Manceron, *Le Paris Arabe*, p. 7

<sup>593</sup> Ouazzani, *Muthakkirat*, Vol. 1, p. 441

young women from the four corners of the earth, each with her own customs, her own problems [...]<sup>594</sup>.

According to Egyptian author and linguist, Abd el-Rahman al-Badawi, by the late 1940s, Paris' Left Bank was swarming with international students, providing a cosmopolitan soundtrack that was particular to the district and to that time:

'There were at that time on Boulevard Saint-Michel thousands of foreign students: Arabs, Africans who had come from French colonies in Africa, and Blacks who had arrived from French colonies surrounding the Atlas Mountains, the Pacific and India. Throughout the forty years that I came to Paris I did not again see such a vast amount of foreign students. You used to pass through the Boulevard Saint-Michel and in general hear nothing but African languages and colonial tongues from across the three oceans, or Arabic.'<sup>595</sup>

By the end of this period, the French capital's international character was a defining characteristic. Sat in a cafe in the 1960s, the Egyptian writer and diplomat Yahya Haqqi evokes the remarkable national, cultural and racial diversity in the Latin Quarter:

'In front of this display, you get the impression that you've seen all the peoples of this world pass before you: whites, blacks, yellows and reds. As for the French population, they seem lost in this vast gathering'<sup>596</sup>

Paris therefore provided an extended opportunity for intellectual migrants to engage with peoples and cultures from across the globe.

North African students tended to interact more with fellow colonial migrants than with Europeans. This was partly due to infrastructure. The mechanisms that were established in Paris to house and cater for international students encouraged them to mix with each other. The *Cité Universitaire* for instance grouped Paris' international students into 'Houses' that were usually established through a mix of private and state funding. It

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<sup>594</sup> Nelson, Shafik, p. 47

<sup>595</sup> Badawi, *Sirat Hayati*, Vol. 1, p. 194

<sup>596</sup> Haqqi, *Un Égyptien à Paris*, p. 83

was widely considered a far superior standard of student accommodation than the Latin Quarter's bohemian hotels, and affordable<sup>597</sup>.

Despite Tunisian and Moroccan 'Houses' only being established in 1953<sup>598</sup>, students from the Protectorates nonetheless could stay in 'Houses' of other nationalities. Tahar Sfar for instance shared a room with Bourguiba in the *Deutch de la Meurthe*, the oldest 'House' in the *Cité Universitaire*. Mohamed Hassan Ouazzani shared a room with Tunisian Ahmed Ben Milad in the *Fondation Biermans-Lapôtre* or '*Maison Belge*'<sup>599</sup>. Algerians on the other hand, coming from a department of France, were not eligible for accommodation in the *Cité Universitaire* as they were not regarded as international students, a situation much lamented by Algerian students<sup>600</sup>. The *Cité Universitaire* therefore, with its superior and affordable accommodation, did encourage a degree of segregation between French Parisian cultural life and its international intellectual constituent.

There was accommodation and infrastructure for international students on the Left Bank around the main axis of *Boulevard Saint-Germain* and *Boulevard Saint-Michel*, but that did not necessarily encourage the mixing of French and international students, except maybe for frequenting the same clubs and cafes. The International House on 93, *Boulevard Saint-Michel* accommodated female international students like Doria Shafik. There were also the Hotel de Paris, *rue Serpente* that housed Moroccan students and was appropriated after the Second World War by the UNEM<sup>601</sup>. According to Mohammed Harbi, many

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<sup>597</sup> Considered better, affordable accommodation by Shusha Guppy, *A Girl in Paris*, p. 32; Also by Lacheraf, who laments the lack of an 'Algerian House' as another reason for Algerian students' relative hardships in France, Lacheraf, *Des noms*, p.94

<sup>598</sup> Maison du Maroc, accessed 10 July 2013, at [http://www.ciup.fr/fr/les\\_maisons/maison\\_du\\_maroc](http://www.ciup.fr/fr/les_maisons/maison_du_maroc)  
Maison du Tunisie, accessed 10 July 2013, at [http://www.ciup.fr/les\\_maisons/maison\\_de\\_la\\_tunisie](http://www.ciup.fr/les_maisons/maison_de_la_tunisie)

<sup>599</sup> Ouazzani, *Mudhakkirat*, tome 1, p. 450

<sup>600</sup> Lacheraf, *Des noms*, p. 99

<sup>601</sup> Ben Barka, *Mon frère*, p. 169

Tunisian students in the forties and fifties stayed in a residence on *rue Blainville*<sup>602</sup>. Furthermore institutions like the AEMNAF with a restaurant catering for Muslim dietary requirements certainly encouraged students from the North of Africa, as well as other parts of the Muslim world<sup>603</sup>, to mix within their denominational social circles.

This physical and infrastructural bias towards the mixing of international students was exacerbated by a propensity among some international students to withdraw from French circles, especially those who were more politicised. This sometimes came as a surprise to migrants who expected a greater degree of integration and cultural immersion from their student communities abroad:

‘Before even setting foot on French soil, it appeared to me that Algerians constituted there a separate community, with their cafes, their hotels and their restaurants. I had nevertheless thought that this was only the case for workers. I came to realise that this was the case for all immigrants.’<sup>604</sup>

Europeans were in some cases deliberately excluded from Maghribi student associations like the AEMNAF as a form of retaliatory discrimination. Europeans had their own associations like the UNEF explained Ouazzani, where Muslims were not made to feel welcome<sup>605</sup>. They also wrote in their statutes that naturalised North Africans were not permitted to join<sup>606</sup>, resulting in many Algerian students favouring the AEMA.

The colonial management of intellectual migration from the colonies, especially in the interwar period, further encouraged the isolation of Maghribi students. It was another manifestation of conflicting cultural colonial policy in North Africa discussed in Chapter Four. While proponents of a *conquête morale* like Paul Marty, Lucien Paye and Roger Le Tourneau

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<sup>602</sup> Harbi, *Une vie*, p. 103

<sup>603</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 101

<sup>604</sup> *Ibid.*, p.96

<sup>605</sup> Ouazzani, *Muthakkirat*, Vol. 1, p. 443

<sup>606</sup> *Courneuve*, Série K 15, P13681

were seeking to influence the young Moroccan elite with the power and charm of French civilisation, they also sought to discourage contact with French intellectual circles for fear of political agitation. This, as Ouazzani qualifies in his memoirs, further encouraged Moroccans to socialise with North Africans, Arabs and other 'Orientals'<sup>607</sup>.

After the Second World War, the French authorities came to realise the potentially destabilising impact of such segregation:

'It is my privilege to bring your attention to the material and moral situation in which Moroccan and Tunisian students undertaking their studies in Paris find themselves.

Won over in the most part by nationalist ideologies, these students live at the moment doubled over themselves, interacting seldom with anyone except those Muslim students from the east whose influence can only help develop particularistic sympathies.'<sup>608</sup>

Formal opportunities were thus created for contact and camaraderie between French and North Africans in an attempt to redress this influence:

[...] there is no doubt that the creation of this foyer is in response to a pressing necessity. North African students were left to themselves and returned without having mixed in French life; on the other hand, at the heart of Islamic student associations they established frequent contacts with their Egyptian, Syrian and Lebanese friends; they were thus driven to have greater interest in North African and Middle Eastern politics than they were inclined to French and university life.'<sup>609</sup>

While contact between French and North African students was considered potentially subversive in the interwar years, by 1945 they saw the isolation of North African students as subversive.

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<sup>607</sup> Ouazzani, *Mudhakkirat*, Vol. 1, p. 439

<sup>608</sup> 'Lettre du Directeur du Cité Universitaire M. André Honorat à la Direction d'Afrique-Levant, Sous-direction des Protectorat, 14 June 1947', *Courneuve*, Série M 581, Carton 45, Dossier 10

<sup>609</sup> 'Lettre, Du Directeur de l'Office de Tunisie à Monsieur le Général Mast Résident Général de France en Tunisie', 19 Oct 1945, *Courneuve*, P4062, No. 232, Carton 45, Dossier 6, 10, 11, p. 16

Egyptian students were naturally not affected by this French colonial context. They were by 1914 integrated into the Parisian milieu to a much greater extent than their Maghribi counterparts. This is partly due to the much longer standing nature of the Egyptian Student Missions, being nearly a hundred years ahead of Moroccan student mobility for instance. In the early nineteenth century, organisers of the Egyptian Student Missions feared the potentially subversive Parisian milieu. However by the 1930s, Egyptian students were deliberately encouraged to mix in French milieus. According to the memoirs of Mubarak Zaki, the Egyptian authorities deliberately avoided establishing bespoke infrastructure for Egyptian students to avoid the isolationism experienced by other international students:

‘Once, some [Egyptian students] suggested to Parliament that the Ministry of Education build an “Egyptian house” in Paris’ *Cité Universitaire*, but they said that Egyptians would benefit from circulating in French milieus.’

Since Egypt was not a French colony, the French authorities were also much keener to integrate Egyptians into Parisian life in its pseudo-diplomatic strategy of undermining British influence by forming a Francophile Egyptian elite, as discussed in Chapter Four.

The divergent treatment of Maghribi and Mashreki students in France was keenly felt by Maghribis like Mostefa Lacheraf:

‘It was to be expected that among our Oriental Arab classmates whose countries were more or less sovereign and which had never suffered at home the presence of a ferocious and exploitative colonialism, [...] should react otherwise when faced by certain events which still concerned us Maghribis, colonised or ‘protected’, [...]’.

‘Their fortuitous position, having been the object of esteem on behalf of French embassies in the Mashreq, the bursaries they received from the

French together with a more enticing reception, tended to predispose them in favour of the host nation, of its material civilisation and its people.<sup>610</sup>

The relationship between the sending region and the French authorities therefore was an important determining factor in a migrant's experience of Paris.

The segregation of colonial intellectual circles dissipated slightly in the 1950s and 60s as students from the Arab world were integrated to a greater extent into French scholarship<sup>611</sup> and European politics became more integrated into the global post-colonial political discourse evolving in Paris. Yet for Algerians especially, the radicalisation of nationalist politics aggravated their experience of racism and stigmatisation:

'Our Algerian students, in this post-war [climate] marked heinously by the May massacres in Sétif, Kherrata and Guelma, had nothing and it was very difficult for them to find lodgings. For the most part, they were sympathisers or active militants of the PPA, recently succeeded [...] by the MTLD and therefore suspected, nearly in their entirety, of being "anti-French" nationalists and classed as such'<sup>612</sup>

This narrative of cultural encounters is therefore not linear, nor is it global. There were of course many significant contacts established during this time between French and Maghribis at a personal level, yet they do not reflect the structural circumstances of colonial intellectual migration. The over-arching observation is not that international students, especially from North Africa, made no significant contacts with Europeans; rather that a highly significant element to their experience of Paris was largely independent of Parisians themselves.

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<sup>610</sup> Lacheraf, *Des noms*, pp. 100-101

<sup>611</sup> For more on the integration of Arabic speaking researchers into French academia, see Brisson, T., 'Le savoir de l'autre? Les intellectuels arabes de l'université parisienne (1955-1980): une relecture de l'orientalisme français', *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée*, 125, (July 2009)

<sup>612</sup> Lacheraf, *Des noms*, p. 94

### **Trans-migrant Communities**

Before delving into the relationship between intellectual migration, the rise of national consciousness and transnational identity formation, it is worth explaining how intellectual migration encouraged the formation of transmigrant communities.

The definition of transnational migration has been elaborated by Glick Schiller, Basch and Blanc as ‘the process by which immigrants forge and sustain simultaneous multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement’<sup>613</sup>. Much of the colonial civil society in Paris can be considered as such. Many of the aforementioned student associations received funds from their home societies. Organisations and galas were created in Tunisia and Algeria to raise money for the AEMNAF, intended to create bursaries and encourage further student mobility from North Africa to France<sup>614</sup>. The *Société des Amis des Etudiants*, founded in Tunisia by Doctor Tlatli in 1930 and which Mahmoud el-Materi and Tahar Sfar were active members, raised up to 120,000 francs for this purpose<sup>615</sup>. The funds raised were administered and distributed by the AEMNAF. *L’Association des anciens élèves du college Moulay-Youssef* acted in a similar capacity, encouraging Moroccans to study in France. Through such mechanisms, Moroccan nationalists raised funds and monitored the progress of students as part of their subversive agenda<sup>616</sup>. Many of those in charge of these associations had studied in Paris. These

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<sup>613</sup> Glick Schiller, N., Basch, L., Blanc, C. S., ‘From Immigrant to Transmigrant: Theorizing Transnational Migration’, *Anthropological Quarterly*, 68 : 1 (January 1995), p. 48

<sup>614</sup> ‘Rapport sur l’ Association des Etudiants Musulmans Nord-Africains en France’, 7 June 1933, Sent by the Minister of the Interior to the Minister of Foreign Affairs ; *Courneuve*, Série K 15, P13681, f. 17

<sup>615</sup> *Courneuve*, Série K 15, P13681, f. 112

<sup>616</sup> Ben Barka, *Mon frère*, p. 39

funding bodies were therefore mechanisms of chain migration which inherently 'link together their societies of origin and settlement'<sup>617</sup>.

Many migrant student associations in Paris were also connected to national student associations. The AEMNAF for instance grew out of the AEMAN, founded in 1919 in Algiers. They maintained ties by sharing party literature, as well as organising joint yearly conferences in Tunis, Algiers, Paris and Tetouan<sup>618</sup>. These congresses gathered representatives from the AEMNAF, the AEMNA, as well as the *Association des Ulémas d'Algérie*, the *Khaldunia* and Sadiki College. Such events served as an opportunity to collectively discuss issues affecting students on both sides of the Mediterranean, primarily the provision and quality of education in the north of Africa and assertion of common culture.

The Maghribi intellectual and student milieu in Paris was also directly connected to national political parties, especially after the Second World War. The Neo-Destour, MTLD, UDMA and *Istiqlal* were well represented in the AEMNAF. For instance, the Third AEMNAF conference in Paris had in attendance, in addition to its members, Ferhat Abbas, Messali Hadj and *Istiqlal* representatives Abdeltif Sbihi and Allal al-Fassi<sup>619</sup>. This particular organisation often held receptions for nationalists visiting Paris and other political migrants. In the Moroccan case, Mohamed Hassan Ouazzani, Ahmed Belafrej and Omar Abdeljalil featured heavily at their events. So did Messali Hadj in the interwar years. There were also many student militants in 50s and 60s, including Harbi, Lacheraf and Taleb-Ibrahimi.

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<sup>617</sup> Glick Schiller, Basch and Blanc, 'From Immigrant to Transmigrant', p. 48

<sup>618</sup> The third conference was intended in Fes but was cancelled at the last minute by the colonial authority on the basis of it stirring nationalist activism.

<sup>619</sup> 'Notes relative au IIIème Congrès des Etudiants Musulmans Nord-Africains', *Courneuve*, Série K 15, P13681, f. 48

Secretary-general of the AEMNAF Zidi Chergui housed clandestine MTLD militants such as Mourad Didouche while studying in Paris<sup>620</sup>.

Education was an important theme in nationalist advocacy and a strategy for combatting European colonialism. This rendered students and their organisations, whether politicised or not, important forms of political and cultural resistance. Because many of these institutions were funded and connected to pedagogical and political bodies back home, their committee members, for whom these 'transnational activities' formed 'a central part'<sup>621</sup> of their lives, can be considered transmigrants; as should political militants who conducted their advocacy and militancy in France via its associative culture.

### **Identity Politics**

Glick Schiller, Basch and Blanc also consider that the 'public identities' of transmigrants 'are configured in relationship to more than one nation-state'<sup>622</sup>. Transmigrant communities on Paris' Left Bank had considerable agency in shaping North African discourse on nationality and identity. Their contributions were greatly influenced by the multiplicity of nationalities they encountered in Paris. The global gathering in Paris facilitated colonial elites in aligning themselves and their nationalist movements with representatives of other nations along cultural, religious or racial lines.

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<sup>620</sup> Harbi, *Une vie*, p. 120

<sup>621</sup> Castles, Miller, *The Age of Migration*, p. 32

<sup>622</sup> Glick Schiller, Basch, Blanc, 'From Immigrant to Transmigrant', p. 48

### **Mobility and National Consciousness**

Migration has been attributed by French historian Benjamin Stora to the formation of Algerian national consciousness. Algerian society at the turn of the century was notoriously bent-over itself, closed to the outside world. From the Francised *évolué* to the reformist *ulama*, progressive social and political movements were struggling against this inward turn. Migration and population displacement, primarily to urban centres, is accredited as a major factor in connecting and organising isolated communities into a new 'imagined community'<sup>623</sup>: 'intense social circulation favours the emergence of an Algerian national consciousness'<sup>624</sup>. So were the spaces that gathered displaced peoples. Compared to the 'physical dispersion' and 'state of ignorance' of the peasantry, Algerian *bidonvilles* gathered the 'uprooted masses', providing space to 'strategize national independence'<sup>625</sup>. Urban centres were important spaces in connecting disparate population groups, breaking up those traditional ties that opened individuals up to the possibility of a national collective.

Stora's interpretation of Algerian national identity formation therefore evokes Durkheim's theory regarding the formation of organic social relations in modern industrial societies at the expense of traditional mechanical forms of solidarity<sup>626</sup>; the newly acquired autonomy experienced by migrants and other displaced persons freed individuals up to an imaginary of a wider *algérianité* being constructed by the PPA/MTLD, generating a national consciousness without necessarily 'wiping out regional disparities'<sup>627</sup>. This theory is seconded by Meynier and Koukassis' analysis of Algerian nationalism, considering the destruction of traditional modes of production in the countryside and the resulting loss of

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<sup>623</sup> Anderson, B., *Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*, (London, 2006),

<sup>624</sup> Stora, *Les Sources*, p. 60

<sup>625</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 94

<sup>626</sup> Durkheim, E., *The Division of Labor in Society*, trans. Simpson, G., (Illinois, 1947)

<sup>627</sup> Stora, *Les Sources*, p. 14

‘segmented identities’ as bringing about ‘uniformity’ in identity politics<sup>628</sup>. So Algerian urbanization, while not wholly destroying regional identities, facilitated the promotion of a national ideal and the organisation of a national movement.

This process is discussed by Stora, Meynier and Koukassis in relation to the internal displacement of Algerians. However economic migration to France was also an important factor. Historians Benjamin Stora, Pierre Vermeren and Tayeb Belloula<sup>629</sup> consider Paris as the birth-place of the Algeria nation. Migrants in France according to Mostefa Lacheraf, detached from the day-to-day back home, had the ‘leisure’ to increase their awareness of Algeria’s exploitation, as well as having an added vantage point to ‘confront the facts, to compare and to ward off daily misery through struggle and hope’<sup>630</sup>. Not that every migrant was theorizing the politics of Algerian nationalism. Rather centres of migration, whether Paris, Tunis or Cairo, provided ‘marginal spaces’<sup>631</sup> that helped to make Algerians more receptive to the idea of being connected to a wider imagined community propagated by the PPA/MTLD.

Furthermore, migrants were effective agents in the spread of nationalist propaganda. Few migrant labourers to France settled permanently until towards the end of this period<sup>632</sup>. Intellectual migrants, as previously discussed, were prone to circular forms of migration, returning for the most part to their place of origin. The circular nature of economic and intellectual migration between France and Algeria during this period facilitated the spread of nationalist ideas, especially since migrants enjoyed an elevated social status upon their

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<sup>628</sup> Meynier, G., Koukassis, A., *L’Emir Khaled – Premier Za’im ? Identité algérienne et colonialisme français*, (Paris, 1987), p. 45

<sup>629</sup> Belloula, T., *Les algériens en France – leur passé, leur participation à la lutte de libération nationale, leurs perspectives*, (Alger ?, 1965)

<sup>630</sup> Lacheraf, *Des noms*, p.97

<sup>631</sup> McDougall, *History*, p. 34

<sup>632</sup> Blanchard, Deroo, El-Yazami, Fournié, Manceron, *Le Paris Arabe*, pp. 13-14

return home<sup>633</sup>. It is for this reason that Stora states that 'nationalist militants are [...] migrants, either within their country or between France and Algeria, [...]'.<sup>634</sup>

Migration was important in bringing about Algerian national consciousness, but it was centred to a greater extent on economic, rather than intellectual migration. The greater populist provenance of Algerian national leadership distinguished it from that of its Maghribi counterparts. Bar the occasional student or professional like Abdelmalek Benhabylès, Mostefa Lacheraf, Mabrouk Belhocine and Mohamed Harbi<sup>635</sup>, there were very few intellectual migrants among the Algerian national leadership in France supportive of independence.

The Francised Algerian elite, or *évolués*, represented by the *Fédération des Elus* or the UDMA did play an important role in leading the advocacy tradition in Algeria. However they generally rejected post-colonial ideas regarding independence as a nation-state promoted by the ENA, then PPA/MTLD, until the May 1945 Massacres which, according to Stora, 'converted' many Algerian intellectuals to the cause of independence<sup>636</sup>. Ferhat Abbas, leader of the UDMA published an article in February 1936 entitled '*La France, c'est moi!*'. Despite becoming the President of the GPRA between 1958 and 1961, he declared in this article that he would not die for the Algerian nation because it does not exist<sup>637</sup>.

This division was evident among the student populace. During the interwar period Algerian proponents of independence were according to Fanny Colonna an 'absolute

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<sup>633</sup> Stora, *Les Sources*, p. 125

<sup>634</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61

<sup>635</sup> Stora, *Dictionnaire biographique*

<sup>636</sup> Stora, B., 'Immigrants and Political Activists: Algerian Nationalists in France, 1945-1954', in *French & Algerian Identities from Colonial Times to the Present – a century of interaction*, ed. Hargreaves, A.G., & Hefferman, M., (Lewiston, 1993), p. 52

<sup>637</sup> Meynier, Koulakssis, *L'Emir Khaled*, p. 6

minority' of the Maghribi student milieu<sup>638</sup>. Mohamed Hassan Ouazzani recalls the near total absence of Algerians in the AEMNAF when he was a student. At the third AEMNAF conference in 1933, among the 150 members in attendance there were only seven Algerians<sup>639</sup>. Similarly, Tunisians and Moroccans were hostile to Algerian students' attachment to French language and literature. When student Salah Arzour praised 'the language of Renan and Anatole France', he provoked uproar from Tunisian and Moroccan AEMNAF members<sup>640</sup>.

This discrepancy between the populist and elite positions taken in Algeria towards independence was particularly evident during the Popular Front regarding the Blum-Violette proposal. Algerian intellectual migrants in France and the *Elus* in Algeria were supportive of the Blum-Violette proposal for extending French citizenship to the indigenous elite, while the ENA, as well as Moroccan and Tunisian students in France opposed it because it undermined the idea of Algerian nationality and their objective of political independence. Therefore if international migration was a factor in spreading Algerian national consciousness, in the interwar years it was generally for economic, not intellectual migrants.

Moroccans and Tunisians however had a more substantial pre-colonial notion of nationality than Algeria. The idea of a Moroccan and Tunisian nation was less of an innovation in post-colonial political thought than in the Algerian context. As Abdallah Laroui shows in his study of Moroccan nationalism, the idea of a Moroccan nation is based primarily on pre-colonial structures like the *Maghzen*<sup>641</sup>. Moroccan nationalism since the 1930s has focused on this pre-colonial institution. From demonstrations in the streets of

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<sup>638</sup> Colonna, 'Training the National Elites', p. 291

<sup>639</sup> 'Note relative au III<sup>e</sup>me Congrès des Etudiants Musulmans Nord-Africains', in *Courneuve*, Série K 15, P13681, f. 49

<sup>640</sup> *Courneuve*, Série K 15, P13681, f. 3

<sup>641</sup> Laroui, A., *Les origines sociales et culturelles du nationalisme marocain (1830-1912)*, (Casablanca, 2001)

Fez in 1934<sup>642</sup> to the chanting 'Long live the King, long live the nation!' in Casablanca in 1945<sup>643</sup>, the sultanate has been evoked throughout the Moroccan struggle against European colonialism as the legitimate state. When Muhammad V was deposed and replaced by Moulay Arafa in 1953, it became the cause around which Moroccan nationalists and their supporters in France rallied. His reinstatement, negotiated in Aix-les-Bains in 1955 by the *Istiqlal* signalled the end of France's direct rule in Morocco<sup>644</sup>.

Therefore the idea of a Moroccan nation gathering its populace under the tutelage of a national sovereign was certainly a form of resistance to European colonialism but not an innovation in Moroccan self-identification. There was a pre-existing social contract between Moroccans and the Sultanate that kept being renewed throughout the nationalist movement. The lack of such a political body in Algeria until the War for Independence in 1954 is the reason Meynier and Koukassis are reticent to refer to Algerian identity markers as Algerian nationality, rather than expressions of 'algerianess' until 1954<sup>645</sup>.

Furthermore, there was a pre-existing concept of Moroccan territorial integrity that pre-dated European colonialism, which the division of Morocco into Spanish and French Protectorates was deemed a violation of. The sentiment of Morocco as a territory, rather than symbolic tutelage or primordial identity markers, is evoked by Moroccan anthropologist and activist for women's rights Fatima Mernissi in her memoirs:

'But Morocco, said Father, had existed undivided for centuries, even before Islam came along fourteen hundred years ago. No one ever had heard of a

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<sup>642</sup> Ouazzani, I., *Combats*, tome 1, pp. 41-42 ; Also mentioned by Lacouture, *Cinq Hommes*, p. 187

<sup>643</sup> Lacouture, *Cinq Hommes*, p. 197

<sup>644</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 245

<sup>645</sup> Meynier, Koukassis, *L'Emir Khaled*, p.16

frontier splitting the land in two before. The frontier was an invisible line in the mind of warriors.<sup>646</sup>

In 1956, when Allal al-Fassi returned from exile upon independence, his focus was restoring that territorial integrity. He launched an exhaustive campaign to popularise Morocco's territorial demands, which he claimed at that point only to be a fifth of historical Morocco<sup>647</sup>. Algeria on the other hand is considered by Meynier and Koukassis to have been in a 'pre-state limbo'. Until 1962, Algerian nationality they believed existed in the 'hope of realising a nation'<sup>648</sup>.

Mobility therefore did not generate a Moroccan national consciousness in the same way as it did in Algeria. But it did affect the way in which Moroccan national identity was discussed. A good proportion of early Moroccan nationalists were intellectual migrants to Paris. And although it is said that many of these 'pioneers' of Moroccan nationalism<sup>649</sup> have been forgotten in popular memory<sup>650</sup>, their experiences shaped Moroccan national discourse.

To begin with, they reconceived the idea of Moroccan nationality in a way that was more appropriate for a modern nation-state. This is due in part to their European education and their greater appreciation of the emerging world system of nation-states. Abdallah Laroui notes in his *Crise de l'intellectuel arabe*, only 'intellectuals attached to "modern" values have the vision to rise above parochial identities and to attach themselves to the

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<sup>646</sup> Mernissi, *Dreams of Trespass*, p. 2

<sup>647</sup> Laroui, *Les origines*, p. 12

<sup>648</sup> Meynier, Koukassis, *L'Emir Khaled*, p.15

<sup>649</sup> Term employed by Vermeren to denote the first generation of Moroccan and Tunisian nationalists in *Ecole, Elite et Pouvoir*

<sup>650</sup> Laroui, *Les origines*, p. 11

notion of a modern nation-state'<sup>651</sup>. A similar remark has been made by colonial educationalist Roger Le Tourneau in the Tunisian context:

'Several of them [...] had acquired funding to go undertake a higher education in France, most notably Paris. There they studied and attained their diplomas, but they were also involved in politics, because politics gripped them: they read large quantities of texts from all kinds of provenance, contacted numerous politicians in order to find out what they thought and also to inform them of their situation in Tunisia. [...]. In short, they were new men, animated by a dynamism possessed only by those who rely on themselves to succeed, spurred on by the desire and the need to achieve, bothered less by the scruples and etiquettes of traditional society, people who could not but alter the tone of Tunisian political action.'<sup>652</sup>

But this attachment to the nation as 'the dominant legitimate category of community and its political organisation'<sup>653</sup> goes beyond the creation of modern state infrastructure. It involved an ethno-religious<sup>654</sup> permutation in identity politics that essentialised the definition of membership to the state.

### **Cultural Identity Formation**

In Egypt and the Maghrib, the mobility of the intellectual elite between France and North Africa was important in propagating cultural conceptions of national identity, rather than necessarily state, territorial or imperial definitions of political membership.

Anthropologist Gary Wilder argues that the grouping of communities along ethnic and cultural definitions<sup>655</sup> was a product of international migration and the establishment of

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<sup>651</sup> Eickelman, D. F., *Knowledge and Power in Morocco – The Education of a Twentieth-Century Notable*, (Princeton, 1985), p. 13

<sup>652</sup> Le Tourneau, *Evolution politique*, p. 69

<sup>653</sup> McDougall, 'Introduction', *Nation*, p. 5

<sup>654</sup> Shepard, T., 'Algerian Nationalism, Zionism, and French Laïcité: A History of Ethno-Religious Nationalisms and Decolonization,' *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 45, 445-467, (August 2013)

<sup>655</sup> For more on the formation of Ethnic Groups, see Brubaker, R., 'Ethnicity without groups', *European Journal of Sociology*, 43 : 02, (August 2002)

diasporic communities in metropolitan centres like Paris<sup>656</sup>. Following Hannah Arendt's analysis of the modern nation-state, increased international migration led to a disjuncture in the traditional European understanding of membership to the state, that is to say a disjuncture between the territory, the nation and the state<sup>657</sup>. This has racialized ideas of national membership and generated a more cultural understanding of nationality, contributing to the development of transnational political identities.

The idea of an emotional cultural identity being distinct from an individual's political relationship with the state is expressed by Alfred Zimmern in his essay 'Nationality and Government'. As a British Jew, he distinguished his emotive cultural affinity to Zionism from his political commitment to the British state. :

'It is clear that there is a fundamental difference between the two conceptions. Nationality, like religion, is subjective; Statehood is objective. Nationality is a condition of mind; Statehood is a condition in law. Nationality is a spiritual possession; Statehood is an enforceable obligation. Nationality is a way of feeling, thinking and living; Statehood is a condition inseparable from all civilised ways of living.'<sup>658</sup>

Zimmern's understanding of nationality is based on culture, or as often expressed in the Tunisian context, collective personality. In the modern nation-state system of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, membership to a state is defined increasingly by nationality; an individual's cultural personality must fit with the official collective personality. This permutation is described as highly violent, destructive and potentially totalitarian by the likes of Hannah Arendt and Mark Levene<sup>659</sup>.

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<sup>656</sup> Wilder, *The Imperial Nation-State*, p. 19

<sup>657</sup> Arendt, H., *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, (New York, 2004), pp. 185-290

<sup>658</sup> Zimmern, A., *Nationality & Government with other war-time essays*, (London, 1919), p. 52

<sup>659</sup> Levene, M., *Genocide in the age of the nation state, Vol. 1, The Meaning of Genocide*, (London, 2005), pp. 17-18

The impact of intellectual migration to Paris on the cultural and racial identification of nationality has been studied in relation to Pan-Africanism and the *Négritude* movement<sup>660</sup>. In exploring Paris' 'alternative public sphere', Gary Wilder shows how agents of a colonial diasporic civil society created transnational networks which conferred the self from the European other:

'[...] expatriate Africans and Antilleans participated in metropolitan French civil society and constituted an alternative black public sphere through which they raised questions about republicanism, nationality, and rights as they intersected with colonialism, culture, and racism.'<sup>661</sup>

Jennifer Boittin emphasises the importance of 'autonomous spaces' for migrants such as Aimé Césaire and Lamine Senghor in constructing transnational identities: 'Cities like Paris provided opportunities for elites from around the world to meet and act together; physical localities that created discursive spaces, providing a platform for dialogue and opposition. In these spaces they explored what it meant to be Black in a global context, through shared experience (generally of racism) as well as a common relationship to African culture.'

The same processes can be seen in relation to North Africans and Arabic speakers in Paris. North Africa, Egypt included, was traditionally ethnically and religiously diverse composite regions. Yet the cultural definition of national identity was increasingly expressed through the growing emphasis on the region's Arab and Muslim qualities. In the physical spaces they created in Paris and through the literature they produced and disseminated, they created an internal discourse on what it meant to be North African.

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<sup>660</sup> Boittin, *Colonial Metropolis*; Wilder, *The Imperial Nation-State*; Dewitte, P., 'Intellectuels et étudiants africains à Paris à la veille des indépendances (1945-1960)', in *Le Paris Des Étrangers Depuis 1945*, ed., Marès, A., Milza, P., (Paris, 1995), pp. 319-342; *Etudiants Africains en France (1951-2001), Cinquante ans de relations France-Afrique – Quel Avenir*, ed. Sot M., (Paris, 2002)

<sup>661</sup> Wilder, *The Imperial Nation-State*, p. 5

### **Nationality by Denomination**

As early as the interwar period, the previously mentioned associations of mutual aid, led primarily by Moroccans and Tunisians, stressed their common Arabic and Islamic heritage. Their activities strengthened ethno-religious conceptions of North African identity and became a medium through which the unity of North African nationalist efforts was negotiated.

The common identification of students from Muslim majority countries like those in the north of Africa was noticeable through the services and functions of the AEMNAF at its premises at 115, *Boulevard Saint-Michel*. Its canteen catering to Muslim dietary requirements gathered students from across the Muslim world, including Egypt and the Levant<sup>662</sup>. Its cultural activities, from lectures to the celebration of religious festivals<sup>663</sup>, also emphasised the common Islamic and Arab heritage of its members. Conversely, there is to be no mention of their Berber or Judaic heritage in those regions.

Every Monday evening, a student-led lecture was organised, usually on the topic of Arabic or Muslim poets such as Oualay Eddine Yakan and Omar Ibn Abi Rabia<sup>664</sup>. Malek Bennabi delivered a lecture on the ontological topic 'Why we are Muslims?'<sup>665</sup>. The Tunisian medical student Ahmed Ben Milad in 1932 spoke of doctors in Arab history who had influenced European medicine, such as Ibn al-Jazzar<sup>666</sup>.

The common identification of Paris' migrant Muslim student community is noted by Malek Bennabi in his memoirs, who considered them all manifestations of pan-Islamism:

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<sup>662</sup> Harbi, *Une vie*, p.101

<sup>663</sup> 'Celebration of Eid el-Kebir on the 5 April 1933', *Courneuve*, Série K 15, P13681, p. 21

<sup>664</sup> Bulletin Trimestriel, April, May, June, 1933, *Courneuve*, Série K 15, P13681, pp. 20-21

<sup>665</sup> Bennabi, *Mudhakkirat*, p. 237

<sup>666</sup> Bulletin Trimestriel, April, May, June, 1933, *Courneuve*, Série K 15, P13681, p. 21

'[...] calls in the Latin Quarter to Reformism, Wahhabism and Maghribi Unity were any of the different slogans grouped under the banner of Islamic unity.'<sup>667</sup>

Bennabi's Reformist background may have contributed to his summarising the grouping of transmigrant communities as pan-Islamic in the sense of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani's firm bond (*al-'urwa al-wuthqa*) between Muslims and Islamic solidarity (*'assabiya*) against foreign aggression<sup>668</sup>. However migrants in Paris had already moved away from the Pan-Islamic formulations of the late Ottoman era. The colonial authorities naturally described much of this primordial interest in Islamic cultural heritage as expressions of Neo-Wahhabism and Pan-Islamism. But these institutions were not seeking the political unity of all Muslims under an Islamic State. As Mohamed Harbi noted regarding the AEMNAF, they were not trying to establish an 'Islamic bloc'<sup>669</sup>. It was rather an emotional undercurrent based upon common Islamic heritage connecting disparate political expressions among intellectual migrants through common cultural symbolism of the past. They were recovering 'an unchanged, authentic self-hood'<sup>670</sup>. In the face of the world's multiple cultures, they were grouping themselves along a point of common identification, in this case religious culture.

The act of recovering a primordial national character rendered associations like the AEMNAF, to employ Rogers Brubaker's terminology, ethno-political entrepreneurs. In their conference and bulletins, they promoted the instruction of Arabic, Islam and the history of Islamic civilisation within a modern educational framework:

'In the north of Africa, we can see a loosening of moral ties between inhabitants .... The individual has lost his sense of distinction, and has come to no longer feel the profound reasons behind the unity which binds him to other individuals of the nation.'

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<sup>667</sup> Bennabi, *Mudhakkirat*, p. 228

<sup>668</sup> Keddie, N., R., *Sayyid Jamāl ad-Dīn "al-Afghānī" : a political biography*, (Berkeley, 1972), p. 184

<sup>669</sup> Harbi, *Une vie*, p. 101

<sup>670</sup> McDougall, *History*, p. 25

'[...] the people are immersed in ignorance. Of their religion, their language and their history: everyone knows these are the three pillars upon which national education is formed.'<sup>671</sup>

In doing so, they were defining the foundations of nationalist education.

Yet culturally essentialist definitions of Maghribi identity did not originate in Paris. The Arabisation and Islamisation of nationalist politics began independently in the Maghrib, largely in response to French colonial policy. Despite having officially quite distinct strands of colonial policy, Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria experienced similar cultural infractions: the Francisation of the ruling class and the attack of Islam in the public sphere (in Algeria with the *code de l'indigénat*, also in the private sphere). The defence of Arab-Islamic values and traditions formed part of their cultural resistance<sup>672</sup>.

The Arabisation and Islamisation of Maghribi national identity is significant in a region which has historically been ethnically and denominationally plural. The Berber or Amazigh communities in the South of Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria's Kabylia have long been accepted sections of North Africa's demographic under the Ottoman Empire. While the Sultan has always been regarded the defender of Islam in Morocco, Jewish and Arab Christian communities had never been so excluded from the national dialogue as they were upon independence<sup>673</sup>.

French colonial policy was partly responsible for the disintegration of national cohesion. The Berber Dahir in Morocco is testament to the 'divide and conquer' mentality

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<sup>671</sup> Liauzu, *Aux origines*, p. 159 ; note Liauzu writes 'fifth conference' in 1933 but it is actually the third, held in Paris after that scheduled in Fes was prevented from taking place by the Moroccan authorities.

<sup>672</sup> For more on forms cultural resistance in the Maghreb, see *Pratiques et résistance culturelles au Maghreb*, ed. Sraieb, N., (Paris, 1992)

<sup>673</sup> Elie Cohen-Hadria also notes in his memoirs how violence towards Jews in Tunisia was a modern development, stirred often by European colonialists, in Cohen-Hadria, *Du Protectorat français*, p. 20; For more on the place of Moroccan Jewish heritage in Moroccan memory, see chapter 5 in Boum, A., *Memories of absence: how Muslims remember Jews in Morocco*, (Stanford, 2013), p. 111

of the French authorities, seeking to dispense Berbers from Islamic jurisdiction<sup>674</sup>. Furthermore, the status of many Israelite North Africans as citizens rather than subjects of the French Imperial Nation-State helped to turn them 'French' in the eyes of Arab Muslim subjects, despite their common ancestral origins.

Many Jewish North Africans opted for French nationality. In Tunisia, especially after the enactment of the 8th November 1921 decree, then the Morinaud Law of 1923, a much larger proportion of Tunisian Jews applied for French citizenship than Tunisian Muslims<sup>675</sup>. Successful applicants tended to be those who had received modern educations, as did socialist Elie Cohen-Hadria and anti-colonial defence lawyer Gisèle Halimi. And while Halimi still identified herself heavily with Tunisia, Eli-Cohen much like Ferhat Abbas in 1936 did not believe in the idea of a Tunisian nation: 'I did not feel that, in receiving French nationality, I was in anyway betraying the Tunisian nation since I was not really conscious of the existence of a Tunisian nation'<sup>676</sup>.

But not all Tunisian Jews felt at home in France either, especially as anti-Semitism was rife in the 30s and 40s. Exclusion from Tunisian nationality was just another contributing factor to their global sense of alienation. This was so for novelist Albert Memmi, whose isolation was described by Camus in the preface to Memmi's novel *La statue de sel*:

'He is Jewish (with a Berber mother, which doesn't simplify matters) and Tunisian subject, [...]. Yet he is not really Tunisian, as the Arab pogroms massacring Jews demonstrates. He is of French culture [...]. Yet Vichy France

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<sup>674</sup> Lacouture, *Cinq hommes*, p. 186

<sup>675</sup> Perkins, K. J., *A History of Modern Tunisia*, (Cambridge, 2014), p.89

<sup>676</sup> Cohen-Hadria, *Du Protectorat français*, p. 26

hands him over to the Germans and the Free French, on the day he seeks to enlist with them, ask him to change the Judaic ring to his name'<sup>677</sup>.

So while Memmi did not reject his Tunisian identity, he did not feel included in Tunisian national discourse; he was 'Tunisian but Jewish, that is to say politically and socially excluded [...]'<sup>678</sup>.

Autochthones in Algeria, unlike the Protectorates, were subject to the *code de l'indigénat*, rendering them French subjects, rather than French citizens until 1947. However in October 1870, Algerian Jews were offered French citizenship *en masse* with the Crémieux Decree, thereby emancipating them into the colonial regime<sup>679</sup>. This effectively stripped Algerian Jews of their indigenous quality in the eyes of the nationalist movement. Thus religion rather than race or origins became the principal determining factor of ones' indigenous status. This is reflected by the fact that Kabylians such as Fadhma Amrouche, mother of novelist Taos Amrouche and poet Jean Amrouche, felt estranged from her home community because she converted to Catholicism, despite the fact that she and her children were important figures in preserving Kabilian heritage. Upon conversion, she was ostracised by both local Berber and Arab communities because she had the freedom to travel without veil or male chaperone. For that reason she preferred to reside in European districts when she moved to Tunisia for her husband's work, full usually of Italian or Maltese migrants<sup>680</sup>.

All of this helped to contribute to the perception that the *indigène* was synonymous with Muslim. This process is described by Meynier and Koukassis as nationality formed by

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<sup>677</sup> Camus, A., 'Préface', in Memmi, *La statue de sel*, p. 9

<sup>678</sup> Memmi, *La statue de sel*, p. 364

<sup>679</sup> Uran, S., 'Crémieux Decree', *Encyclopedia of Jews in the Islamic World*, Ed. Stillman, N. A., Brill Online, accessed 29 September 2015 at [http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopedia-of-jews-in-the-islamic-world/cremieux-decree-COM\\_0005900](http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopedia-of-jews-in-the-islamic-world/cremieux-decree-COM_0005900)

<sup>680</sup> Amrouche, F. A. M., *Histoire de ma vie*, (Paris, 1968), p. 140

‘the subjectivity of a society’ and ‘consciousness of its specificity’<sup>681</sup>. That is not to say that the experience of colonialism eliminated original ethnic identities. Despite her French naturalisation, conversion to Catholicism and living in European districts, Fadhma Amrouche still proclaimed herself Kabyle to the very end:

‘I forever remained “the Kabyle”’: never, despite the forty years I spent in Tunisia, despite my essentially French education, never could I associate myself intimately with the French, nor the Arabs. I remained, always, eternally exiled, she who never felt at home anywhere.’<sup>682</sup>

Rather colonial policy regarding the indigenous status of French subjects in Algeria contributed to a growing cultural identification of Algerianness that increasingly excluded Christians and Jews, regardless of whether they were ethnically and actually autochthones.

The local context was important in North African identity formation. But so was the international mobility of the intellectual elite. They formalised the religious basis for national membership through the institutions they created abroad. A poignant case is the creation of the UGEMA in 1955. By the 1950s, the AEMNAF was losing its prominent position among Maghribi student circles in France in favour of general national student associations, such as the UGET and UNEM. Algerian students wanted to do the same. Many, including Mohammed Harbi, wanted to create a general association of Algerian students, including Jewish and European Algerians supportive of independence. These proponents established the *Association des Etudiants Algériens de Paris* in 1953<sup>683</sup>. However others wanted to establish a more exclusionary body which defined their Algerianness through their Muslim identity. These included Ahmed Taleb-Ibrahimi, Amir Benïssa and Belaïd Abdelsslam. After lengthy deliberation, the UGEMA was formed in July

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<sup>681</sup> Meynier, Koulakssis, *L’Emir Khaled*, p. 15

<sup>682</sup> Amrouche, *Histoire*, p. 194

<sup>683</sup> Harbi, *Une vie*, 106

1955 by Algerian students who according to Harbi were ‘partisans of a Muslim-Arab Algerian nation’<sup>684</sup>.

The idea was supposedly to establish Algerian resistance to French colonialism under Muslim auspices, with the intention of dispensing of its religious criteria upon independence. The UGEMA’s first president Ahmed Taleb-Ibrahimi notes in his memoirs that the ‘Muslim’ auspices was not meant to represent religious denomination but to indicate that Algeria belonged to an Islamic cultural sphere and civilization<sup>685</sup>, echoing the idea that ‘indigenous’ in Algeria was synonymous to ‘Muslim’.

Therefore Algerian intellectual migrants both reflected and contributed to the cultural essentialisation or ‘cultural fundamentalism’ of the Algerian national movement<sup>686</sup>. Intellectual migrants to France had relatively greater freedom in which to carry out these forms of cultural resistance. Being in Paris and exposed to multiple cultures generated a reaction in the face of such potential cultural alienation. As Harbi noted among the economic migrant community in France, migrants were often more concerned about ‘conserving their identity markers’ than non-migrants<sup>687</sup>. Fanny Colonna makes a similar point about Mouloud Mammeri, Paris and his equally ‘distorting and essentialist’<sup>688</sup> Berberist identity<sup>689</sup>. In relation to the globe’s kaleidoscope of cultures and ethnicity, individuals and groups could situate themselves within both narrower and wider cultural spheres.

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<sup>684</sup> Ibid., p. 155

<sup>685</sup> Taleb-Ibrahimi, *Mémoires*, p.92

<sup>686</sup> Conrad, S., Sachsenmaier, D., ‘Introduction’, in *Competing Visions of World Order – Global Moment and Movements 1880s-1930s*, (New York, 2007), p. 8

<sup>687</sup> Harbi, *Une vie*, p. 96

<sup>688</sup> McDougall, J., ‘Dream of Exile, Promise of Home: Language, Education, and Arabism in Algeria’, *International Journal Middle East Studies*, 43, (2011), p. 252

<sup>689</sup> Colonna, F., ‘The Nation’s “Unknowing Other”: Three Intellectuals and the Culture(s) of Being Algerian, or the Impossibility of Subaltern Studies in Algeria’, *The Journal of North African Studies*, 8:1, p. 161

### **Arab Nationalism and Maghribi Unity**

Paris was also an important centre for Arab Nationalism and Maghribi Unity, as was Cairo, Algiers, Tunis<sup>690</sup>, Geneva, Berlin and Beirut. The capital was referred to by Pascale Blanchard as, in the 1930s at least, being ‘without doubt one of the capitals of Arab nationalism’<sup>691</sup>. As Thomas Brisson points out, important polemicists of Arab nationalism and Ba’athism in Syria, Michel Aflaq and Zaki al-Arsouzi, not only studied in Paris but formulated many of their ideas there<sup>692</sup>. North African migrants in Paris could travel easily to Geneva which, due to the presence of Shakib Arslan and the *Delegation Syrio-Palestinien*, was another centre of Arab nationalism in Europe. The delegation also made regular visits to Paris, where it was received by North African associations such as the AEMNAF and the ENA.

Egyptian and Machreki students in Paris influenced Arab nationalism in the Maghrib<sup>693</sup>. Paris hosted in 1913 the First Arab Congress at the *Société Géographique* in the Latin Quarter. A reception was organised in 1946 by the AEMNAF in honour of the arrival of UNESCO delegates from Iraq, Iran, Syria and Egypt to Paris. There were over 300 students in attendances, as well as Omar Abdeljalil, Messali Hadj, the Minister of Lebanon in Paris and the Egyptian Minister of Education. The aforementioned *Association des étudiants arabes*, founded 1936, had among its Maghribi members Ouazzani, Lacheraf and Mohammed Masmoudi. The appeal of these congregations was an emotional, rather than political basis

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<sup>690</sup> James McDougall looks at transnational identity formation among Algerian students in Tunis’ Zaituna university in ‘Dream of Exile’

<sup>691</sup> Blanchard, Deroo, El-Yazami, Fournié, Manceron, *Le Paris Arabe*, p. 12

<sup>692</sup> Brisson, *Les Intellectuels arabes en France*, p. 31

<sup>693</sup> Blanchard, Deroo, El-Yazami, Fournié, Manceron, *Le Paris Arabe*, p.12

for alignment. Its members instead of seeking to form an Arab state, grouped together based on their sharing 'common values':

'It consisted of regular, fraternal meetings which, given the chasm resulting from political engagement and active militancy in sectors that did not oppose each other, but were different, became eventually relatively conformist, without diminishing however the will to unite, to defend together certain common values.'<sup>694</sup>

These kinds of meetings and networks could not have taken place in the Maghrib itself. The Residency-General in Morocco prevented an AEMNAF conference in 1934 from taking place in Fez for fear of cultural and political subversion. Shakib Arslan was certainly prohibited from entering French territories in the north of Africa. But they did take place in Egypt, which took a leading role in Arab nationalism, especially under Nasser. Cairo became the headquarters of the Arab League in 1945. According to Mostefa Lacheraf, the idea of Arab Unity had considerable currency in the immediate post-war period for intellectual migrants, 'exiled in this hostile Parisian milieu'<sup>695</sup>. By the 60s, Paris lost its significance as a centre of Arab unity in favour of Cairo. Nevertheless Paris, Cairo, like other 'marginal spaces', were places where North Africans could develop 'relationships to their own homes and homelands through their experiences and perceptions of other spaces and places, within wider regional and global contexts'<sup>696</sup>.

Largely connected to Arab nationalism were sentiments of Maghribi unity, both in the cultural sense and in their common experience of and struggle against French colonialism. Despite the creation of a common economic zone, the Arab Maghrib Union in February 1989, sentiments of Maghribi Unity never really formally materialised into an effective movement. It remained the intellectual ideal of a few 1970s and 80s North African

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<sup>694</sup> Lacheraf, *Des noms*, p.99

<sup>695</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 100

<sup>696</sup> McDougall, 'Introduction', in *Nation*, p. 7

writers<sup>697</sup>. Yet the sentiment of a Pan-Maghribi cultural identity was rooted in the networks that were established during the period of this study in Paris, Algiers, Tunis and Cairo<sup>698</sup>.

Since the interwar period, North African students in Paris expressed their fraternity through the associations they created. The aim of the third AEMNA conference held in Paris was to promote a fraternal community among Maghribi states based on common cultural heritage and attachment:

[...] to give birth to a consciousness of our national unity in North Africa, unity which is founded on our unified spirit, our single religion and our common sentiments. And woe who say that we have created a fictitious unity... We are rekindling an ancient unity, which has been recorded in history and for which we are responsible [...].<sup>699</sup>

The ambition of promoting Maghribi Unity was further emphasised by the tricoloured flag that was erected at the conference, combining the colours of each constituent state; green for Tunisia, white for Algeria and red for Morocco.

Some members of the AEMNAF expressed a deep attachment to the ideas of Maghribi Unity in their memoirs:

‘The newly created Committee<sup>700</sup> is a premonition of the new era ahead of us. The idea of North Africa was in the air, for the first time it has been cemented by the creation of this Committee. That the Government in metropole has understood this is a singular territory to defend, will the three peoples of Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco come to realise that they too have the same interests to preserve and that under their three separate denominations, they constitute a same and single populace: the North Africa peoples, the one and the same nation, the North African Nation, an integral part of the bigger Arab Nation and the even vaster Islamic family? And since it is our coloniser who has created, for their own purposes, the North African appellation, let us make use of this appellation to serve our own needs, by multiplying our contacts in every domain, in forging closer relations, in strengthening our ties

<sup>697</sup> Stora, B., *Algérie, Maroc: histoires parallèles, destins croisés*, (Paris, 2002), p. 31

<sup>698</sup> Pervillé, *Étudiants*, p. 97

<sup>699</sup> Liauzu, *Aux origines*, p.160

<sup>700</sup> ‘Haut Comité méditerranéen et de l’Afrique du Nord’ was created in 1935, *Présence française outre-mer (XVI-XXIe siècles), Tome I*, ed. Bonnichon, P., Gény, P., Nemo, J., (Asom, 2012), p. 419

through reciprocal mutual aid, public works, assistance, common faith and intimate conviction that we all need to defend the same ideals and the same patrimony.

Tunisia – Algeria – Morocco. Factions of the same whole, parts of the same organism, vast territories swept by the same historical tides, which have been trampled over time by the same races, moulded by the same culture, which are currently subjected to the same yoke.<sup>701</sup>

The author of this passage, Tahar Sfar, did have internationalist leanings which most likely made him more receptive to political identities that transcended traditional territorial boundaries. Nevertheless the idea of transnational identity and unity seemed to have considerable currency at the time in giving the intellectual elite a sense of belonging to a cultural sphere beyond European empires.

Sentiments of Maghribi Unity appear to have been the preserve of the intellectual elites. According to French security records, there was conversely much antipathy among North African factory workers of different nationalities:

‘If Maghribi students often feel a sense of solidarity in regards to their culture and common destiny, willingly interacting according to their ideological affinities, the climate is different among employees and traders.’<sup>702</sup>

Messali Hadj had noted in his memoirs that when he first moved to Paris as a manual worker, Algerian workers socialised among themselves, often with people from the same village back home<sup>703</sup>. This further emphasises how important North African student associations were in fostering fraternal relations and overcoming instinctive suspicions and segregation.

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<sup>701</sup> Sfar, *Journal*, pp. 51-52

<sup>702</sup> ‘Documentation Préfecture de Police; b) La Communauté Algérienne du Département de la Seine (Préfecture de Police – Direction des renseignements généraux et des jeux – Ministère de L’intérieur’, 21 Juin 1965, AN, Paris, F 1a 5016, p. 91

<sup>703</sup> Messali Hadj explains how young Tlemcenians used to always gather together in the ‘café de Mme Baucha’, Boulevard Diderot; Hadj, *Les mémoires*, p. 132

But while some of North Africa's intellectual elite expressed the ideas of Maghribi Unity in the emotional sense of cultural nationality, it was primarily manifested through mechanisms of common struggle against colonialism. In Paris, a number of Tunisian students approached Messali Hadj at an AEMNAF event asking him to represent the Tunisian nationalist movement during Bourguiba's exile:

'We consider you our chief and you may, in the future, speak as much on behalf of Tunisia as Algeria. We could not have a better leader, as ours: Bourguiba and Moncel Bey, are absent.'

'Bourguiba's brother (22 years) immediately asked Messali to represent Tunisia [...]: We give you free rein for the future, he said, as we know you. We know that "*L'Etoile Nord-Africaine*" that you founded consists of Moroccans, Tunisians and Algerians, united fraternally. We request the regrouping of this association.'<sup>704</sup>

The political expediency of Maghribi Unity resulted in the creation of the *Congrès Nord Africain* in Cairo in February 1947. This in turn resulted in the creation of the *Bureau du Maghreb* by Salah Ben Youssef, Rachid Driss and Allal al-Fassi. Abd el Krim el Khattabi, hero of the Rif Wars and recently escaped from exile, was designated president of the *Comité de Libération du Maghreb Arabe* and became the emblem of resistance to all Maghribi nationalists<sup>705</sup>. This sentiment culminated in the *Pacte Nord-Africain*, signed by all North African nationalist parties in Paris on the 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1952. This pact was followed by the creation of a Committee of North African Union and Action<sup>706</sup>.

Structurally, the idea of Maghribi Unity was a manifestation of 'the nation's forcible integration into, and negotiation of positions within, different regional and global

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<sup>704</sup> 'Copy of a report to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 14 February 1947 ; based on description of events in Moroccan Arabic journal 'El Alam', published in Rabat', *Courneuve*, Série M 581, Carton 45, Dossier 10, pp. 2-3

<sup>705</sup> Stora, *Algérie, Maroc*, p. 42

<sup>706</sup> Ouazzani, I.M.H., *Entretiens*, p. 67

systems'<sup>707</sup>. It acquired its political currency as a strategic political association, serving the common interests of North Africans in their nationalist struggle. Like Arab nationalism, it was an ideological and practical realignment of nations. It was a strategy and a mentality of decolonisation.

Upon independence, Maghribi states tended to abandon their commitments to each other. Morocco's Sultan did lend his private plane for FLN leaders in 1956, which was then intercepted by the French. However Mostefa Lacheraf in the lead up to that meeting noted the King's reluctance to compromise his 'policy of cooperation with France' in favour of supporting the FLN<sup>708</sup>.

Algeria's GPRA headquarters were in Tunis between 1958 and 1962. However in his negotiation of political autonomy, Bourguiba abandoned Tunisia's position within the Arab bloc, a move opposed by nationalist leaders such as Salah Ben Youssef who felt this was a betrayal of the common struggle of Arab nations. Ouazzani expressed similar sentiments when Belafrej stated in an interview with *Le Monde* in 1954 that Morocco would consider joining the *Union Française* upon independence; according to Ouazzani this was in violation of the Committee for the Liberation of the Arab Maghrib<sup>709</sup>. Gisèle Halimi, when trying to petition Bourguiba in favour of Messali Hadj, was shut down by the newly instated president, shouting: 'That's enough of Algeria! ... After all, you're Tunisian, aren't you?'<sup>710</sup> Therefore the idea of Maghribi unity did not sufficiently capture the hearts of North Africans to survive past its political exigency. It remained ultimately a sentiment of mutual

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<sup>707</sup> McDougall, 'Introduction', *Nation*, p. 5

<sup>708</sup> Stora, *Algérie, Maroc*, p. 57

<sup>709</sup> Ouazzani, I.M.H., *Entretiens*, p. 86

<sup>710</sup> Halimi, *Milk*, pp. 187-188

identification for the cosmopolitan elite for whom cities like Paris provided a space for interaction, discourse and collective action.

Global interaction was a major contributing factor to formalising transnational identities based on common culture, religion, ethnicity and race. It provided an environment for North Africans and Muslims in general to relate their understanding of themselves to the European, Asian or African other. It strengthened this association by providing circumstances in which these networks became advantageous and provided opportunities for collective action which reaffirmed and strengthened these transnational ties. Paris and its global community of students, political actors and intellectuals offered young North Africans a 'door to the world':

'[...] in our hearts, going to France was simply opening the door to the world, as in Algeria the doors were closed.'

'Deep down, we only went to Paris in order to discover other worlds. Prospects of exploration and exciting adventure loomed before us.'<sup>711</sup>

Though the stage for those encounters was European, the cultural encounters affecting change were global.

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<sup>711</sup> Bennabi, *Mémoires*, p. 120

## Chapter Eight – The Anti-colonial Metropolis

The opportunity for global encounters in metropolitan centres like Paris was a major factor in decolonisation. Through regular contacts in urban metropolises, the social elite from colonised societies became increasingly aware of the phenomenon of colonialism, the common experience of colonised societies, and came to create what could be considered as a community of the oppressed.

### **Meeting the Post-colonial Elite**

As such a high proportion of intellectual migrants between 1914 and 1962 were to take important positions in their countries' political, economic and cultural leadership, Paris at this time was an important space to meet the future leaders of the post-colonial world. The presence of notable individuals in a populated city or infrastructure of higher education does not guarantee the establishment of meaningful contacts between them, let alone a degree of influence or collaboration. Yet because of the student associations in Paris, the 'alternative public sphere' described by Gary Wilder and the political activism in the French capital meant that, during this period in question, there was a high level of interaction between individuals who were to become of historical note.

Despite having established important connections with French and Spanish socialists, Mohamed Hassan Ouazzani emphasises how it was the opportunity to mix and engage with fellow North-African, Arab, and other international or Oriental students in Paris that really affected the decolonisation movement:

'That cohort had seen in Paris during their studies a great many Tunisian and Oriental students who too had achieved great ends in the liberation of their [respective] regions as political scientists or in the area of governance. People like Habib Bourguiba, Mongi Slim, al-Hédi Nouria and Salah Ben Youssef from Tunis, and the Egyptian Doctor Muhammad Salah Eddine<sup>712</sup> and the Lebanese Takieddin al-Solh<sup>713</sup>. People like Munir al-Ajlani<sup>714</sup>, Michel Aflaq<sup>715</sup>, founder of the Arab Ba'ath, and Farid Zayn al-Din<sup>716</sup>, all from Syria, among others who excelled after their return to their homelands in a variety of domains: ministries, diplomacy, professorships and political leadership. That generation had been in the Arab nation a generation of renaissance, and nationalism, in a struggle on the path to freedom and independence.'<sup>717</sup>

Many of the Arab nationalists listed in this extract helped Ouazzani to secure the support of Arab nations at the UN and other meetings of the 'international community' in the 1950s for the Moroccan nationalist cause<sup>718</sup>.

Figures like Ahmed Belafrej, Dr Ahmed Ben Milad, Messali Hadj, Hédi Nouria, Salah Ben Youssef, Slimane ben Slimane and Farid Zayn al-Din appear frequently in student memoirs during the interwar period. They were a prominent feature of the active student milieu. They are all cited in Malek Bennabi's memoirs<sup>719</sup>, as are the Algerian Mohammed al-Aziz Kessous and the Moroccan Habib Thameur, due to Bennabi's position as secretary of the AEMNAF in the academic year of 1932-1933<sup>720</sup>. This is not significant to the political history of North Africa because Malek Bennabi was not a notable figure in the Algerian War for Independence, being highly critical of the FLN<sup>721</sup>. But his citing these names in his memoirs reasserts how institutions like the AEMNAF were crucial in putting nationalists and notable figures in meaningful contact with each other as students, contacts that were often

<sup>712</sup> Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs 1950-1952

<sup>713</sup> Prime Minister of Lebanon 1973-1974 and 1980

<sup>714</sup> Appointed Syrian Minister of Education in 1947

<sup>715</sup> Founder of the Ba'ath movement and fervent Pan-Arabist

<sup>716</sup> Ambassador of Syria to the United States – 1952-1957

<sup>717</sup> Ouazzani, *Mudhakkirat*, Vol 1, pp. 451-452

<sup>718</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 442

<sup>719</sup> All these names also appear in Malek Bennabi's memoirs, *Muthakkirat*, p. 228, p. 238, pp. 250-251

<sup>720</sup> 'Rapport sur l' Association des Etudiants Musulmans Nord-Africains en France', 7 June 1933, Sent by the Minister of the Interior to the Minister of Foreign Affairs ; *Courneuve*, Série K 15, P13681, f. 17

<sup>721</sup> Sellam, 'Le FLN vu par l'écrivain Malek Bennabi', p. 137

repeated through their reoccurring visits to Paris and due to the transmigrant quality of these institutions.

According to Messali Hadj, the meeting of fellow nationalist militants was key to establishing political solidarity between national liberation movements:

‘All my encounters, thanks to the Emir [Shakib Arslan], with Sayed Ziaddine, former Prime Minister of Iran, and Nouri Saïd, Prime Minister of Iraq, or with the Moroccan Omar Ben Abdeljelil proved to me that North Africans and Orientals wanted to help each other’<sup>722</sup>.

These connections intellectually and materially helped to establish a sense of common objective and struggle among separate revolutionary movements.

These types of encounters continued to take place after the Second World War. Mostefa Lacheraf notes how in Paris he had the opportunity to meet, of course, Messali Hadj, but also Aderrahman Badawi and Iraqi academic and Minister Abdeljabbair Joumard<sup>723</sup>. Badawi recalls meeting Younis Bahri, the Iraqi Pan-Arab broadcaster and journalist who ran the Istiqlal paper *Al-Arab*<sup>724</sup> destined for Moroccans in Europe<sup>725</sup>. As a notable ‘Arab existentialist’<sup>726</sup>, Badawi knew Paris was a centre of French philosophy. Yet in his memoirs he appears more struck by the gathering of the ‘Third-World’s’ future leaders:

‘[...] in *Café Dupont* I got to know some Arab students who were to be politically engaged in their country: among the Tunisians were Chedli Klibi, who became Minister of Culture in Tunisia and then Secretary-General of the Arab League after its headquarters were relocated to Tunis in 1970; and Ahmed Ben Salah who became Minister of Finance [...]; and Mahmoud Messadi, the playwright and Minister of Education; and among the Marakeshies: Abdallah Ibrahim who became Prime Minister – as well as a large number

<sup>722</sup> Hadj, *Les mémoires*, p. 216

<sup>723</sup> Lacheraf, *Des noms*, p. 103

<sup>724</sup> Badawi, *Sirat Hayati*, Vol. 1, p. 196

<sup>725</sup> ‘Renseignements du Ministère de l’Intérieur à M. le Ministre des Affaires Etrangère, direction Afrique-Levant’; 28 November 1947’, *Courneuve*, Série M 581, Carton 45, Dossier 10

<sup>726</sup> Self-coined term, justified in Badawi’s *Quelques figures et thèmes de la philosophie islamique*, (Paris, 1979), cited in Lacheraf, *Des noms*, p. 109

of Iraqis and Syrians of divergent leanings, who filled the ministries in the shadow of several successive coups in Iraq and Syria'<sup>727</sup>.

Mohammed Harbi recalls regularly meeting notable figures in the dining hall of the AEMNAF:

'We would often see the Lebanese Lamia Solh, always accompanied by her chaperone, Sheikh Salah Sobh, and who was to marry the prince Abdallah of Morocco; but also Moktar Ould Dada, future president of Mauritania, Mohammed Masmoudi and Moulay Ahmed al-Alaoui, who represented Neo-Destour and Istiqlal respectively. We were all in contact with each other.'<sup>728</sup>

The meeting of international students who later became important national figures is a reoccurring feature in the recollections of intellectual migrants during this period. These future movers and shakers were for the most part central to the intellectual and political life of migrants from the north of Africa.

### **A Community of the Oppressed**

During the period in question, one of the principle tenets of common identification was colonialism. Colonial subjects in Paris, increasingly aware of the colonial condition through their interaction with peoples from other colonised societies, associated with each other as victims of an unjust structure of governance. The 'other' or the 'oppressor' was generally Europe as a whole, eventually to evolve into the 'West', and the 'us' was an increasingly large community of colonial subjects seeking to throw off the yoke of colonialism. The mentality that this process engendered has been the subject of many studies, particularly those looking at the provenance of what has been referred to as 'Third-Worldism', the Non-Alignment movement, and naturally decolonisation. In the Parisian case, these include

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<sup>727</sup> Badawi, *Sirat Hayati*, Vol. 1, p. 195

<sup>728</sup> Harbi, *Une vie*, p. 101

again Claude Liauzu and Michael Goebel<sup>729</sup>. Similar studies have also been undertaken in relation to Berlin by Frederik Petersson<sup>730</sup>, as well as Egyptian-Indian Collaboration in European centres, including London, Paris and Geneva by Noor-Aiman Khan<sup>731</sup>.

The process started as early as 1905 when subordinate regions of the world grew in confidence as Japan defeated the Russian advance on Korea and Manchuria. In the 1920s, the Rif Wars in Morocco received considerable international support and sympathy. Its military leader Abd-el-Krim Kattabi became a figurehead for anti-colonial resistance across the world, his guerrilla tactics are said to have influenced the likes of Mao Zedong, Ho Chi Minh and Che Guevara<sup>732</sup>. Militants from the colonised world looked to and travelled to China and Japan for inspiration, influence and training in overcoming their own local socio-political struggles while remaining culturally authentic<sup>733</sup>.

As the level of solidarity increased between anti-colonial movements, they began to treat each other's struggles as one and the same. Since European colonialism's character as a monolithic and all-encompassing adversary became increasingly apparent to colonial subjects, defeats and successes from one local struggle became increasingly shared by another. This was especially the case with the defeat of the French at Dien Bien Phu, which was celebrated by many as a watershed in the global struggle against European colonialism<sup>734</sup>.

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<sup>729</sup> Goebel, *Anti-Imperial Metropolis*; Liauzu, *Aux origines*,

<sup>730</sup> Petersson, F., 'Hub of the Anti-Imperialist Movement, The League against Imperialism and Berlin, 1927-1933', *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, 16:1, 49-71, (2014)

<sup>731</sup> Khan, N-A. I., *Egyptian-Indian nationalist collaboration and the British empire*, (Basingstoke, 2011), p. 9

<sup>732</sup> Er, M., 'Abd-el-Krim al-Khattabi: The Unknown Mentor of Che Guevara', *Terrorism and Political Violence*, (London, 2015), p.1

<sup>733</sup> See Green, N., 'Anti-Colonial Japanophilia and the constraints of an Islamic Japanology: information and affect in the Indian encounter with Japan', *South Asian History and Culture*, 4:3, 291-313, (2013) and Roussillon, A., *Identité et modernité. Les voyageurs égyptiens au Japon (XIXe - XXe siècle)*, (Arles, 2005)

<sup>734</sup> Pervillé, *Étudiants*, p. 111

The universalisation of anti-colonial politics was an evolution in post-colonial political theory. Expressions of anti-colonial discontent are distinct from anti-colonialism as a political ideology. There may be protests concerning local grievances directed towards the colonial administration or towards their French oppressor. But these expressions were not formalised into an anti-colonial ideology in the sense of critiquing European colonialism as a political phenomenon and objecting to this arrangement of international political and economic relations, by any oppressor, in any region. This distinction from anti-European colonialism is particularly evident in early twentieth century Algeria, where according to Messali Hadj's chronicles, local expressions of grievances towards their 'French oppressor' were seconded by an interest in and admiration of the Ottoman Empire.

Crucial to the intellectual history of decolonisation, understanding anti-colonialism in global post-colonial political thought is fundamental to our understanding of contemporary discourse about international relations, particularly according to Kohn and McBride, about ideas regarding global justice, freedom, race, identity and the rule of law<sup>735</sup>. The formal anti-colonial ideology of the twentieth century was connected to, yet transcended the nationalist politics of decolonisation. Enriched by local contributions and cultural dynamics, it independently addressed the realities and rhetoric of a connected, global political landscape. The twentieth century anti-colonial ideology was a highly pluralistic entity<sup>736</sup>. But the interaction of these plural elements contributed to the creation of globally relevant ideas that had repercussions on global politics. They redefined the geo-political landscape away from zones of European influence. The likes of Ouazzani and Salah Ben Youssef in positioning North African resistance within an Arab bloc were devolving international

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<sup>735</sup> Kohn, M. & McBride, K., *Political Theories of Decolonization: Post-colonialism and the Problem of Foundations*, (Oxford, 2011), p. 1

<sup>736</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12

relations of their Euro-centricity; serving as the intellectual premise for decolonisation. And as Michael Goebel's book emphasises, 'the seeds' of that process were sown by migration to urban spaces like Paris.

There are many factors affecting the universalisation of anti-colonial politics. These include the spread of the international press and the aforementioned internationalisation of local conflicts. Nevertheless there are scholars such as Gary Wilder, Jennifer Boittin, Federik Pettersson, Claude Liauzu and Michael Goebel who believe that migration and mobility to particular cities were notable factors in that evolution. Metropolitan centres offered colonial migrants an opportunity to group themselves on the basis of their colonial experience, where 'the spectre of "empire" guided the self-identification of its residents as well as their social and political interactions'<sup>737</sup>. As Michael Goebel argues, global 'contacts, networks and connectivity' generated a 'post-imperial world order'<sup>738</sup>.

The creative impact of meeting places in universalising anti-colonial discourse is demonstrable through a number of conferences held in Brussels in the interwar period. The first congress of the Anti-Imperialist League in 1927 organised by the Third International provided Messali Hadj with his first opportunity to meet important contemporary colonial nationalists. They included Jawaharlal Nehru from India, Mohammed Hatta of Indonesia, the Syrian 'combatant' Nasib al-Bakri, the Japanese Communist Sen Katayama and Senegalese communist Lamine Senghor<sup>739</sup>. Such events enabled its attendants to relate on the basis of discrimination. For instance, when relaying the difficulties that the Senegalese communist Lamine Senghor experienced in finding a hotel willing to accept Black clientele, a

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<sup>737</sup> Boittin, *Colonial Metropolis*, p. xiii

<sup>738</sup> Goebel, *Anti-Imperial Metropolis*, p. 3

<sup>739</sup> Hadj, *Les mémoires*, p. 159

problem that according to Mohammed Harbi many Algerians experienced in the 1940s, Messali Hadj expressed empathetically:

'[...] we sympathised with him, [...] because he was oppressed like us by colonialism.'<sup>740</sup>

Conferences by the Anti-Imperialist League continued to be held across Europe in the interwar period; they were both important ideological markers in the development of twentieth century anti-colonialism and important opportunities to establish connections between national movements and exchange practical information<sup>741</sup>.

International conferences also provided opportunities for the colonial elite to act together in an internationalist context. In December 1934, 374 students participated in the World Congress of Students against War and Fascism in Brussels. While the overwhelming majority of participants were French and Belgium, there were a dozen student delegates from Indonesia, a dozen from India and six from North Africa, all of whom were grouped under one representative as students from colonised societies<sup>742</sup>. It was therefore an opportunity for intellectual migrants to position themselves together within the international community as colonial subjects, and in doing so they helped to universalise their local struggles into a common cause.

The existence of anti-war, anti-fascist and anti-imperialist conferences indicates a universalisation of anti-oppression sentiments in the interwar period. It pertains to the common identification of victims of violence, oppression and discrimination. This concerned not only anti-fascist and anti-imperialist movements, but also feminism. In her

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<sup>740</sup> Ibid., p. 160

<sup>741</sup> 'League Against Imperialism', *The Open University Research Projects*, accessed 14/10/2015 at <http://www.open.ac.uk/researchprojects/makingbritain/content/league-against-imperialism>

<sup>742</sup> 'Congrès Mondial Des Etudiants Contre la Guerre et le Fascisme ; Bulletin No. 4, 4<sup>ème</sup> Séance du Dimanche 30 Décembre 1934', *Courneuve*, Série K 15, P13681, p. 174

study of Paris as a Colonial Metropolis, Jennifer Boittin connects proponents of anti-racism with feminism in Paris:

'Like colonial migrants, these women saw representations of themselves abound in popular culture. Following the war, women and black men renewed similar demands. Both groups wished to become full-fledged citizens with access to civil rights and perhaps even suffrage, either of France or of lands they hoped would soon be decolonized and transformed into independent nations. Several governments of France's Third Republic [...] found various excuses for evading these requests. Indeed women did not obtain the vote, and colonized men and women did not win independence or negotiate assimilation, until after the next world war'<sup>743</sup>.

Gisèle Halimi in her memoirs explicitly connects her defence of anti-colonial activists to her own experience of subjugation as a woman in a patriarchal Jewish society in Tunisia:

'I chose sides; I voluntarily put myself next to the victims and the oppressed! My oppression thus became a revolt, an open combat.'

'It was decided, I would fight. And not only for myself. I fought for those who found themselves in the same camp as me.'

'This large chasm, I was aware of it from an early age. It became my permanent point of reference. [...]. On the one side those who oppressed and who drew profit from it and the others, the humiliated, the offended, the victims.'<sup>744</sup>

'[They] were in dire need of being defended. Together with the Tunisians, the colonised Arabs and ... women.'<sup>745</sup>

The fact that Halimi took on so many political trials, defending anti-colonialists, nationalists, secessionists, feminists and victims of war crimes testifies to that approach. In her experience, women's experience of oppression was comparable to those of *indigène* under the colonial regime:

'If you ask around : 'Female Ministers ? [...] Female Mayors of big towns?' 'Yes they say, but...' and then they explain how they [women] were not ready, that they could not assume such responsibilities, that men would not accept [...]

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<sup>743</sup> Boittin, *Colonial Metropolis*, p. xix

<sup>744</sup> Halimi, *La cause*, p. 39

<sup>745</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40

the authority of women [...] ... just like the Vietnamese or Algerians – according to colonisers – would have immediately reached independence if they were capable of governing themselves ...’<sup>746</sup>

The methods of oppression were the same; depriving sections of society of the tools for self-empowerment, such as knowledge and education<sup>747</sup>. ‘The subjugated’, as she calls them, were bound by their ‘common values as oppressed peoples’<sup>748</sup>, whether they were Black Africans, autochthones in North Africa and Indochina or women across the globe.

Therefore anti-colonial politics was connected to combatting the experience of social oppression, whether patriarchal or hierarchical. For instance Algerian resistance fighter and historic leader of the FLN, Lakhdar Ben Tobbal notes in his memoirs, cited by Benjamin Stora, how young Algerians were struggling against a ‘pyramid of oppression’ from their overbearing parents to the patriarchal domination over women, of which colonialism was at the pinnacle<sup>749</sup>. The sensation of being part of a community of oppressed or subjugated people according to Benjamin Stora facilitated national unification<sup>750</sup>.

Therefore the rise of nationalist and anti-colonial discourse was connected to communalising experiences of socio-political oppression. The growing awareness felt by individuals and groups of belonging to a community of oppressed and subjugated peoples was greatly facilitated by the opportunities for contacts and interactions in metropolitan centres like Paris.

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<sup>746</sup> Halimi, ‘La femme enfermée’ in *La cause*, p. 11

<sup>747</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19

<sup>748</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21

<sup>749</sup> Stora, *Les Sources*, p. 45

<sup>750</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 59-60

## Militant Spaces

International intellectual migration to Paris contributed to the universalisation of anti-colonial politics and engendering a community of the oppressed. If viewing 'group-making' as an event is beneficial to understanding identity formation as do Rogers Brubaker and E. P. Thomson<sup>751</sup>, then it is also necessary to understand the spaces which trigger or influence these forms of collective identification. But not in the sense of social spaces, as in Pierre Bourdieu's study of 'The Social Space and the Genesis of Groups'<sup>752</sup>, but in relation to physical spaces.

As seen with the conferences in Brussels, mobility to centralised spaces created opportunities for the colonial elite to meet and potentially collaborate either through the sharing of information and the establishment of alliances. Paris acted in a similar capacity; the specificities of the Parisian milieu, together with the mobility of the colonial elite created in Paris important militant spaces.

There were a number of places across Paris that could be considered militant spaces, ranging from the *Cité Universitaire* down on Boulevard Jourdan to the premises of the paper *Journal des peuples opprimés* at 57, rue Charlot. There was the *Librairie du Travail* on the *quai de Jemmapes* run by the French syndicalist Marcel Hasfeld. This library was supposedly regularly attended by Léon Trotsky. In addition to providing its members with militant and subversive literature, it was an opportunity for future militants and Left-wing protagonists in Paris to meet. For instance the future Ho Chi Minh, who apparently regularly attended this library, supposedly established links there with French syndicalists such as Monatte and Bourderon, journalist Paul Vaillant-Couturier, who invited him to write a column in

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<sup>751</sup> Brubaker, 'Ethnicity without groups', p. 168

<sup>752</sup> Bourdieu, P., 'The Social Space and the Genesis of Groups', *Theory and Society*, 14 : 6, 723-744

*l'Humanité*, and Jean Longuet who suggested he write for *Populaire*<sup>753</sup>. Though there were a number of similar locations across Paris, there was a notable concentration of them on the Left Bank; a concentration that helped integrate Paris' colonial civil society into the decolonisation movement (see Appendix C).

The cluster of student residences from the colonies on the Left Bank helped to make the whole district a militant space, whether or not the residences themselves had a subversive element to them. There was at 24, *rue Bonaparte* a 'Foyer des Etudiants Marocains', an old hotel acquired by University of Paris in 1953 for Moroccan students<sup>754</sup>. It featured heavily in Police records as a subversive space and was closely monitored by the authorities<sup>755</sup>. There was also the aforementioned Tunisian student residence on *rue Blainville*<sup>756</sup>, situated near the *Centre Révolutionnaire* and the University campus. There was the *Association mutuelle des Indochinois*, known for its political activism on 12, *rue du Sommerard*, right by the Sorbonne and which created the AGEI in 1927. On 22, *rue Vauquelin* was a *foyer* of Vietnamese Students founded in 1929 which, much like the AEMNAF, included a library, lecture room and sports facilities<sup>757</sup>. These are just a number of the student residences in the Latin Quarter, some militant, such as the AGEI, some not so militant, like the *Foyer Malgache* founded in 1938<sup>758</sup>.

In addition to the student residences, the Left Bank also offered facilities which assisted the organisation of political movements and accommodated their activities. For

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<sup>753</sup> Lacouture, *Cinq Hommes*, p. 18

<sup>754</sup> 'Letter from Minister of National Education to Minister of Moroccan and Tunisian Affairs', 4<sup>th</sup> July 1955, CADN, Série M 582, Carton 45, Dossier 10

<sup>755</sup> 'Lettre du Ministre de l'Éducation Nationale à Monsieur le Ministre des Affaires Marocaines et Tunisiennes, 1<sup>er</sup> Juillet 1945,' *Courneuve*, Série M 582, Carton 45, Dossier 10

<sup>756</sup> Harbi, *Une vie*, p. 103

<sup>757</sup> 'Maison des étudiants de l'Indochine à la Cité universitaire', *L'Écho annamite*, 27 mars 1931

<sup>758</sup> Liauzu, *Aux origines*, p. 146

instance the *Palais de la Mutualité*, 21, *rue Saint Victor*, was a rentable space where several student-run events were held. It hosted in December 1932 the annual AEMNAF conference; it also hosted events organised by the French branch of the Anti-Imperialist League<sup>759</sup>.

The proximity of these militant spaces to Paris' creative district and student infrastructure enable intellectual migrants, should they so wish, to engage in militancy and interact with other student militants without much suspicion, for it was where they were supposed to be, and without necessarily compromising their studies. Mohammed Harbi notes in his memoirs that he spent most of his Parisian days divided between his secondary school *Collège Sainte-Barbe* at 4, *rue Valette*, the AEMNAF premises at 115, *Boulevard Saint-Michel* and MTLD headquarters at 22, *rue Xavier-Privas*<sup>760</sup>. The preparatory work for the establishment of the AEMNAF was done in Ouazzani's bedroom which he shared with Ahmed Ben Milad in the *Maison Belge* of the *Cité Universitaire*<sup>761</sup>.

So even though certain student foyers were not inherently subversive, like the Foyer for Indochinese students on *rue Vauquelin* which was an officially administered space financed by the Bank of Indochina<sup>762</sup>, the location of these kinds of student residences were inductive to student militancy. The clustering in Paris' cultural district of university infrastructure, student residences and political organisations turned the whole district into a militant space.

Even the districts cafes and restaurants were instrumental in the militancy of migrants. In industrial zones, pamphlets and journals were often created and distributed among punters. The foundation of the ENA in March 1926 by Messali Hadj, the Algerian

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<sup>759</sup> One such meeting was covered in *Journal des peuples opprimés*, January 1935

<sup>760</sup> Harbi, *Une vie*, p. 98

<sup>761</sup> Ouazzani, *Muthakkirat*, Vol I, p. 450

<sup>762</sup> Liauzu, *Aux origines*, p. 149

Communist Hadj Ali and Si Djilani resulted from discussions that took place at a small café in Paris' nineteenth arrondissement. The ENA then spent considerable time promoting its agenda among North African factory workers by holding discussions and distributing their party literature in other cafés and restaurants<sup>763</sup>. Moroccan communists in Paris were also said to use restaurants in Parisian suburbs, such as the *Restaurant Populaire, rue de la Loge*, to create a nationalist paper intended for distribution in Morocco<sup>764</sup>.

Popular cafes in the Latin Quarter acted in a similar capacity, largely because they were relatively inconspicuous and not specific to migrant communities. Mohammed Harbi held meetings in the Latin Quarter's popular hang-outs with fellow nationalists or dissidents, always choosing a different café to avoid suspicion and possible arrest<sup>765</sup>. As stated above, Abderrahman Badawi highlighted in his memoirs the importance of the café *Dupont* in meeting notable North African and Middle Eastern migrants. Lacheraf also notes a supposedly famous Algerian café in the Latin Quarter called *al-Hoggar* where he met Badawi<sup>766</sup>.

Some cafes were in fact designed to be militant spaces. For instance, Mostefa Lacheraf recalls a restaurant on *Place Maubert-Mutualité*, off Boulevard Saint Germain which had a special 'eye-piece' designed to allow Si-Djilani, founding member of the ENA to escape by the back door when police were patrolling. This set up was designed by the restaurant owner, a sympathetic French Left-wing progressive militant<sup>767</sup>.

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<sup>763</sup> Hadj, *Les mémoires*, p. 153

<sup>764</sup> 'COPIE Marseille 12 Nov 1923 à Monsieur le Consul de France à Tétouan', *Courneuve*, Série K 20, P3531, Carton 102, Dossier 3, f. 12

<sup>765</sup> Harbi, *Une vie*, p. 170

<sup>766</sup> Lacheraf, *Des noms*, p. 104

<sup>767</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 188

These militant spaces were not however wholly unrestricted. Ouazzani for instance notes that even in the late 20s, the French authorities had been threatening restaurant and café owners into refusing entry to some students and members of certain associations<sup>768</sup>. During the 1950s especially, the French authorities increasingly cracked-down on Algerian cafes with the escalation of police reprisals during the war of independence<sup>769</sup>. Therefore while the Left Banks day-to-day informal infrastructure helped shelter militants from unwanted attention, they were not always spaces in which they could freely operate uninhibited by the French authorities.

Of the militant spaces on Paris' Left Bank that most formalised the alliance between intellectual migrants from colonised societies was the *Centre de Propagande Révolutionnaire pour les Colonies Françaises*, 3 rue du Marché des Patriarches. Home to the *Union Intercolonial*, the premises was funded by the Third International and produced the *Paria* journal between 1922 and 1926. Despite being short-lived, it was an important centre and symbol of resistance. Among its active members was Ho Chi Minh, who founded the *Paria* journal<sup>770</sup>. Hadj Ali, founding member of the ENA and very close to becoming the first Muslim Algerian deputy in France, was also a regular attendee and contributor to the journal. Its premises was a little way away from the main axis of the Boulevard Saint-Germain and Boulevard Saint-Michel. Yet it was importantly within walking distance of many the student residences that housed intellectual migrants from across the non-Western world.

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<sup>768</sup> Ouazzani, *Muthakkirat*, Vol. 1, p. 451

<sup>769</sup> Lacheraf, *Des noms*, p. 99

<sup>770</sup> Lacouture, *Cinq Hommes*, p. 25

Its membership represented Paris' international community, from Africa and the Caribbean to the Maghrib, East Asia and South East Asia<sup>771</sup>. This without doubt was an important place gathering the future leadership of the post-colonial world. Yet, according to Messali Hadj's account, it was not necessarily an opportunity for interaction:

*'Rue des Patriarches, I also came across militants from Asiatic and African countries who later became important figures in the leadership of their countries. These particular men used false names, spoke little, read a great deal and appeared to be suspicious of everyone.'*<sup>772</sup>

According to Claude Liauzu's intricate study of the Union, despite it having over a hundred members, it only had about 10 active agitators and only approximately 20 to 30 members regularly attending meetings. It is for this reason that Liauzu concludes that the significance of the Union lay primarily in the journal it produced<sup>773</sup>.

*Le Paria*, though not a regular publication, did have considerable breadth, with over 2000 copies being distributed across three continents by October 1924. Although the paper claimed communist auspices, the majority of its contributors and readership were the colonial intellectual elite<sup>774</sup>. Intellectually and practically, both the UIC's activism and the content of *Le Paria* demonstrate the basis for the universalisation of anti-colonial politics and solidarity between liberation movements in the colonies. The journal articles emphasised common experiences of colonialism in justifying their resistance, from the loss of life, the hypocrisy of the civilising mission, the arbitrary use of power and intimidation, racial discrimination and obscurantism through the lack of freedom of information and association<sup>775</sup>. Through such common experiences, the paper first speaks of a 'union of the

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<sup>771</sup> Liauzu, *Aux origines*, p. 106

<sup>772</sup> Hadj, *Les mémoires*, p. 156

<sup>773</sup> Liauzu, *Aux origines*, p. 108

<sup>774</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 109-110

<sup>775</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 115

colonised' and 'solidarity of the colonised'. Yet this is said to have decreased with the rise of Bolshevism in favour of communist lexicons referring to an 'alliance of the global proletariat'<sup>776</sup>. The Union did also hold several well-attended meetings during its lifetime in support of several colonial causes, including protesting against the *code de l'indigénat* in Algeria, the suppression of strikes in Guadeloupe in 1924 and in support of the Rif Wars in Morocco, through which the UIC sought to 'cement [...] the idea of solidarity between pariahs'<sup>777</sup>.

While these meetings were attended by representatives from across the world, there were according to Liauzu many limitations to their collective action, limitations that led to the Union's eventually demise in 1926. The question of independence was particularly divisive, alienating many original African members who were lobbying for greater political emancipation within the colonial regime. So was the matter of communist intervention, as PCF members opposed the UIC's support of the Rif Wars. So while international communism helped to establish colonial solidarity by providing its first auspices and infrastructure, like the Anti-Imperialist League and the Intercolonial Union, it was also on many occasions the obstacle to intercolonial solidarity. The rapid disintegration of the UIC and its journal on the basis of divergent positions leads Liauzu to believe that its 'reason for being' was limited to early tentative stages of colonial demands<sup>778</sup>.

There are few who doubt that solidarity between disparate movements held currency when that unity was most profitable and tended to peter out when their interests ceased to be aligned. However, looking beyond the interwar period, there were renewed

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<sup>776</sup> Ibid., p.119

<sup>777</sup> Ibid., pp. 111-112 and p. 123

<sup>778</sup> Ibid., p. 130

efforts at anti-colonial solidarity among intellectual migrants to Paris after the Second World War. In 1948, the *Association des étudiants anti-colonialistes* or *Comité de liaison des associations d'étudiants anti-colonialistes* was formed. Its first president was Jacques Verges, who became an anti-colonialist lawyer of considerable notoriety<sup>779</sup>. The association gathered students from the north of Africa (AEMNAF), Indochina (*l'Association générale des étudiants vietnamiens*), Malagasy (*Association générale des étudiants d'origine malgache*) and from the Reunion islands (*l'Union des étudiants réunionnais*). Its premises were at 22, *rue Saint-Sulpice* and it published between 1949 and 1952 the journal *Étudiants anti-colonialistes*.

The aim of the committee clearly shows that colonial students identified with each other as subjects of colonial oppression:

'Every crime committed against one of our people strengthens our ties a little more. At each attack perpetrated against one of our liberties, the more we understand that our condition as students is inseparable from our lot as patriots. This is why we believe that the improvement of even our situation as students in France cannot be obtained by taking demeaning measures, but can only be seized by action'<sup>780</sup>

Its journal was a self-proclaimed weapon in the unification of the anti-colonial struggle<sup>781</sup>.

Mohamed Harbi joined said committee in 1952, which at that time included among its members Annie Besse from the PCF, Suzanne de Brunhoff, Edouard Lépine, a student from Martinique who became a historian and politician, as well as leaders of the FEANF. According to Harbi, in addition to the journal *L'Étudiant anti-colonialiste* run by Hassan

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<sup>779</sup> Barbet Schroeder, *L'Avocat de la terreur*, (2007)

<sup>780</sup> 'Étudiants anti-colonialistes', n° 1, Novembre 1949, *Fonds de L'Institut Français de l'Éducation*, accessed 06 October 2015 at [http://www.inrp.fr/presse-education/revue.php?id\\_rev=1135&LIMIT\\_OUVR=1120,10](http://www.inrp.fr/presse-education/revue.php?id_rev=1135&LIMIT_OUVR=1120,10)

<sup>781</sup> '[...] sa portée comme arme dans le combat qui est le nôtre' (décembre 1949), 'Étudiants anti-colonialistes', *Fonds de L'Institut Français de l'Éducation*, accessed 06 October 2015 at [http://www.inrp.fr/presse-education/revue.php?id\\_rev=1135&LIMIT\\_OUVR=1120,10](http://www.inrp.fr/presse-education/revue.php?id_rev=1135&LIMIT_OUVR=1120,10)

Abadou and André Akoun, it also organised in 1952 an 'Anti-colonialist Day', although there remains little information about it.<sup>782</sup>

Another collaborative example among student associations on Paris' Left Bank was the International Preparatory Committee, established by the UGET in 1955 with other anti-colonial groups across European university towns. This Committee included the Union of West African Students (UK), Society of Iraqi students (UK), the FEANF, the AEMNAF and the Association of Iranian Students in Germany<sup>783</sup>. Militant intellectual migrants from colonised societies therefore continued to associate with each other on the basis of their common colonial experience up until the late 1950s.

### **Universalising the French Spirit of Resistance**

The universalising of anti-colonial resistance was in the interwar period part of an intercolonial discourse. Yet, especially after the Second World War, there was a growing level of participation and sympathy from French, or European, sections of the Parisian milieu.

There were prior to World War Two various contacts between migrants from the north of Africa and Europeans in Paris. There were of course some on Europe's Left taking interest in the cause of North African nationalists. The aforementioned *Maghreb* review was described by Claude Liauzu as 'a unique experience of its kind of equal collaboration between colonised and socialists'<sup>784</sup>. There were isolated instances of public support for

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<sup>782</sup> Harbi, *Une vie*, p. 102

<sup>783</sup> Memo on 'L'Union Internationale Des Etudiants (U.I.E) et les pays coloniaux', 5 October 1955, CADN, Carton 686, 2nd Versement, Tunisie

<sup>784</sup> Liauzu, *Aux origines*, p. 156

nationalist movements in North Africa such as Daniel Guérin and Emile Dermenghem's articles in *Le Monde* in the 1930s on the Moroccan question. There was even some support from French student bodies for colonial claimants, such as that by the *Union fédérale des étudiants* in the late 1920s<sup>785</sup>. But on the whole Europeans were astride from colonial discourse. For the most part the French press were unreceptive and unsympathetic to the demands of colonial militants.

There are a few rare examples of colonial intellectual migrants writing in French mainstream papers. For instance Ghanaian Léon Damas wrote for *Esprit* since 1934<sup>786</sup>. *Les Editions Rieder* on the Left Bank at 7 *Place Saint-Sulpice*, published in 1931 Ouazzani's protest against the Dahir Berbère entitled *Tempête sur le Maroc* under the pseudonym *Mousslim Barbari*<sup>787</sup>. Yet once again these examples were few and far between. Generally, as stated in previous chapters, the European public were uninterested in colonial societies except for their penchant for the exotic and failed to interact with colonial societies except for with their stereotypes<sup>788</sup>.

By 1947 and 1948, continuing through to 1962 and beyond, French intellectual and popular circles became much more receptive to North African advocacy. As a consequence they became more integrated into the decolonisation process. Once the dust had settled from the global conflict, French moderate liberals became increasingly integrated in those political movements operating in their own capital.

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<sup>785</sup> Ibid., p. 148

<sup>786</sup> Gyssels, K. M., 'Centenaire de Léon-Gontran Damas', accessed on *Esprit's* website <http://esprit.presse.fr/news/frontpage/news.php?code=209>

<sup>787</sup> Barbari, M., *Tempête sur le Maroc ou les erreurs d'une 'politique berbère'*, (Paris, 1931)

<sup>788</sup> Blanchard, Deroo, El-Yazami, Fournié, Manceron, *Le Paris Arabe*, p. 7

Work has been produced on the involvement of Europeans in anti-colonial movements, especially their support of the FLN<sup>789</sup>. Considerable work has also been produced on Sartre's philosophy of the committed intellectual. Nevertheless more could be done on twentieth century European anti-colonialism, especially French support of Moroccan and Tunisian nationalism.

Paris' intellectuals spear-headed European integration into global post-colonial discourse. Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, Raymond Aron and their entourage called for writers to be actively involved in other peoples' quests for liberty and freedom. Sartre was intellectually affected by his conscription to the French army in World War Two. Upon his return to Paris, he began the activist group *Socialisme et Liberté*, consisting of approximately fifty members of France's intellectual elite, including students, teachers, lecturers and Sartre's own existentialist entourage<sup>790</sup>. They produced and distributed seditious tracts calling for resistance. Though the endeavour is deemed relatively unsuccessful, Sartre continued after the Second World War to emphasise a writer's social responsibility, a responsibility that was in his case awakened by the German occupation. It was a writer's duty to scrutinise, not ignore, the world's most pressing exigencies:

'To speak is to act [...].' 'The function of a writer is to ensure that nobody can ignore the world and that no one can claim to be innocent.'<sup>791</sup>

That social responsibility after the Second World War was directed in support of anti-colonial, anti-racist and anti-fascist movements. Sartre wrote a preface to Leopold

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<sup>789</sup> Evans, M., *The Memory of Resistance – French Opposition to the Algerian War (1954-1962)*, (Oxford, 1997); Branche, R., Thénault, S., Albert, M-C., *La France en guerre, 1954-1962: expériences métropolitaines de la guerre d'indépendance algérienne*, (Paris, 2008) ; Ulloa, M-P., *Francis Jeanson: a dissident intellectual from the French resistance to the Algerian War*, (Stanford, 2007) ; Sorum, P.C., *Intellectuals and Decolonization in France*, (Chapel Hill, 1977) Moureaux, S., *Avocats sans frontières, le collectif belge et la guerre d'Algérie*, (Alger, 2000)

<sup>790</sup> Leak, A., *Jean-Paul Sartre*, (London, 2006), p. 44

<sup>791</sup> Sartre, *Situations II*, p. 72 & p. 74

Senghor's book on contemporary Malagasy poetry<sup>792</sup>, which according to biographer Andrew Leak, 'went a long way towards establishing Sartre's credentials amongst third-world intellectuals and freedom fighters'<sup>793</sup>. He also produced in 1945 with his partner Simone de Beauvoir the series *Les Temps Modernes*, with an office on *rue Jacob*, covering issues from North African nationalism, anti-Semitism, the Israeli-Palestine Conflict<sup>794</sup> to the Indochina wars, as well as producing literary reviews.

The involvement of popular existentialists most famously characterised a change in French attitudes towards decolonisation. But there was at the time a broader re-appropriation of French resistance infrastructure for anti-colonial advocacy. This can be seen through the content of journals and papers such as the *Témoignage Chrétien*, *Franc-Tireur*, *Combat*, *Esprit*<sup>795</sup>, among others. The first three journals cited were born as French resistance organs, designed to combat 'spiritual subservience' under occupation<sup>796</sup>, to promote, organise and assist local resistance<sup>797</sup>, as well as gathering intelligence on the enemy<sup>798</sup>. Even after the Second World War some of their contributors maintained an ambivalent attitude towards decolonisation, especially regarding Algerian independence. But they offered greater coverage to non-European intellectual and political leaders than the mainstream press<sup>799</sup>, giving greater credence to their nationalist cause. Habib

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<sup>792</sup> Sartre, J-P., 'Orphée Noire', in Senghor, L.S., *Anthologie de la nouvelle poésie nègre et malgache de langue française*, (Paris, 1948), pp. ix-xliv

<sup>793</sup> Leak, *Sartre*, p. 82

<sup>794</sup> 'Le conflit israélo-arabe', *Les Temps Modernes*, No. 253, 1963

<sup>795</sup> Founded in 1932 by Emmanuel Mounier. The journal's anti-colonial stance developed under Jean-Marie Domenach, 'Ministère de l'Intérieur – Direction générale de la sûreté nationale – direction des renseignements généraux – Sous-Direction de l'Information - Secret – "Le Séparatisme Algérien – Troisième Parties – L'aide à la Rébellion. Exemple 257', February 1961, AN, Paris, F 1a 5016

<sup>796</sup> *Témoignage Chrétien*, (November 1941), No. 1

<sup>797</sup> *Le Franc-Tireur*, *Organe des Francs-Tireurs et Partisans du Centre*, (February 1943)

<sup>798</sup> *Combat*, No. 1, (December 1941)

<sup>799</sup> Surveillance of the Tunisian Minister of Social Affairs revealed how he was interviewed by *Franc-Tireur* journalist Jean Rous during his stay in Paris in 1952, 'Objet: Séjour à Paris de M. Badra, Ministre tunisien des Affaires Sociales, 26 Mars 1952', AN, Paris, F 1a 5113, 4AG 71

Bourguiba is said to have had close relations with the papers *Combat* and *Franc-Tireur*<sup>800</sup>. The legendary French resistance writer Vercors also wrote a preface to an anonymous publication about the vicious and arbitrary repression in Algeria entitled *Barberousse* after the detention centre in Algiers<sup>801</sup>. The French resistance publishing house, *Les Editions de Minuits* was also implicated in the Algerian conflict, publishing Djamel Amrani's *Le Témoin*<sup>802</sup> and Henri Alleg's *La Question*<sup>803</sup>, the latter of which was censored in 1958.

Much of these contributions were combatting the misinformation and disinformation in France regarding anti-colonial movements worldwide. Such was the nature of Robert Barrat's *Justice au Maroc*, which fully documented step by step the evolution of the Moroccan question in order to 'testify to the truth'<sup>804</sup>. Albert Camus, chief editor of *Combat* from 1944 to 1947, published material intended to overcome popular French stereotypes of Algeria:

'The survey which I have produced [...] has no other objective but to reduce the incredible ignorance in the metropolis in what concerns North Africa.'<sup>805</sup>

Denise Schoenfeld, the wife of Robert Barrat was suspected and arrested in September 1960 for smuggling goods for the FLN<sup>806</sup>. The communist Jeanson network, led by intellectual and contributor to *Les Temps Modernes* Francis Jeanson also smuggled goods, money and arms from France into Switzerland for the FLN<sup>807</sup>.

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<sup>800</sup> 'Objet: Séjour à Paris du leader destourien Habib Bourguiba'; 10 Novembre 1950, AN, F 1a 5113, 4AG 68

<sup>801</sup> *Mustafa G... Barberousse*, (Paris, 1960)

<sup>802</sup> Amrani, D., *Le Témoin*, (Paris, 1960)

<sup>803</sup> Alleg, H., *La Question*, (Paris, 1958)

<sup>804</sup> Barrat, R., *Justice pour le Maroc*, (Paris, 1953), p. 15

<sup>805</sup> Camus, A., 'Crise en Algérie', (13/14 May 1945) in *Camus à Combat : éditoriaux et articles d'Albert Camus 1944-1947*, (Paris, 2002), p. 498

<sup>806</sup> 'Ministère de l'Intérieur – Direction générale de la sûreté nationale – direction des renseignements généraux – Sous-Direction de l'Information - Secret - "Le Séparatisme Algérien – Troisième Parties – L'aide à la Rébellion" Exemplaire 257', February 1961, AN, Paris, F 1a 5016, p. 37

<sup>807</sup> Evans, *The Memory*, p. ix

The French authorities tried to counter this French anti-colonial advocacy with their own pro-colonialist propaganda<sup>808</sup>. By the late 1950s as previously discussed, French ultra-nationalists also tried to dissuade European support for North African nationalist movements through a campaign of violence and intimidation.

European involvement in anti-colonial action was not limited to North African and Arab nationalism; there was growing support for movements in Africa, the Caribbean and Indochina. It marked rather a shift in attitude among Europeans towards colonialism itself. Practically this shift was largely characterised by greater support and sympathy for colonial independence movements. Greater numbers of French intellectuals, journalists and politicians contributed to the decolonisation process, petitioning the interests of colonial nationalist movements. Intellectually however, the change in European anti-colonialism pertains to a changing perception of colonialism as a political structure that was more in line with post-colonial political thought developing in colonial intellectual circles.

But what triggered this change? The formal anti-colonial ideology of the mid-twentieth century was being developed in colonial discourse prior to the Second World War. Were contacts between European and colonial intellectual and political circles the cause? Or to what extent was the Second World War instrumental in affecting European attitudes towards colonialism and world order?

As we have already seen, a more universal anti-colonial ideal was being formulated in colonial intellectual and political discourse before World War Two. It would be easy to assume that European thought was affected by migrant circles and influenced by their

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<sup>808</sup> Samples of pro-colonialist propaganda can be found in CAOM, 81 F 803. For example, inclusion of a poster distributed in France entitled 'Appel de "COMBAT D'OUTRE-MER"', which stated that "France must remain a great world power."

discourse. In an article published in 1950, French socialist and academic Charles-André Julien suggests that his support of North African independence was influenced by meeting Habib Bourguiba when he was advocating the Popular Front:

‘I had frequent interviews with Habib Bourguiba when I dealt with the North African question as President of the Council in 1936 and 1937. I found him an intelligent and sympathetic speaker. Although I have not seen him again since, I still think he is a Tunisian with which it is most profitable to negotiate. [...]. I fear, as does the leader of the Neo-Destour, that France is ignorant of the ‘growing desire among Tunisians for emancipation.’<sup>809</sup>

Yet an account by Mohamed Hassan Ouazzani attests that Charles-André Julien was dismissive of Moroccan nationalists in the mid-1930s, claiming that French Socialists should not support the demands of a colonial bourgeoisie because it had ‘no need of a privileged minority’ to replace ‘imperialist exploitation by their own exploitation’<sup>810</sup>. It could be that Julien bestowed upon these earlier contacts retrospective significance, possibly to give greater credibility to Bourguiba’s 1950 declaration to which Julien was responding in said article.

Jean-Paul Sartre on the other hand had few contacts with colonial intellectual circles prior to the Second World War, either in Paris or abroad; yet these circles existed, ready for contacts to be established. After the Second World War, he did engage profoundly with ‘third-world activists’ in Paris and abroad. These contacts certainly would have affected the form and content of his critique of European colonialism, as well as reciprocally affecting the ideas of colonial migrants who came into contact with him. Up until the 1960s Sartre was ‘an important symbol [...] of Third World Nationalism’ in the Arabic speaking world<sup>811</sup>. But this influence was exerted only once he had become politically agitated, suggesting that

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<sup>809</sup> Julien, ‘La politique française en Tunisie’, *Le Monde*, (19 April 1950), in Julien, *Une pensée*, p. 122

<sup>810</sup> Ouazzani, *Combats*, tome 1, p. 25

<sup>811</sup> Di-Capua, ‘Arab Existentialism’, p. 1081

contact between European and colonial circles was not necessarily the pivotal factor. Post-colonial discourse had existed in Paris' diaspora before World War Two. This discourse however, until the conclusion of the Second World War, was largely ignored.

There is something therefore about the Second World War that triggered Europeans to be not only more sympathetic at a popular level to the grievances of colonial subjects, but that also integrated European thought into the global post-colonial political discourse. One theory is that German occupation expanded the French understanding of liberty, political freedom and sovereignty. This shift is in part connected to the legacy of resistance in France; the Second World War apparently instilled in the minds of resisters a spirit of resistance in French history, transposing it both forwards to the cause of decolonisation, as well as retrospectively upon historic struggles for liberation and justice.

France's history with Protestantism is marked by considerable conflict, particularly during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when thousands of French Huguenots were murdered at the St Bartholomew Massacre. This history has been retrospectively interpreted, especially upon the conclusion of the Second World War, as part of France's history of resistance. Magali Morsy for instance positions Charles-André Julien's support of anti-colonialism within his own Protestant background:

'The expression of a temperament - a "character", as they would say in the classical period - it transcribes a scrupulous conscience shaped by a Protestant heritage, a cultural conscience as much as a psychological and moral structure as was the tradition of the nineteenth century, [...], the professional conscience of a historian whose job - in the broadest sense of the term - includes multiple protests dotting the years of his life and the pages of this book.'<sup>812</sup>

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<sup>812</sup> Morsy, M., 'Préface' in Julien, *Une pensée*, p. 15

André de Peretti, French activist, political actor, poet, pedagogue and close friend of Louis Massignon also notes in an interview how his experience of incarceration throughout World War Two awakened his sympathy towards historically persecuted French protestants and contemporary anti-colonial advocates.

André de Peretti was one of the founders of both the CFM and CCEFI. He liaised a great deal with Moroccan nationalists such as Omar Abdeljalil and Allal al-Fassi. As elected member of *l'Union Française*, he arranged opportunities for Moroccan nationalists to meet and plead their case directly to top French officials. He had been a lieutenant during the Second World War in a French artillery regiment that was captured at the Battle of Dunkirk. He spent the rest of the Second World War as a prisoner of war across Germany. In the last three months of his incarceration, he was compelled to make the Catholic Church symbolically reconcile with Protestantism by celebrating the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Luther's death, a cause he pursued upon his release. While he was not successful, they did eventually honour the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth. As André de Peretti said, he was clearly before his time<sup>813</sup>. But the connection between de Peretti's experience of German occupation, his compulsion to retrospectively reconcile French Catholics and protestants and his support of Moroccan nationalism is retrospectively made explicit in a speech delivered in Rabat in 2006 on precisely the subject of 'the spirit of resistance':

'Resistance is both in our bodies and in our hearts, to maintain an integrity, to "stand up" as has now been customary in France since at least the sixteenth century! It is an ability to support dispositions and impairments, and draw from oneself the strength to defeat them. It has become part of history, having, from 1940 to 1945, supported men and enlightened our younger generations in the Maquis, in the Free French Forces or in captivity.

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<sup>813</sup> André de Peretti Interview, Paris, (30 May 2011)

And now in 1945, youths of 30 years of age, animated by the "spirit of resistance" found themselves in various roles, present in the various ministries or secretariats of political movements, or in the press. Among them it was possible to find North African resisters in the straight sense of the word. And that was the case with me, meeting in 1946 in Rabat the friend of my father, Ahmed Bargach, and Istiqlal officials of my age.<sup>814</sup>

Among France's former 'resisters' to join the anti-colonial cause were Jean Scelles, founder of the resistance cell *Combat Outre-Mer* and François Mauriac, French novelist, intellectual, Nobel Prize laureate and founder of the clandestine resistance journal *Cahiers Noire*.

It was not therefore the opportunity to encounter a colonial migrant milieu that rendered the political climate in Europe more sympathetic to colonial grievances and more receptive to global post-colonial thought. North Africans, as well as West Africans, Indochinese and Levantine subjects had been in French metropolises trying to change official policy and public opinion since the conclusion of the First World War. After World War Two, however, doors began to open for them as French intellectuals became more receptive to their claims and assisted their advocacy.

Once these doors were open, the presence of a colonial diaspora in Paris in the late nineteen forties, and increasingly so in the nineteen fifties, did shape decolonisation. It affected the way in which French circles interacted with the nationalist cause, providing more opportunities for collaboration, sharing information and establishing practical networks of assistance. However the continuity in North African methods of advocacy from the interwar to post-war era combined with the discontinuity in the French reception to that advocacy highlights how crucial the French experience of German occupation was upon the receptiveness of European intellectual circles to colonial post-colonial discourse.

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<sup>814</sup> de Peretti, A., *L'Esprit de Résistance*, (Rabat, 2006) in Archives d'André de Peretti, Paris

## **Conclusion**

Paris as a political centre therefore affected international migratory patterns and on the flip side was itself affected by migration from the colonies. Home to central, national and international authorities, it drew political advocates, most of whom were the colonial elite. Home of enlightened ideals, Paris' populace was seen to have political potential. But global political thought was most affected by the presence of a colonial elite, who for the most part were there to study, but whose intersection with other student populaces and political migrants created a colonial civil society that evolved post-colonial political thought and helped establish post-colonial political alliances. It also led to culturally essentialist definitions of nationality and transnational identification. Therefore Paris was both a colonial and anti-colonial metropolis, as the gathering of the colonial elite strengthened the association of different population groups based on their experience of oppression and subjugation, mostly from European colonialism. While these factors do not account for the full history of decolonisation, it does provide considerable insight into the mind-set of decolonisation, the foundation blocks of a post-colonial world. A particularly notable feature of colonial migration to Paris was that much of these developments were somewhat independent of Europeans in Paris bar its imaginary which attracted migrants to Paris in the first place. Even when Europeans contributed to anti-colonial activism, it was due more to their own experience of World War Two than their encounters with colonial migrants in their capital. Paris therefore hosted two somewhat parallel universes which finally intersected as a result of historical conjuncture.

## Part Four – Religious Encounters

## Chapter Nine – Paris and the Spiritual/Material Dialectic

Another dominant theme evoked by intellectual migrants to an avant-garde European metropolis like Paris is the spiritual-material dialectic. Thus intellectual migration from the north of Africa to Paris must be situated within the discourse of religiosity and lack of religiosity, or secularism. This dialectic is not exclusive to migrants of the Muslim faith, although it relates to a very important thread in Islamic thought at the time. Rather, it is to show how the North African intellectual elite's prolonged and intimate contacts with urban centres fed this spiritual-material discourse. It also shows how multifaceted that discourse was, and to a certain extent how confused it was, conflating questions of social and sexual liberalism, French anti-clericalism and atheistic philosophies.

As explored in Chapter Three, Paris was reputed to be a city of pleasure. It was also the city of anti-clerical and atheistic philosophies and philosophers, characterised by the Surrealism of André Breton and the existentialism of Jean-Paul Sartre. These aspects of Paris' international reputation were both the source of attraction and repulsion; the source of anticipation and fear. Yet inevitably the reality was somewhat astride from the mythology surrounding the Parisian urban imaginary. The memoirs of intellectual migrants are an important source in navigating this field, of discerning the imaginary from the reality, the expectation from the experience.

Secularism was very much perceived as a Western phenomenon, an element of Western modernity. But Western secularism as it features in Islamic religious discourse was

a highly plural composition. French *laïcité* for instance has until this day had a notoriously fractious relationship with Islamic traditions and culture. Yet the conflict concerns far more than simply the wearing of headscarves in schools. This chapter will deconstruct secularism as it appears in the spiritual-material discourse in order to evaluate how it was affected by intellectual migration to Paris from the north of Africa.

### **A Secular Influence**

The secular influence of metropolitan centres dominated narratives of intellectual migration, especially from Muslim majority countries. The spiritual was increasingly considered the 'essential marks' of Eastern cultural identity<sup>815</sup>. Exposure to Western culture, European thought and learning Western scientific techniques was seen to influence secular tendencies and was considered by many in the non-western world as a particularly nefarious import. Intellectual migration was a key process in the perceived spread of secular ideals in North Africa, especially Egypt. Conversely, the discourse shaped intellectual migration to Europe from traditionally conservative societies, determining who travelled, their motives for travelling and to a large extent preconditioning migrants and their expectations of European culture.

As the religious dimension to cultural relations was so prominent, characterising the experience of young migrants in the West, it became a popular theme in Arabic literature. There are many novels dealing with the importation of Western secularism via student mobility<sup>816</sup>, some of which are said to have been semi-autobiographical<sup>817</sup>. This literature

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<sup>815</sup> McDougall, *History*, p. 8

<sup>816</sup> Idris, S., *al-Hayy al-Latini*, 2 Volumes, (Tal Abib, 1960); Hakim, *Bird of the East*; Hakki, Y., *The Lamp of Umm Hashim*

helps us to understand how the secularisation of students, especially Muslims, was represented and understood in much of the Arab world. Yet the use of fictional literature is always problematic, frequently dramatizing or sensationalising its subject. Comparing Taha Husayn's memoirs *A Passage to France* to his novel *A Man of Letters* serves to warn against writing history from fictional literature. His experience of Paris was sedate and scholastic, yet his novel depicts an Egyptian persistently indulging in the luxuries of Paris, driven mad by his alienation, moral corruption and cultural disjuncture. Literary representations of the topic therefore contrasted from the experience of notable migrants. They are nonetheless revelatory about how stereotypes were formed, how the subject was discussed at a popular level and how popular opinion of those subjects in the Middle East was shaped by these cultural products.

For starters, literary representations created a somewhat homogenous and static history of Western secular culture, despite regional variation and temporal evolution. Regional and diachronic variations were conflated to create an all-encompassing Western social history. Therefore accounts of student migration to western destinations other than Europe are relevant to understanding the way that student mobility to Paris was understood in places like Egypt. Differences between the American, British and French contexts are highly important. But Sayyid Qutb's reaction to visiting America for instance<sup>818</sup>, or Yahya Haqqi's short story *Lamp of Umm Hashim*<sup>819</sup> about a student in Cambridge, reflect the

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<sup>817</sup> William Maynard Hutchins, who has translated a number of Tawfiq al-Hakim's short stories, notes in his introduction that many of the author's novels are "autobiographical in a sense that goes beyond mere autobiographical fiction." *In the Tavern of Life & Other Stories*, p. 4; A. Abul Naga makes a similar point in the preface to his translation of Yahya Haqqi's *Un Égyptien à Paris*, p. 6

<sup>818</sup> Qutb, S., "The America I Have Seen": In the Scale of Human Values (1951)', translated by Masoud, T., and Fakeeh, A., in *America in an Arab Mirror: Images of America in Arabic Travel Literature*, ed. Abdel-Malek, K., and El Kahla, M., (Basingstoke, 2011)

<sup>819</sup> This story is about the cultural disjuncture of a young Egyptian returning from his medical studies in Britain.

generalisations readily employed in this discourse, rendering the spiritual-material dialectic a geo-political definition.

Sayyid Qutb, considered by many the father of political Islam, wrote considerably against the exportation of Western secularism to Muslim societies. His contributions have come to epitomise the conservative Muslim reaction to Western secular societies; yet he was not a migrant to France but to the US. While being wary of reproducing generalisations, it is interesting to understand how the social history of the West was conflated in the secularist discourse. Furthermore, while this topic pertains especially to the Muslim world's relations with Europe, many of the themes under the umbrella of secularism are relevant to non-Muslim traditional communities in the north of Africa. As the case of Gisèle Halimi demonstrates, the subject regards rather the confrontation of traditional conservative religious communities in the north of Africa with a new way of life epitomized through urban metropolitan centres like Paris.

### **Deconstructing the Umbrella of Secularism**

Western secularism as it appears in the spiritual-material dialectic has come to bracket a series of related but distinct intellectual and socio-political forces. These include the loss of religious culture, social liberalism, atheism and even capitalism. By breaking down the discourse into its composite elements, it is possible to perceive through the sources of intellectual migrants the distinct processes embroiled in the highly emotive and subjective issue of Western materiality.

The modern development of Western societies was seen in Muslim majority countries as going hand in hand with the decline of religion. Usually characterised in Islamic

thought as Eastern spiritualism and Western materialism, the debate fundamentally revolved around the role of religion in modern twentieth century society. The subject has been discussed, portrayed, romanticised and demonised by several generations of writers, intellectuals and religious scholars from across the non-Western world, especially in Islamic thought. It has also subsequently become a central theme to historical representations of Eastern-European encounters, second only to colonialism.

Positions for or against secularism are usually judged as either pro- or anti-Western. Yet while this dichotomy has been immortalised in literature and scholarship, it is as inaccurate as it is problematic for cultural relations. The extent to which the West is perceived and often projects itself as having conceived secularism, of having ownership of these ideas and authority over the forces implicated within the dialogue, sustains the perception that those processes were being deliberately created in the West, controlled, fully supported in western societies, then exported internationally. However these forces arose, or grew in prominence in the West as a result of modern industrial developments. The spread of those forces internationally was inextricably linked to the spread of European colonialism and by consequence, the global free-market capitalist economy. Yet the spread of secularist ideals was not a deliberate colonial policy, was certainly not controlled, nor was it fully supported in Western societies. As will be discussed throughout the next two chapters, they are instead the result of the spread of industrial capitalist economies and its societal implications, the result of two world wars, the epistemological implications of scientific knowledge, the increasingly multi-cultural nature of political discourse and growing international mobility.

## Defining Secularism

The majority of criticisms of Western secularism focus on its visible manifestations, such as the decline of religion in the public sphere, a materialistic culture and changes to individual and collective behaviour, that it to say the spread of so-called immorality. Yet it was first and foremost a political model for modern nation-state governance and the ontological implication of the West's supposed *Age of Reason*<sup>820</sup>.

Coined by the positivist 'agitator' George Jacob Holyoake, and distinct from its French counterpart *laïcité*, the definition of secularism in the Oxford English Dictionary is almost word for word that of its original author: 'The doctrine that morality should be based solely on regard to the well-being of mankind in the present life, to the exclusion of all considerations drawn from belief in God or in a future state'<sup>821</sup>. This conception reflects very much the French Positivist tradition from which it was inspired that looked to the material world for an alternative belief system in which to govern human life and behaviour<sup>822</sup>.

As a political theory however, the term secularism has come to signify the separation of church and state, akin to its French counterpart *laïcité* and rooted in pre-existing Christian suspicion about the entanglement of temporal and spiritual affairs. Thus debates about the

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<sup>820</sup> The term made famous by Thomas Paine's pamphlets, written while imprisoned by Robespierre and published in 1795; 'Paine, Thomas (1737-1809)', *Encyclopedia of World History*, compiled by Market House Books Ltd., (Oxford, 1998), p. 501

<sup>821</sup> 'Secularism', accessed 26 November 2012, at *Oxford English Dictionary*, <http://ezproxy.ouls.ox.ac.uk:2277/view/Entry/174621?redirectedFrom=secularism#eid> Compared to the definition by George Jacob Holyoake: "Secularism means the moral duty of man in this life deduced from considerations which pertain to this life alone", Holyoake, G.J., *Principles of Secularism Illustrated*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition revised, (London, Austin & Co., 1871), p. 27 published online by Google, accessed 05 September 2013, at [http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=w6v5glczzmEC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q=secularism&f=false](http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=w6v5glczzmEC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q=secularism&f=false)

<sup>822</sup> For an overview of Auguste Comte's Religion of Humanity as an institutional framework for the Positivist system, see Wernick, A., *Auguste Comte and the Religion of Humanity: The Post-Theistic Program of French Social Theory*, (Cambridge, 2001), accessed 04 September 2013 at <http://site.ebrary.com/id/5007853?ppg=14>

provenance of social ethics are lumped in with the question of modern modes of governance within Islamic secularist discourse.

Western secularism was also inherently connected to atheism. Yet as Holyoake himself acknowledged at the time, the latter meaning of secularism did not necessarily bring into question wider ontological assumptions about existence, knowledge or agency; a person could be religious and a proponent of secular education for example<sup>823</sup>. Nevertheless perceptions of secularism as a political stratagem are embroiled in Islamic thought with the positivist belief system turned to the material world, characterised by its cultural, societal and philosophical implications such as the loss of religious culture, the rejection of the mystical, immorality and ultimately atheism. And as Muslim visitors to Europe witnessed the implications of Europe's *Age of Reason*, they too were relating the perceived societal failures of secularism as a philosophy to the political model.

## **Religious Culture**

The loss of religious culture was a visible manifestation of twentieth century Western secularism. In France, public religious culture was greatly affected by the country's age old fervent anti-clericalism dating back further than the French Revolution<sup>824</sup>. The decline of religion in the public sphere was most characteristic of urban metropolises and was remarkable to migrants arriving from societies of religious fervour.

The reduced place of religion in French public life is addressed in Tawfiq al-Hakim's fictional literature. In the following extract from his famous novel, *Bird of the East*, he

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<sup>823</sup> Holyoake, *Principles*, p. 6

<sup>824</sup> Le Gall, M., 'Anti-clericalism and Positivism: A Note on French Orientalism', in *Franco-Arab Encounters*

highlights the culture shock experienced by Egyptian Muslims at the brazen attitude of Europeans towards religious institutions and rites:

'I'll never forgive you for making fun of me like that. You knew I would have to go inside the church, and that you didn't even say a word so that I could prepare myself for it.'

"'Bird of the East,'" André answered smiling, "what do you mean, prepare yourself for going into the church? What does that mean? You go into the church like you go into a café.... What's the difference? One is a public space; the other is a public place. One has an organ; the other, an orchestra."

"On the contrary, [...] in a church it is heaven that is in question, and it's not easy to climb up to heaven... you have to make a real effort."

André didn't appear to have understood what Muhsin said, and he didn't bother to question him any further.<sup>825</sup>

While of course being a fictional conversation, Tawfiq al-Hakim alludes in this passage to the different status of places of worship in Paris and Egypt. André's seemingly complete incomprehension of his Egyptian friend's discomfort in casually taking part in the burial rituals of a stranger evokes this cultural contrast.

These sentiments have shown considerable longevity and are deemed universal to the wider geopolitical dichotomy. Written nearly twenty years later, Sayyid Qutb published a piece in the Egyptian journal *al-Risala* deploring American irreverence to the sanctity of holy spaces<sup>826</sup>:

'If the church is a place for worship in the entire Christian world, in America it is for everything but worship. You will find it difficult to differentiate between it and any other place, they go to church for carousal and enjoyment, or, as they call it in their language "fun". Most who go there do so out of necessary social tradition, and it is a place for meeting and friendship, and to spend a nice time.'<sup>827</sup>

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<sup>825</sup> Al-Hakim, *Bird of the East*, p. 12

<sup>826</sup> Qutb, 'The America', pp. 19-20

<sup>827</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

This contrast in religious culture experienced by Egyptian migrants to the West was thus a persistent one in the twentieth century.

Yet France's own history of anti-clericalism was quite distinct from that of its European neighbours; or the US for that matter. Rooted in its political antagonism towards the Vatican, the public place of religion was attacked during the French Revolution and throughout Napoleonic reforms. This feature of post-Napoleonic France is described by Andrew Wernick as 'God's cultural demise'<sup>828</sup>. The French Republic looked unfavourably upon outward manifestations of religious expression. While some revolutionaries were themselves men of the cloth, such as French nationalist Abbé Henri-Baptiste Grégoire<sup>829</sup>, French intellectual circles were historically very unsympathetic to religious expressions, especially in the twentieth century<sup>830</sup>.

And while anti-clericalism and the loss of religious culture, especially in metropolitan centres, became characteristic of French culture, it is rarely used to justify French attitudes towards other, non-European faiths. The history of East-West encounters on non-European soil, predominantly under the guise of colonialism, is saturated with accounts regarding the disrespect shown by European colonisers towards indigenous religious rites and cultures, considered the Orientalist condescension of non-Western culture. But in the French context, when situated alongside France's history of institutional conflict with the Church, the tone of colonial condescension is tinted with a more universal disregard for the status of religion. Of the few historians interpreting Orientalism in this way is Michel Le Gall. In his

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<sup>828</sup> Wernick, *Auguste Comte*, p. 14

<sup>829</sup> Abbé Henri-Baptiste Grégoire was a Catholic priest, ordained in Metz on 1 April 1775, who joined the Third Estate in 1789 and an advocate for Jewish rights in Europe, Sepinwall, A.G., *The Abbé Grégoire and the French Revolution – The Making of Modern Universalism*, (California, 2005), p. 20 & p. 89

<sup>830</sup> Waardenburg, J., 'L'Impact de l'œuvre de Louis Massignon sur les études islamiques', *Louis Massignon au cœur de notre temps*, (Paris, 1999), p. 295

article 'Anti-clericalism and positivism: a note on French Orientalism'<sup>831</sup>, Le Gall demonstrates how French anti-clericalism emanating from the positivist tradition preconditioned Orientalist scholarship of North African *maraboutisme*. More histories of French-Muslim relations should adopt this approach.

When it comes to westward intellectual migration from traditionally religiously conservative societies such as those in the north of Africa, the loss of religious culture, both in the sense of practicing religion and respecting faith, was an oft remarked feature of Western society. Yet migrants generally anticipated this feature of the Parisian environment. Students for instance accepted when in France that they could not adhere to their own traditional religious culture, despite the construction of the Paris Mosque in 1926. This is evident from an account of the AEMNAF congress in 1933. Moroccan students called for recipients of bursaries to be respectful of religious day to day conventions. Yet this resulted in an uproar from fellow students, claiming that in Paris it was impossible to live one's life according to Muslim conventions<sup>832</sup>. The matter was therefore dropped. This shows an acceptance among migrants that urban European centres like Paris were not conducive to religious life and practices.

### **Social Ethics – Immorality**

While the loss of religious culture was presented as an undesirable component of Western secularism, the most ardent criticisms were directed at another visible repercussion of Western secularism: social liberalism, represented subjectively as immoral conduct.

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<sup>831</sup> Le Gall, 'Anti-clericalism'

<sup>832</sup> *Courneuve*, Série K 15, P13681

Gay Paree, with licentious nightclubs like the *Folie Bergère*, *Chez Maxime* and *Taboo*, was widely perceived abroad as a hive of immorality. The reputations of such institutions thus stereotyped the experience of provincial students from religious conservative societies in Arabic literature:

‘[...] the east has begun to understand that its daughter has turned into a dissolute hussy with no heart, conscience or moral character, a tart who will end up ripped apart under the tables of the riotous drunks in that tavern whose windows look out on the Atlantic on one side and on the Black Sea on the other.’<sup>833</sup>

This extract from Tawfiq al-Hakim’s aforementioned novel evokes the stereotypical depiction of Western culture as a loose woman, a ‘dissolute hussy’. Though the idea of Western immorality on the whole referred to the loss of family values and selfish uncharitable individualist behaviour, it was most prominently represented by the idea of sexual misconduct.

Sexual liberalism dominated Eastern popular representations of Western metropolitan experiences. Derek Hopwood explores this dynamic in his book *Sexual Encounters in the Middle East*. Spanning from the social interaction of men and women to dancing and promiscuity, it stands in historiography as one of the main themes of cultural encounters<sup>834</sup>. Novels such as Suhayl Idris’ *al-Hayy al-latini* and Tayeb Salih’s book *A Season of Migration to the North* demonstrate how the issue of sexual liberation dominated Arab impressions of Europe before travelling, became a motivation for travelling to Europe, and the cause of an important cultural dialectic between Eastern and Western identity: the

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<sup>833</sup> al-Hakim, *Bird of the East*, p. 156

<sup>834</sup> Hopwood, D., *Sexual Encounters in the Middle East: The British the French and the Arabs*, (Reading, 1999), p. 1

traditional, conservative morality of prohibition versus the modern developing immorality of social liberation, especially in post-World War Two Europe<sup>835</sup>.

It was an image which was particularly associated with migration to Paris. As remarked by Malek Bennabi in his memoirs, Paris was stereotyped as the epitome of European sexual liberalism, referring to the space as a blonde female figure:

‘It was a time when [they] would sing “*Paris est une blonde*”, ... “*Paris reine du monde*” ... it must be said that these young Algerians pined after this blond [...].’<sup>836</sup>

Tawfiq al-Hakim also evokes a similar rhetorical image of Europe in his novel:

‘At a certain time in history, Asia and Africa joined in marriage, and from that union there issued forth a new-born child – a blonde girl called Europe. She was svelte, beautiful, and intelligent. But she was also frivolous and egotistical – concerned only with herself and with keeping others in subjection.’<sup>837</sup>

This image not only romanticised student experiences of the city, but it created a degree of expectation, indeed eventually, purpose for travelling.

But the reputation was not only romanticised, it was also demonised. The predominant concern was of students becoming corrupted by this lax moral and sexual culture. This concern features heavily in literary representations of intellectual migrants, such as this extract from Haqqi’s novel *Lamp of Umm Hashim*:

‘My advice to you, [...] is that you live in foreign parts as you live here and that you are scrupulous about your religion and its duties. If you once become negligent about them you don’t know where that will lead you. [...]. Beware of the women of Europe, that they don’t lead you astray, for they are not for you and you are not for them.’<sup>838</sup>

<sup>835</sup> El-Enany, *Arab Representations*, p. 83

<sup>836</sup> “Paris is a blond, ... Paris queen of the world”, original kept to display intended rhythm and timbre; Bennabi, *Mémoires*, p. 116-117

<sup>837</sup> al-Hakim, *Bird of the East*, p. 149

<sup>838</sup> Hakki, Y., *The Lamp*, p. 58

The relative nudity of European women was the very first observation recorded by Algerian thinker Malek Bennabi in his memoirs. Upon moving to Paris as a student, he lived, like many students, in a destitute hotel room, in less than reputable districts with blatant manifestations of prostitution displayed at his doorstep<sup>839</sup>. The image of the Latin Quarter, where girls and boys resided in the same hotels, same streets, with debauchery at their doorstep, was a stereotypical image frequently propagated in the literature. Yet the image had many threads of truth<sup>840</sup>.

The perceived promiscuity of European women is presented as a direct result of Western secularism. The breakdown of moral social frameworks was considered by religious conservatives like Sayyid Qutb and Hasan al-Banna' as the consequence of religious inobservance and the decline of religion in the West. Social values upheld by a practicing religious community were seen as having been eroded by the materialist quality of secularism, leading to social anarchy:

'[...] individuality and unlimited liberty can lead to chaos and many other short-comings, which ultimately led to the fragmentation of the social structure and family systems, and the eventual re-emergence of totalitarianism.'<sup>841</sup>

The moral corruption associated with Western secular culture continues therefore to be one of the principle objections to secularism in Islamist discourse; however this image of Western sexuality was misleading. Firstly, many of the impressions of Europe stigmatised in Arabic literature exaggerate the question of Western promiscuity. The cultural shock

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<sup>839</sup> Bennabi, *Mudhakkirat*, p. 203

<sup>840</sup> Descriptions of these sorts of accommodation, dirty and destitute, housing students and intellectuals can be found in many accounts of Paris' Latin Quarter, from George Orwell's *Down and Out in Paris and London* to Susha Guppy's memoirs *A Girl in Paris*, pp. 34-36

<sup>841</sup> al-Banna, H., *Peace in Islam, The Complete Work of Imam Hasan al-Banna*, accessed 07 December 2012, at 'The Quran blog', <http://thequranblog.wordpress.com/2008/06/07/the-complete-works-of-imam-hasan-al-banna-4/trackback/>

produced by migrants from conservative societies, especially Muslim societies, interacting with unveiled and unchaperoned women resulted in presumptions about their availability<sup>842</sup>. Secondly, the image of European, later Western sexuality did not reflect the social history of the region.

Ideas about Western sexuality and immorality were propagated in early Arabic literature by authors such as Rifa'ā Rafī' al-Tahtawi, Muhammad al-Saffar, 'Ali Mubarak<sup>843</sup> and Muhammad al-Muwaylihi<sup>844</sup>. The stereotype of Paris as a faithless female figure is present in the writings of al-Tahtawi: 'If I were to have a final divorce from Paris, it would only be to return to Cairo. Each of them is a bride to me – however, Cairo is not the daughter of unbelief!'<sup>845</sup> He also directly accuses European women of being adulterous and men being 'slaves of women', whom they treat as 'spoilt children':

'In short, this city, like all the great cities of France and Europe, is filled with a great deal of immorality, heresies, and human error, despite the fact that Paris is one of the intellectual capitals of the entire world'<sup>846</sup>.

Their reactions to public and private contacts with European women subsequently permeated into twentieth century encounters.

Many of the impressions found in Arabic and Islamic literature about Western sexuality from the 1914 to 1962 were by and large the product of earlier encounters,

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<sup>842</sup> Hopwood, *Sexual Encounters*, p. 245

<sup>843</sup> Selected for Egyptian Student Mission in 1844 and became an important statesman and educationalist who produced a famous twenty volume encyclopaedia of Egypt, including his autobiography *al-Khitat al-jadida al-tawfiqiyya*, published in 1888; Vollers, K.. "Alī Pasha Mubārak." *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, edited by Bearman, P., Bianquis, Th., Bosworth, C.E., van Donzel, E., Heinrichs. W.P., (Brill Online, 2013) accessed 06 September 2013 via Oxford University at [librarieshttp://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/ali-pasha-mubarak-SIM\\_0535](http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/ali-pasha-mubarak-SIM_0535); for more information on 'Ali Mubarak, see Dykstra, *A Biographical Study*

<sup>844</sup> Egyptian writer, said to be connected to Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and Muhammad 'Abduh, who travelled to Paris in 1844, "al-Muwaylihi." in *Ibid.*, accessed 06 September 2013 via Oxford University Libraries at [http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/al-muwaylihi-COM\\_0827](http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/al-muwaylihi-COM_0827)

<sup>845</sup> Al-Tahtawi, *An Imam in Paris*, pp. 159-160

<sup>846</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 177-178

creating rhetoric that was 'repeated by Muslim preachers and polemicists in the twentieth century.'<sup>847</sup> This refers back to what Peter Burke calls the 'double lens' of individual experience and conventions of representations. As Abu-Lughod notes, twentieth century polemicists were still influenced by the impressions recorded of Europe in the nineteenth century due to the reputation they established among Middle Eastern and North African intelligentsia:

'[...] these books were one of the very few means which were available to the literate population for gaining an understanding of Europe and for constructing their first image of the West. Much of what the author's wrote was absorbed by Arab intellectuals whose familiarity with the West was shaped by these early impressions and whose later knowledge was coloured by them.'<sup>848</sup>

Many polemicists whose writings had a significant impact on Islamic secularist discourse, such as Hasan al-Banna' and Sayyid Abu'l-a'la' Mawdudi, did not themselves travel to the West. Their impressions of Western sexuality were fed by the stories of their contemporaries, their contacts with Europeans in their native homeland and by reading literary representations. This partly explains the relatively consistent impression of European sexuality and immorality, despite the greatly changing social circumstances in Europe.

Gender relations in Europe and America during this period were by no means static. Social liberalism and sexual liberation was barely apparent in most social circles during the interwar period, and it was not until the 1960s that the social liberalism that now characterises European society began to become notable. The discrepancy between expectations of migrants, based upon stereotypes propagated abroad, and their

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<sup>847</sup> Hopwood, *Sexual Encounters*, p. 249

<sup>848</sup> Abu-Lughod, *The Arab Rediscovery*, p. 96

experiences in Europe is noted in some of the memoirs of migrants. The Iranian singer Shusha Guppy explicitly notes her disappointment at the attitudes of European women she encountered in Paris. She had during her youth in Iran looked up to this image of independent European woman, propagated by popular culture and communist propaganda, aspiring for an enlightened girl brought up in a religious and socially conservative milieu. European women, she had thought, were independent of men, professional, politicised and with prospects far beyond those of marriage and children. Yet most European women she met in Paris did little to combat traditional gender constructs:

‘I was constantly amazed at the conduct of my first friends at the Foyer: these were the middle and upper-class girls, usually Catholics, who believed in the convention of ‘bourgeois’ families, and whose one aim in life was finding a husband.’

‘All of this contrasted every illusion I had about Western women’s freedom of spirit and social mobility. Paradoxically, the most natural independent behaviour seemed to be that of my Jordanian friend Jamila.’<sup>849</sup>

Though she was not a North African migrant, having been raised in a traditionally conservative religious household in a Muslim majority country does give her testimony bearing to this argument. Social liberalism was not necessarily a Western or Parisian quality.

The discrepancy between the expectations and experience of migration is also prevalent in the narrative of Suhayl Idris’ novel *al-Hayy al-Latini*. The story depicts a young Arab student whose quest for easy sexual conquests and exploits in Paris leaves him disappointed and unsatisfied. The story concludes by the hero realising that relationships in socially liberated Europe had to be built on mutual respect<sup>850</sup>. Suhayl Idris did himself study

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<sup>849</sup> Guppy, *A Girl in Paris*, p. 230

<sup>850</sup> Hopwood, *Sexual Encounters*, p. 258

in Paris at the Sorbonne, and his novel is known to be semi-autobiographical<sup>851</sup>. While it is not clear whether he himself experienced the same expectation and disappointment, his treatment of the topic reflects the problematic and misleading rhetoric concerning Western sexuality, immorality and the availability of women.

Despite the persistent assumption about Western immorality as a product of modern secular society and civilizational progress, the liberalisation of Western social mores in the twentieth century has less to do with the underlying philosophical premise for scientific progress than a result of the societal implications of industrialisation and urbanisation. The displacement of young men and women, the breakdown of traditional family and social structures and their restrictive moral frameworks had much more potential to affect drastic social change than exposure to a certain culture. Students travelling independently to study in metropolitan centres like Paris felt those forces particularly keenly, being themselves displaced.

While travelling to centres of knowledge for education was a deep-seated tradition in Islamic societies, the resulting isolation and liberty of students in Europe was unlike the kinds of strict supervision and discipline experienced in centres such as Al-Azhar, al-Karouine and Zaitoun Universities in Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia respectively. Taha Husayn's account of residing at al-Azhar was one of austerity, monotony, regulation and supervision:

'The four years I had spent at the Azhar seemed to me like forty, [...]. It was not the poverty that oppressed me, nor my inability to do as I please. [...] Rather, it was seeing around me tens and hundreds suffering what I suffered, enduring what I endured, with even their most modest desires beyond their attaining.'<sup>852</sup>

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<sup>851</sup> El-Enany, *Arab Representations*, p. 83

<sup>852</sup> Hussein, *A Passage*, p. 1

Contrasting this background with his experience of Paris, he felt it obvious that young Egyptians would indulge in café culture, drinking and chasing women:

'How could Egyptian youths expect to live in France and frequent cafés and clubs and celebrations without love coming into the picture, to tease and tempt them, and from time to time tax them hardly?'<sup>853</sup>

As explained in Chapter Two, Taha Husayn himself lived a very sedate experience of Paris, despite meeting his wife in France<sup>854</sup>. Yet there is plenty of material pertaining to Egyptian students profiting from Paris' qualities as a centre of pleasure. For instance, Doria Shafik described her cousin and future husband's experience of Paris as that of a rich playboy indulging in drinking, dancing and women:

'[...] he was extremely good looking and full of charm and had tremendous success with women both in Cairo and now in Paris. Apparently for the first several months he was in Paris he was having such a good time that he neglected to inform the director of his arrival or register at the university'<sup>855</sup>.

Tawfiq al-Hakim also profited from individual freedom when studying in Alexandria, Cairo and Paris to indulge in his love of the arts.

Female migrants from conservative religious societies felt particularly liberated when studying abroad from patriarchal restrictions. Naturally this relative freedom was the principle objection to families educating their daughters abroad, which in turn limited the number of female migrants during this period. Gisèle Halimi for instance managed to convince her mother to let her go only once her brother, already in Paris, found her lodgings with a family:

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<sup>853</sup> Ibid., p. 81

<sup>854</sup> Ibid., p. 113

<sup>855</sup> Nelson, *Shafik*, p. 79

'I struggled for every minute of every day for more than three months. "A young girl, alone! In France!" exclaimed my mother, taking the sky as her witness.'<sup>856</sup>

Even to this day in Western societies where young people overall experience high degrees of individual liberty and independence, the act of moving away from home, away from the supervision of one's parents, is widely considered a watershed in their lives, marked generally by a large degree of impropriety.

Whether it is indulging in the arts or in romantic relationships, the primary forces affecting these developments was not necessarily the Western secularist ideal. It was the inherent mobility attached to studying abroad with little or no supervision. There is no denying that Paris offered plenty of opportunities for 'undesirable' behaviour, whether those were extramarital relations or simply indulging in Paris' theatrical scene. But the key factor was the increasingly routine displacement of the educated elite into a relatively unsupervised milieu. The factor at play therefore is the increasingly globalised knowledge industry, combined with colonial structures which prevented the establishment of equivalent knowledge industries in the colonies themselves, forcing students to undertake their further education in foreign capitals.

The forces supposedly corrupting students in European centres were therefore the same forces that originally 'corrupted' European culture; the development of an industrial, free-market global economy that encourages the free movement of peoples. Secularisation was therefore not a Western cultural feature but a mark of the 'changing historical reality' of society brought on by industrial capitalism<sup>857</sup>. As Rasheed al-Enany states, these forces were at this time felt increasingly in urban centres across the Middle East as they

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<sup>856</sup> Halimi, *La cause*, p. 43

<sup>857</sup> Engineer, A. A., 'Islam and Secularism', in *Blackwell Companion to Contemporary Islamic Thought*, ed. Abu-Rabi', I. M., (Oxford, 2006)

themselves became urban industrial and intellectual centres, resulting in similar processes of social liberalisation that contrasted centres like Cairo and Beirut from the rural communities in the Middle East and North Africa<sup>858</sup>.

The importance of migration to urban centres in combating social conservatism is the mainstay of 'Contrast Theorists' such as Emile Durkheim, Ferdinand Toennies and Max Weber. Their theories have since been dismissed by urban theorists for their nostalgic bias, theoretical abstraction and Euro-centricism<sup>859</sup>. Though they do not represent a comprehensive and methodologically stringent theory of urban transformation, they are an important observation in relation to social change resulting from encountering urban spaces. Such theories do not satisfactorily explain the make-up and development of urban milieus in the way they were intended, or at least perceived. Nevertheless they do effectively pertain to a contrast experienced by those migrating to urban areas either from non-industrialised societies or conservative, often religious societies which have until this point experienced little circular mobility or population displacement.

So, political Islam rejected secularism as a nefarious consequence of Western cultural hegemony<sup>860</sup>. Yet more attention should be afforded to the societal forces which encouraged social change. While of course not all forces that produced social change in Europe could be transferred internationally, such as the impact of the Second World War on European society, others were more easily exported, such as scientific education and greater rate of population displacement. Without the kinds of strict supervision which were usually exerted in Islamic centres of knowledge, intellectual migration from conservative

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<sup>858</sup> El-Enany, *Arab Representations*, p. 84

<sup>859</sup> For an overview of contrast urban theory, see Thorns, *The Transformation of Cities*, pp. 23-26

<sup>860</sup> Butko, T. J., 'Revelation or Revolution: A Gramscian Approach to the Rise of Political Islam', *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 31: 1, (May 2004), p. 41

societies in the north of Africa, as well as other Muslim majority countries, created a displaced youth free of the normal constrictions of social structure.

This interpretation of social liberalism and migration also applies to feminism. The two notable female North African intellectual migrants studied in this thesis were not won over by feminist philosophies due to their experience of Paris. Rather, they sought to go to Paris to be liberated from the stranglehold that traditional religious communities had over them.

For Doria Shafik, education was a chance to flee the traditional expectations of marriage and domesticity:

'A ring was put on my finger and with it was the collapse of all my dreams of a free future! A door had been slammed on the unknown and its unsuspected riches.'<sup>861</sup>

Shafik believed that pursuing a further education in France was not only an individual act of liberation, but a step towards the liberation of women in Egypt in general:

'This strange sensation of being on the threshold of realizing a great dream, unacknowledged but vaguely felt by generations of oppressed women, a secret buried deep within their hearts, which little by little, as within my own, would become the day of liberation.'<sup>862</sup>

For Gisèle Halimi, education was in itself a subversive act. Being from a poor Jewish family in Tunisia, she was also expected to lead a life of marriage and domesticity. Her mother deemed her crazy for refusing at the age of 16 to marry a 35 year old merchant. So even at school age, reading was to Halimi an act of liberation:

'The look, even the feel of books fascinated me. I would look at them, touch them and sniff them for a while before devouring their secrets. As if the extraordinary power of their words – which I felt so strongly – had to manifest

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<sup>861</sup> Nelson, *Shafik*, p. 19

<sup>862</sup> *Ibid*, p. 29

themselves first physically to me, [...]. It seemed like a material understanding of a book gave me, as if by osmosis, the knowledge and the means to be free.<sup>863</sup>

Going to study in France, alone and single, away from her familial obligations, was the ultimate act of personal liberation:

'My departure for France was an opportunity for a small domestic revolution!'<sup>864</sup>

Therefore for these two young women, migrating and studying abroad was a feminist act in itself.

But travelling was not the cause of these women's independent minds and desires to lead independent lives. It was not the source of their modern progressive attitude. In Halimi's case, she had already established at home, under the wing of the PCT, the Union of Tunisian Girls<sup>865</sup>. Instead, they were more influenced by remote contacts with European philosophy and feminist literature, especially Simone de Beauvoir's *Second Sex*:

'Coming as I did from an Islamic country, growing up under the rabbis' watchful eyes, plunging into the taboos of virginity, fertility, paternity, the denunciation of these myths was like the miracle of the discovery of my identity.'<sup>866</sup>

Travelling to Paris was rather the consequence of their independence. Nor did it result necessarily in their corruption. While Halimi did have abortion at the age of 19<sup>867</sup>, Doria Shafik by all accounts led a very upright existence in Paris, being very conscious of her reputation at home (see Chapter Three). Paris therefore was not the source but the object of their feminism.

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<sup>863</sup> Halimi, *La cause*, pp. 33-34

<sup>864</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 43

<sup>865</sup> Halimi, *Milk*, p. 94 and p. 99

<sup>866</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 296

<sup>867</sup> Halimi, *La cause*, p. 49

Therefore the act of sending students away for education without supervision affected their behaviour, rather than necessarily exposure to Western culture. Misunderstanding the causal relationship between Western secular culture and social liberation has contributed to the image of Western authorship and authority over these developments, complicating cultural relations. Furthermore, the excessive focus on the moral anarchy of secular societies ignores a fundamental component of Auguste Comte's Positivist philosophy. While being the intellectual foundations upon which the Western secularist ideal was built, it did not seek to shake society of all institutional moral control. It sought to shake society of a flawed and corrupt institution, the Catholic Church; it sought to create an alternative moral structure, the Religion of Humanity, which would serve to instil the same social guidance and ultimately restriction as the Church, but based on principles devoid of belief in the supernatural, upon which monotheist religious authority was based. His new church, despite being described as a colossal failure, sought to develop a secular clergy that included scientists, responsible for the spiritual well-being of society. It also included, in imitation of Christianity, a secular liturgy and regular congregation. As Wernick notes, '[...] the Positivist System would provide the scientific-humanist equivalent to what systematic theology had been in the high Middle Ages: it would serve as the intellectually unifying basis of the new industrial order.'<sup>868</sup> Therefore Auguste Comte's secularist vision was the rational governance of human behaviour on earth, derived from knowledge of the world as seen and understood by humanity, for the sake of humanity. So unlike what was presented in Islamic discourse, secularism was not necessarily about the decline of religion as an institution in Europe, as a result of Europe's history of anti-clericalism. It is an issue of provenance, not unaccountability of conduct or rejection of spirituality.

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<sup>868</sup> Wernick, *Auguste Comte*, p. 3

### **Ontological and Epistemological Implications of Secular Knowledge**

The focus in Islamic discourse on visible manifestations of religion's decline in Western societies diverts attention from the more fundamental connection between scientific knowledge, technological progress and faith. In European thought, the ontological and epistemological implications of scientific knowledge are central to the debate about secularism. Ideas such as Charles Darwin's evolutionism conflicted with Christian creationism, thereby questioning scriptural knowledge as well as the ontological premise of a higher being. Scientific techniques employed in the study of religion, such as scriptural exegesis and hermeneutics, also questioned the status of religious scriptures. Scientific and empirical approaches to knowledge therefore brought into serious question the religious premise to knowledge in Europe and eventually the West. Science therefore was seen in Europe to produce secularism, but science also needed knowledge to be secular. This essentially underpins the epistemic clash between Islamic thought and scientific knowledge.

This epistemic clash is discussed in the Algerian context by Fanny Colonna in her article on the impact of positivism on islamist and modernist thought in Algeria, resulting in the invisibility of the Kuttab schools in modern Algerian history:

'The republican scholastic system, which is responsible for an entire intellectual restructuring in France, and which is both a symptom and a means at the same time, marks a formidable revolution in the French way of thinking; this revolution is positivism, [...]. At the centre of positivism, there is a definition of knowledge around which the republican school is structured (and which is still active today) build in opposition to previous definitions in France, in particular regarding the contamination of knowledge and religion.

This definition legitimately renders all other knowledge invalid and gradually invisible.<sup>869</sup>

Yet the epistemological implication of Western scientific knowledge is not central to Islamic discourse on secularism. The literature focused during this period primarily on visible manifestations of Western secularism. Science for polemicists like Hasan Al-Bana', was a physical, material tool, not a belief system:

'The western way of life which was founded on material knowledge, technical know-how, innovation, invention and the dominance of the work market with its products, was not able to give the human soul a ray of light, a hint of "spiritual inspiration or a strand of faith."'<sup>870</sup>

America did not have the spiritual capacity or refinement, Qutb felt, to engage with scientific knowledge as an advancement of knowledge about fundamental human truths. Instead, he believed that they only believed in 'one kind of science, and that was applied science'<sup>871</sup>.

This understanding of Western science also features in early twentieth century Egyptian literary representations of European society. Tawfiq al-Hakim describes the spiritual and intellectual malaise in Europe through the rants of his Russian émigrés character, Ivan:

'I am afraid Europe is on the verge of pushing humanity over the abyss. [...] her fascinating civilisation is only tinsel and that all her modern science, which has been her chief boast throughout her history, is little more than a toy made of tin and glass - a toy which has brought a certain comfort to people in daily living, but which has deprived mankind of its true nature, of its poetry, and its purity of soul!'<sup>872</sup>

'European science is merely an eye, and, like any other eye, it sees the exterior surface of things. [...]. It is based on the tangible world only, and I

<sup>869</sup> Colonna, F., 'Invisibles défenses : à propos du kuttaab et d'un chapitre de Joseph Despramet', in *Pratiques et résistance culturelles au Maghreb*, p. 40

<sup>870</sup> al-Banna, 'Materialism in the West', *Peace in Islam*

<sup>871</sup> Qutb, 'The America', p. 12

<sup>872</sup> al-Hakim, *Bird of the East*, p. 150

insist that it is an incomplete civilisation that only perceives life in one world.<sup>873</sup>

Western science in Islamic discourse was therefore presented as a toy, or a tool, not an earth-shattering, epistemological shift.

Atheism was moreover commonly presented as a product of secular, materialistic culture, rather than the necessary product of scientific knowledge. The adoption of secular approaches to knowledge in Islamic thought did at times provoke considerable reaction if it was seen to conflict with, rather than complement Islamic scholarship. The employment of scientific techniques was considered particularly problematic when directed towards the study of Islam itself. In the modern history of Islamic thought, there are celebrated cases of epistemological confrontation between scientific knowledge and Islamic thought, such as Jamal al-Din al-Afghani's conversation with Ernest Renan's *Islam and Science*<sup>874</sup>. Yet there are many notable cases in the twentieth century that provoked violent reactions in opposition, such as the reactions to Abu Zaid's hermeneutics<sup>875</sup>.

There was therefore a fear that European thought could corrupt Muslim students from the north of Africa and threaten a student's Islamic faith. But they feared exposure to secular philosophy, not scientific knowledge. The Khedive once told Taha Husayn before going to France not to study philosophy, implying that it corrupted students, but to study history, because 'that was a good subject'<sup>876</sup>. A similar situation occurred for Doria Shafik,

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<sup>873</sup> Ibid., p. 164

<sup>874</sup> See Renan, E., al-Afghani, J.A-D., *L'Islam et la Science – avec la réponse d'Afghani*, (Montpellier, 2003)

<sup>875</sup> Jansen, J.J.G.. 'Muḥammad Abū Zayd' *Encyclopédie de l'Islam*. (Brill Online, 2013), [Oxford University libraries], accessed 06 September 2013 at [http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopedie-de-l-islam/muhammad-abu-zayd-SIM\\_5380](http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopedie-de-l-islam/muhammad-abu-zayd-SIM_5380)

<sup>876</sup> Husayn, *A Passage*, p. 65

who also wanted to study philosophy. It took the intervention of Taha Husayn, who at the time was Dean of the Faculty of the Arts, to pursue her first choice<sup>877</sup>.

Sending students to acquire scientific knowledge abroad inherently resulted in the confrontation of distinct epistemological spheres. But while most literary representations dealt with this conflict through the cultural lens, Yahya Haqqi was one of the few Egyptians from the new generation of Arab novelists to address and attempt to reconcile this epistemic clash in his literature. After a powerful and debilitating internal conflict upon returning to Egypt, surrounded by superstition and poverty, Yahya Haqqi portrays through his hero the essence of the Islamic modernist reconciliation with science; Ismail concludes at the end of his struggle that 'there is no knowledge without faith'<sup>878</sup>. Knowledge would give him the technique and faith would give him the strength to preserve against adversity:

'He went back again to his medicine and science. But now he was given the support of faith. He did not despair when he found that the disease had taken a strong hold on her and none of his efforts seemed to have any effect. He persevered and went on treating her until there was a faint ray of hope, after which Fatima continued to improve daily, [...]. When, one day, he saw her standing in front of him in perfect health, he searched in vain in his mind and heart for the feeling of surprise that he feared would be there.'<sup>879</sup>

Written upon returning to Egypt from Europe, Yahya Haqqi concludes his short story with what he offered as an epistemological reconciliation:

'He relied first and foremost upon God, then on his knowledge and the skills of his hands – and God blessed his learning and his skill.'<sup>880</sup>

For intellectual migrants to Europe like Yahya Haqqi, science did not disprove the religious premise of knowledge, but reinforced it<sup>881</sup>.

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<sup>877</sup> Nelson, *Shafik*, p. 36

<sup>878</sup> Hakki, *The Lamp*, p. 84

<sup>879</sup> *Ibid.*, p. p. 86

<sup>880</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 87

During the period of this study, many Islamic thinkers were influenced by the approach of secular philosophers. Despite famously writing that 'God is dead', Nietzsche's philosophy and analytical approach influenced scores of Muslim intellectuals at this time, including Malek Bennabi<sup>882</sup>, Mohamed 'Aziz Lahbabi and Ali Shari'ati. Even Sayyid Qutb historicised Christianity and Islam, especially in *Social Justice in Islam*<sup>883</sup>. Much of this was directed towards the study of late rather than early Islamic societies or the formation of religious scriptures where such methods caused more controversy. So while the process of historicising Islam brought Taha Husayn and Abu Zayd into disrepute, for Sayyid Qutb it served to justify the prominent role of Islam in public life. This seemingly paradoxical association of atheistic interpretive structures with the reinvigoration of Islamic thought is a remarkable feature of the intellectual interaction of European and Islamic societies. But it also shows that scientific knowledge in Islamic thought was not inherently secular, as it was in Europe.

Atheism, like the loss of religious culture and social liberalism, was therefore considered another negative ramification of a society turned solely to the material world and relying on scientific knowledge as the only interpretative framework from which to view the world and human existence. In Europe, secular knowledge forms an underlying premise for science. In Islamic thought during this period, secular knowledge and science were not necessarily considered one and the same. Science was not inherently secular and atheism was not a product of scientific knowledge, it was a product of secular philosophy.

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<sup>881</sup> 'The rays which ensured this enlightenment are the effects of divine will for which the mystery has yet to be pierced despite the spectacular scientific progress.', Haqqi, *Un Égyptien à Paris*, p. 40

<sup>882</sup> Bennabi, M., *The Qur'anic phenomenon: an attempt at a theory of understanding the holy Qur'an*, (Indianapolis, 1983)

<sup>883</sup> Kotb, K., *Social Justice in Islam*, translated by John B. Hardie, (New York, 1970)

Paris' reputation as a city of pleasure, home to anti-clerical and atheistic philosophies affected the nature of intellectual migration; it generated expectations and trepidations, as well as expected outcomes. Yet Paris' reputation was not only exaggerated. It conflated many aspects of urban materiality. It is clear that urban centres in Europe, especially Paris, were seen as secular spaces and that migration to such a city represented an encounter with Western secularism. This association between rhetorical discourse and a physical locality attracted a considerable number of migrants, especially as it was the focal point of romanticised representations of Paris in Arabic literature.

The way in which material culture and secularism has come to epitomise narratives of religious encounters in European cities has completely overshadowed alternative religious discourse also taking place in Paris at the time. Catholic intellectual revivalism in Paris and its significance for cultural encounters resulting from North African intellectual migration will be discussed in the following chapter.

## Chapter Ten – French Catholic Circles and the Spiritual Crisis of Modernity

Paris was best known as a secular and licentious metropole. Yet there was in the city an important religious current which is oft ignored in narratives of cultural encounters. Between 1914 and 1962 progressive religious discourse among sections of French catholic intellectual circles grappled with the challenges of modernity and multiculturalism. This Parisian constituency was by no means the majority, yet they presented an alternative presence which contested stereotypes about European society and turned Paris into a place of religious discourse and inter-religious dialogue.

### **Maritain and Mounier**

There was in Paris in the early- to mid-twentieth century an important network of catholic intellectuals who were important mediators of religious culture in France and who developed a discourse in opposition to modern societal developments. Charles Maurras' extreme-right *Action Française*, the Christian democracy of Jacques Maritain, Emmanuel Mounier's Personalism, the humanism of *Témoignage Chrétien* and the Christian mysticism of Louis Massignon's *badaliyya*, while representing quite distinct responses to their contemporary challenges, were all reacting to the same forces grouped under the umbrella of Western secularism in Islamic discourse.

They believed, like many Islamic thinkers, that European society was undergoing a spiritual crisis. Jacques Maritain<sup>884</sup>, the famous French catholic writer and philosopher, was particularly vocal on this issue and his contributions to this discourse acquired international significance<sup>885</sup>. He and his wife Raïssa have become prominent representatives of Paris' disaffected youth resulting from Europe's perceived spiritual crisis. It is well known that they were both so disillusioned with French intellectual and spiritual life that they swore to commit suicide if they found no solution<sup>886</sup>. Salvation was achieved in the end by converting to Catholicism and embracing the neo-Thomist philosophy.

Jacques Maritain from then on dedicated a significant proportion of his prolific intellectual output to a critique of atheism, such as that presented at Notre Dame University on 23 March 1949:

'I should like to consider in this essay one particular aspect of the present spiritual crisis – namely, contemporary atheism and its inner meaning. [...] this casting aside of all religion is itself a religious phenomenon, [...] this rejection of God – of the true, transcendent God of nature – is in actual existence an adoration of the false, immanent god of history.'<sup>887</sup>

Maritain discussed this same topic ten years before in the same edition; Maritain's preoccupation with Europe's spiritual crisis was therefore enduring<sup>888</sup>.

Maritain in his writings was responding to the modern development of European society, motivated by his 'desire to look for the hidden spiritual significance of the present agony of the world'<sup>889</sup>. His response was intellectual, inspired by Henri Bergson whose

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<sup>884</sup> Born November 1882 and died April 1972; 'Jacques Maritain', *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, accessed 10 September 2013, at <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/365487/Jacques-Maritain>

<sup>885</sup> Capaldi, N., 'Jacques Maritain: "La Vie Intellectuelle"', *The Review of Metaphysics*, 58:2, (Dec., 2004), p. 401

<sup>886</sup> Hellman, J., *Emmanuel Mounier and the New Catholic Left 1930-1950*, (Toronto, 1981), p. 21

<sup>887</sup> Maritain, J., 'On the Meaning of Contemporary Atheism', *The Review of Politics*, 11:3, (1949), p. 267

<sup>888</sup> Maritain, J., 'Integral Humanism and the Crisis of Modern Times', *The Review of Politics*, 1:1, 1-17, (Jan., 1939)

<sup>889</sup> Maritain, 'On the Meaning of Contemporary Atheism', p. 267

lectures he attended in Paris, but it was also practical. Maritain sought to create a transnational community of Catholics, a new Christendom with which to oppose, or at the very least contest, secular developments of modern society. According to historian Phillipe Chenaux, Maritain's '[...] European (or transnational) dimension' was 'indispensable'. He created in the interwar years a network of Catholic intellectuals, described by Chenaux as the 'Maritain milieu', which 'disregarded political and linguistic borders'. Though not exclusively Catholic, this milieu, like many international political developments in Paris at this time, sought to transcend national borders and create extra-national communities based on common cultural values, or on 'Christianity's universal message and the supra-nationality of the ecclesiastical institution'<sup>890</sup>.

He developed over the years close personal and professional relationships with other notable French Catholic intellectuals such as Charles Péguy, Paul Claudel and Louis Massignon. Maritain was also professor of modern philosophy at the Catholic Institute in Paris from 1914 to 1939, before then moving to the United States during the Second World War to take up posts at Columbia, Chicago and Princeton University. Intellectuals like Maritain not only represented a strong religious discourse in Europe opposing modern developments in secular philosophy and material culture, they also created an alternative space in the Parisian metropolis to the dominant secular and anti-clerical intellectual milieu.

Emmanuel Mounier, founder of the Personalist movement and journal *Esprit* was another important constituent of French catholic revivalism at the time. While there is still much debate as to what exactly the Personalist movement comprised, it was clearly

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<sup>890</sup> Chenaux, P., *Entre Maurras et Maritain: une génération intellectuelle catholique (1920-1930)*, (Paris, 1999), p. 13

founded in response to the spiritual void that Mounier experienced after moving to metropolitan France from the provinces:

'Personalism, [...], will never be a system or a political machine. We are employing this convenient term to indicate a certain perspective to human problems, and to accentuate certain requirements for solving the crisis of the twentieth century that are not always highlighted.'<sup>891</sup>

Mounier was of provincial origin, studying first at University of Grenoble before then progressing on to the Sorbonne. This transition produced in Mounier considerable malaise. He was shocked by the anti-clericalism of Parisian academia, as well as intolerance towards religious knowledge or religious thought. In his correspondence to former teacher and mentor Jacques Chevalier, Mounier was clearly struck by the lack of metaphysical contemplation among his colleagues and classmates:

'I consider myself forever immune to the poison of the Sorbonne.... It is subtle, but it is dangerous above all, in my opinion, for those whom life has not rattled enough, or who.... have no other concern than the development (and I specify: academic) of their intellect. I am certainly incapable of the objective attitude that those young men who place themselves before problems as if in front of a piece of anatomy, and before their career as before a piece of machinery...'<sup>892</sup>

Within this context of spiritual malaise and alienation, the development of the Personalist movement and the entourage surrounding the *Esprit* journal appears to be an attempt at creating a milieu sympathetic and accommodating to those who addressed knowledge from a religious perspective or sheltering those who felt at odds with the secular scholastic environment in Paris.

Concern for the loss of religious culture, French anti-clericalism and secular thought explains why many French Christians supported European fascism despite their otherwise

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<sup>891</sup> Mounier, E., *Qu'est-ce que le personnalisme*, (Paris, 1946)

<sup>892</sup> Lettre to Jacques Chevalier, (25 May 1928), *Œuvres*, IV, 418 in Hellman, J., 'Jacques Chevalier, Bergsonism, and Modern French Catholic Intellectuals', *Biography*, 4 : 2, (Spring 1981), p. 148

liberal stance to politics. The likes of Paul Claudel supported Franco and the Vichy regime precisely because they stood for the preservation of traditional values, supporting structures threatened by urbanisation and industrialisation and defence of the church<sup>893</sup>. Mounier's Personalist movement also came under attack for its early links to German National-Socialism, despite the *Esprit's* content not being fascist<sup>894</sup>. Many of the intellectual and political developments within the French catholic intellectual milieu in the mid-twentieth century can therefore be seen as a reaction to this communal sense of malaise and the context of religious decline in European society. There was in Paris an alternative physical, intellectual, epistemological and religious environment.

### **Louis Massignon's Interfaith Dialogue**

Of the prominent French catholic intellectual responses during this period to the spiritual malaise in Europe, Louis Massignon's is particularly interesting, especially because of his connection to Islamic scholarship. Massignon, like Maritain and Mounier, tried to create an alternative religious milieu to the secular intellectual climate in Paris, but he turned not only to Catholicism, but also to Islam. A close look at Massignon's life, work and professed faith reveals how interfaith dialogue was for Massignon a response to this perceived spiritual crisis, in much the same way that Personalism had been for Mounier, and Christian Democracy had been for Jacques Maritain.

Louis Massignon, who had been a professor at the *Collège de France* for over thirty years, was a Catholic scholar of Islam. Although he often denied having syncretistic

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<sup>893</sup> André de Peretti Interview, Paris, (10 May 2011)

<sup>894</sup> Hellman, *Emmanuel Mounier*, p. 6

tendencies<sup>895</sup>, as have his friends and family posthumously<sup>896</sup>, his relationship with Islam and Islamic culture went beyond simply that of academic interest. Since the day he converted to Catholicism in a prison cell in Bagdad, interfaith dialogue had in many ways formed part of his own personal faith and spiritual journey.

Massignon, like Maritain and Mounier, expressed publicly his feeling that French society was undergoing a spiritual crisis and was therefore in need of revival. In an article entitled '*Un nouveau religieux est-il actuellement nécessaire?*' originally published 1955, Massignon clearly states that a religious revival is 'extremely' necessary on both sides of 'our fraternities'<sup>897</sup>, thereby directly comparing Islamic and Catholic revivalism. The way in which Massignon went about redressing that necessity is worth a detailed analysis. His eminence, fame and personality meant that Massignon was the most notable religious current in Paris that provided an alternative space to the secular social and academic milieu for migrants from the north of Africa of the Islamic faith.

Through his manifold contributions to the improvement of Muslim-Christian relations, he sought to create a religious space in modern metropolitan society, create a congregation and a community of believers. In the light of the perceived spiritual crisis, Massignon's interfaith dialogue seemed to be creating a discursive space for Christians to explore their faith and defend the public place of religion in European society.

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<sup>895</sup> 'I believe it is necessary to enter into the system of the other without reservation for the sake of discussion, it is necessary to know if it is liveable, and to discover this, one must live among those who expose it to us. And to live with those which expose it to you, one must understand and espouse to their ideas and demands for justice.' Massignon, L., 'Réponse', in *Ecrits mémorables*, tome II, (Paris, 2009), p. 7

<sup>896</sup> Introduction by L'Yvonnet, F.,: 'There are no grounds to suspect Massignon of syncretism, which implies that he wishes to mix different aspirations, doctrines and dogmas [...]. Those he read his work closely know his whole-hearted fidelity to the teachings of the Roman and Apostolic Catholic Church', *EM II*, p. 3

<sup>897</sup> Massignon, L., '*Un nouveau religieux est-il actuellement nécessaire?*', *EM I*, pp. 83-87

### **Building Bridges**

The first step was to overcome the traditional mistrust between Muslims and Christians by underlining their common faith, heritage and religious culture. In addition to disseminating greater scholastic interest and knowledge about Islam across Europe, a considerable portion of Massignon's research was aimed at furthering understanding across monotheist faiths<sup>898</sup>. While he did not engage with critical theological debates about the Divinity of Jesus, Hypostasis or the Holy Trinity, he dedicated considerable energies to highlighting similarities in both religions, such as the Three Abrahamic Prayers<sup>899</sup>, the commonality between Muslim and Christian mysticism<sup>900</sup>, and the Cult of the Seven Sleepers<sup>901</sup>.

Massignon's treatment of the Cult of the Seven Sleepers is most well-known. Their presence in both Christian and Islamic religious culture and liturgies became the focus of considerable interest for Massignon. He used this example to highlight common points of religious devotion and the common historical roots of Christianity and Islam. Massignon even established interfaith pilgrimages based on the common worship of these religious figures. The Cult of the Seven Sleepers therefore became a tool to overcome traditional representations of 'the other' which continued to obstruct Christian-Muslim relations.

Speaking at the French branch of the World Congress of Faiths in 1947, Massignon sought to demystify Islamic religious culture by combating traditional stigmas held by European Christians. Addressing a popular, rather than necessarily scholastic audience, Massignon defends religious culture in Muslim societies by regretting the loss of religious practices in Europe.

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<sup>898</sup> Gude, M. L., *Louis Massignon: the crucible of compassion*, (Notre Dame, 1996), p. xi

<sup>899</sup> Massignon, L., *Les trois prières d'Abraham*, (Paris, 1998)

<sup>900</sup> Massignon, 'Mystique Musulmane et Mystique Chrétienne au Moyen Age', *EM II*, pp. 119-142

<sup>901</sup> Massignon, L., 'Les "Sept Dormants" apocalypse de l'Islam', *Opéra minora*, tome III, (Paris, 1969), pp. 104-118

'Christians often don't understand how Muslims will pray five times a day, only they forget the seven canonical hours in Christianity. [...] It is a Judeo-Christian tradition which Muslims have kept and Christians have forgotten, or at least confined its usage to behind convent gates, while the Islamic community are invited to pray five times a day (and not seven).'<sup>902</sup>

Massignon expresses a longing for the religious fervency of Islamic religious culture, describing the fast of Ramadan as 'a communitarian endeavour which we no longer know how to do in Christianity'<sup>903</sup>. While he is trying to accustom his audience to the social adherence of Muslims to religious practices, he is simultaneously criticising the laxity of modern Christian religious culture, a sentiment comparable to those expressed by Sayyid Qutb decades later.

Here, Massignon is clearly combating traditional European presumptions about Muslim fanaticism akin to those of W.W. Hunter<sup>904</sup> and Voltaire<sup>905</sup> by highlighting the lost religious culture in Western Christendom. European Christians should not at the same time lament the loss of religious culture in Europe and then criticise Islamic religious culture as fanatical. He argues instead that religious devotion is a point that Christians and Muslims have in common, or at least should have in common; that Christians could turn to Islamic culture as a reprieve from the secularising influence of twentieth century ideologies, particularly those Christians who were claiming to be suffering from the spiritual malaise brought on by the excessive materialism of the modern age.

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<sup>902</sup> Massignon, 'Réponse á un Ami Musulman', *EMIII*, p. 12

<sup>903</sup> Ibid.

<sup>904</sup> W. W. Hunter, *The Indian Musalmans*, (London, 1876)

<sup>905</sup> Voltaire, *Le fanatisme, ou Mahomet : le prophète*, (Berlin, 1751)

### **Interfaith Pilgrimage**

Massignon not only preached about common religious culture, he also encouraged Muslims and Christians as fellow believers to celebrate their common heritage by undertaking interfaith practices, such as pilgrimage and fasting. The most prominent example was the establishment of a yearly pilgrimage to a chapel in Vieux-Marché, near Plouaret, a site of worship of the Seven Sleepers in Brittany located by Massignon's daughter, folklorist Geneviève Massignon. The first pilgrimage was on 25 July 1954 and Massignon's last was in July 1962 before his death in October when he was accompanied by the future president of Comoros, Muhammad Taki<sup>906</sup>. The tradition has since been maintained by his friends and family, where believers continue to meet under the auspices of interfaith dialogue, invoking the heritage of Louis Massignon and his spiritual rapprochement of these two monotheist faiths. Liturgies relating to the Seven Sleepers are performed consecutively by Christians and Muslims side by side, accompanied by a series of conferences on the subject of Muslim-Christian relations<sup>907</sup>.

In the context of French anti-clericalism and diminished religious culture, the establishment of such an enterprise appears to be an attempt to create a new religious culture in France, a culture shared between Muslims and Christians. But media coverage of these pilgrimages, given that they were founded during the years of decolonisation, portray them somewhat as a diplomatic exercise to maintain good relations between French Christians and Muslims from France's former colonies, rather than an ecumenical initiative attempting to solve their contemporary spiritual crisis.

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<sup>906</sup> *Ouest France*, 'A l'heure du Concile œcuménique au pèlerinage islamo-chrétien, une même prairie unissait l'Orient et l'Occident', (23 July 1962)

<sup>907</sup> 'Programme du 57ème pèlerinage Islamo-Chrétien', accessed 02 August 2012, at L'Association des amis de Louis Massignon website, <http://louismassignon.org/uploads/PDF/affiche23et24%20juillet2011.pdf>

An article published in the French local newspaper *Ouest France* on 23 July 1962 shows how the ninth pilgrimage enjoyed a notable guest list, including the writer and politician André Malraux, then Minister of State for Cultural Affairs, M. Guillin, Secretary General of the Police Department, the writer and journalist Louis Martin-Chauffier<sup>908</sup>, and General de la Bollardière, who had recently resigned from the army after the 1961 putsch in Algeria and devoted the rest of his life to promoting non-violence. The article adds how the event served as a shared act of memorialisation to commemorate victims of the recently concluded Algerian war of independence. A wreath of roses was laid in the crypt and numerous messages were sent to the organisers expressing sentiments of peace and forgiveness. But while local press coverage did stress the purpose of reconciliation and memorialisation, the fact that this act of reconciliation was manifested through common prayer and pilgrimage is important: it utilised common religious culture, thereby creating a place for religious practices in France's public domain and a more receptive milieu for North African religious culture in France.

Despite the diplomatic significance they acquired in 1962, these interfaith practices were first and foremost ecumenical enterprises. They were a genuine expression of private and collective faith with public utility. Massignon regularly practiced religious rites such as fasting and pilgrimage. He frequently visited the site of La Salette for example near Grenoble where the Virgin Mary was said to have appeared in 1846. In his visits, Massignon was usually accompanied by catholic friends such as Jacques Maritain<sup>909</sup>. He also took part in pilgrimages to Ephesus in Turkey which became a regular event and, on the 16 August

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<sup>908</sup> He was a member of what John Hellman calls the "Catholic Extreme-Left", who believed Catholicism and communism to be compatible and believed there to be a need for a 'juncture' between the two. He was often called "The Catholic-Stalinist" and editor of the Left-wing review *Vendredi*. Hellman, J., 'French "Left-Catholics" and Communism in the Nineteen-Thirties', *Church History*, 45: 4 (Dec., 1976), p. 508

<sup>909</sup> Massignon, 'L'Amitié et Présence Mariale dans nos vies', *EMI*, p. 376

1952, gathered over a thousand Christians and Muslims to celebrate the Assumption, or Dormition as it is known in the Levant<sup>910</sup>.

Massignon also made several trips to the site of his conversion in Baghdad and the shrine of al-Hallaj, whose name he had invoked when he opened himself up to Catholicism. He also mentions in a letter to Mary Kahil, co-founder of the *badaliyya*, an ad-hoc pilgrimage to the shrine of Salman Pâk (or Salam the Persian), one of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad who features heavily in Massignon's academic repertoire; there he was accompanied by some Alawite friends<sup>911</sup>. Massignon was therefore clearly accustomed to engaging in religious practices with followers of other faiths and believed there to be great value in doing so. The establishment of a regular and well-advertised interfaith pilgrimage demonstrates an intention to encourage others to participate not just for the sake of reconciliation, but also for religious renewal and to engage in a more universal religious culture. He was bringing together people of different faiths on the basis of shared religious devotion at a theological, liturgical and mystical level.

### **Promoting a Community of Believers**

The principle of bringing Christians and Muslims together was based on Massignon's belief that Christianity had a special relationship with Islam on the basis of common liturgical worship. He implicitly encouraged greater solidarity among Muslims and Christians on the basis of their shared religious devotion, both liturgical and theological:

‘I believe – and this by the way is the opinion of several Catholic theologians among the most strict – that the Muslim faith is not simply natural, but a

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<sup>910</sup> Massignon, ‘Éphèse et son importance religieuse pour la Chrétienté et pour l'Islam’, *EMI*, p. 299

<sup>911</sup> Massignon, L., Kahil, M., ‘Lettre 12’, *L'Hospitalité sacrée*, (Paris, 1987), p. 181

theological faith, [...] from a Christian point of view, we are obliged to have for them the respect and friendship that discovers a profound common point, which is the basis for common meditation, liturgical meditation for a Muslim and for a Christian alike.<sup>912</sup>

This commonality he felt was based on the principle that Islam was one of Christianity's closest relatives:

'There are not so many religions in the world, [...] we have the three big monotheist faiths of Semitic descent; [...] then you have those from the Far East [...] though it must be said that these are primarily disciplines of illumination, rather than determined religions.'<sup>913</sup>

When interpreted within the context of perceived spiritual decline and alongside Massignon's participation in interfaith practices, the rapprochement of the two monotheist faiths appears somewhat as an attempt to establish a community of believers.

While Massignon never explicitly expressed such intentions, his actions imply it. Massignon, like Mounier, was ill at ease in the secular Parisian intellectual climate. He was more comfortable sharing in an Islamic religious intellectual milieu than he was in the French existentialist or communist climate that reigned in Paris. One of his former students Jacques Waardenburg, who himself later became a scholar of Islam and interfaith dialogue, attests to this epistemological alienation. Anti-clerical intellectual communities it seemed tended to dismiss or condescend the religious ontological premise of Massignon's intellectual activities. According to Waardenburg, the Parisian climate at the time was:

'[...] that of an official *laïcité* which looked down upon the religiosity which Massignon wished to bear witness. [...] in fact, these characteristics created a level of incomprehension between the parties'<sup>914</sup>.

Massignon preferred to engage with people and ideas from a religious framework, from the ontological premise about the existence and wisdom of a higher being. It explains partially

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<sup>912</sup> Massignon, 'Réponse', *EMIII*, p. 14

<sup>913</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17

<sup>914</sup> Waardenburg, J., 'L'Impact de l'œuvre de Louis Massignon', in *Louis Massignon au cœur*, p. 295

why he saw in Islam a friend and an ally for himself and other Christians in the face of twentieth century secular ideologies; they were equally struggling with the epistemic clash between religious and secular thought. An interfaith practicing religious community was a platform from which to engage in fraternal relations, to preserve the remaining religious culture in Europe by practicing in religious rites and defending religion under the colonial regime.

This said, Massignon denied that his activities, or that of his varied associations, were intended as a Christian-Islamic front against non-believers:

‘As for whether or not to forgo the title “Christian-Islamic front”, from the part of the “tacticians” like Mgr. Dauzon, BP Blancs, Viard, etc. I really do not care: remembering also what Léon Bloy used to say: “the best names of men were those given to them by their enemies”. – no doubt, I protested two years ago when Beuve-Méry (already) “pinned” me because I did not want to participate in an “anti-communist crusade” from an Christian-Islamic “front”. – If you are in agreement with me on this matter, you believe, like I do, that there is no point in meddling in this trap, [...].’<sup>915</sup>

An overview of the CCEFI’s papers show that, rather than actively attacking non-believers, Massignon and fellow committee members sought to defend believers, especially Muslims, against the attack of religious identities and practices within France’s colonies.

### **Defending Religious Culture**

Massignon worked to defend religious culture in the colonies. While many French intellectuals participated in anti-colonial activities after World War Two, Massignon put greater focus on religious concerns. In this context interfaith dialogue created a space from which to defend the place of religion in the decolonisation struggle.

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<sup>915</sup> ‘Lettre de Louis Massignon à André de Peretti et Jean Scelles’, 19 April 1952, Archives privée de André de Peretti, Paris

There were several anti-colonial initiatives of Christian inspiration. These were channelled often through existing journals such as *Esprit* and *Témoignage Chrétien*. While their editors like Robert Barrat<sup>916</sup> and Jean-Marie Domenach<sup>917</sup> were Christian, the content of their advocacy was akin to that of their secular counterparts, exposing cases of police brutality and torture, especially throughout the Algerian war and countering the spread of misinformation.

Louis Massignon's contribution to anti-colonial advocacy was however quite distinct. He did participate in more secular forms of advocacy, writing in *Témoignage Chrétien*<sup>918</sup>, *Esprit*<sup>919</sup>, *Franc-Tireur* and Ferhat Abbas' *La république algérienne* and *Organe du Manifeste*<sup>920</sup>. He was also an active member of the *Comité d'Action des intellectuels pour la Défense des Libertés*<sup>921</sup> and the *Comité pour l'amnistie aux condamnés politiques d'outre-mer*<sup>922</sup> alongside Jean-Paul Sartre and George Izard<sup>923</sup>. But mostly he directed his advocacy in defence of Islam in North-Africa through the associations he co-founded with his friend

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<sup>916</sup> Editor of journal *Témoignage Chrétien*. For more information on Robert Barrat and his participation in anti-colonial advocacy, see Barrat, R., *Un journaliste au coeur de la guerre d'Algérie. 1954-1962*, (Paris, 2001)

<sup>917</sup> French left-wing catholic intellectual who took over as editor of the journal *Esprit* in 1957 ; Santoni, G.V., Domenach, J-M., 'Les Intellectuels: entretien avec Jean-Marie Domenach', *The French Review*, 47 : 4 (Mar., 1974), p. 695

<sup>918</sup> Massignon, L., 'Jérusalem Ville de Paix', *EMI*, originally published in *Témoignage Chrétien*, (20 April 1948), pp. 743-760

<sup>919</sup> Massignon, L., 'La situation sociale en Algérie', originally published in *Esprit*, (August 1951), also reproduced in *OMIII*

<sup>920</sup> Massignon, L., 'Pas de Fait Accompli au Maroc', *EMI*, p. 638 Published in *Franc-Tireur* in (September 1953) and in Ferhat Abbas' *Organe du Manifeste* on (11 September 1953)

<sup>921</sup> *Libérons les condamnés d'outre-mer*, Massignon, L., 'Pourquoi le fait appel à chaque français', No. 1, (Juillet 1954, Paris)

<sup>922</sup> 'Biography Louis Massignon'. Accessed 13 August 2012, at <http://louismassignon.org/index.php?page=biographie>

<sup>923</sup> Sirinelli, J-F., 'Guerre d'Algérie, guerre des pétitions?', *La Guerre d'Algérie et les intellectuels français*, ed. Sirinelli J-F., and Rioux, J-P., (Bruxelles, 1991), p. 274

and colleague André de Peretti: the Christian Committee for French-Islamic Understanding (CCEFI) and the France-Maghrib Committee (CFM)<sup>924</sup>.

The focus of these organisations, particularly that of the CCEFI founded in 1947, differed from that of most French anti-colonial movements at the time. While they all shared the common purpose of defending the human rights of North Africans, supporting their rights to self-determination and seeking ‘solidarity amongst all people’ in order to achieve ‘freedom and progress’<sup>925</sup>, Massignon and his colleagues approached the matter from a distinctly more religious bias. The CCEFI, like its secular counterparts, sought to support justice in North Africa; but they employed a much more sacred understanding of the word. In statements published across France’s national and colonial press<sup>926</sup>, the Committee repeatedly refers to a divine notion of justice shared across all monotheist faiths:

‘Like before, it entails doing justice to all men. We know what superhuman confidence in God animates the Muslim world and its social plea, everywhere mocked or ignored. It will never be said that Christians are deaf to these calls for sovereign justice because it has stopped believing in it. We want to be in France, in our capacity as Christians, the first to bear witness: striving towards a loyal, civic and social understanding with Muslims: for our common destiny.’<sup>927</sup>

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<sup>924</sup> While François Mauriac is accredited with founding the *Comité France-Maghreb*, it was in fact André de Peretti’s initiative, based largely upon his contacts and information provided through his networks in Morocco. However, he chose to deliberately distance himself officially from the organisation to preserve his father’s position in the Chamber of Commerce; André de Peretti Interview, Paris, 10 May 2011

<sup>925</sup> ‘Ministère de l’Intérieur – Direction générale de la sûreté nationale, *Le Séparatisme Algérien – Troisième Parties – L’aide à la Rébellion*, Exemplaire 257’, February 1961, f. 39, AN, Paris, F 1a 5016

<sup>926</sup> In a letter addressed to André de Peretti and Jean Scelles, Louis Massignon lists the recipient newspapers destined to publish the Committee’s latest statement. These include *Le Monde*, *La Réforme*, *La République Algérienne*, *La Voix Libre* and *al-‘Arab*; ‘Lettre de Louis Massignon à André de Peretti and Jean Scelles, Paris, 15 November 1951’, Archives Privée de André de Peretti, Paris

<sup>927</sup> Massignon, L., ‘Comité Chrétien pour l’entente France-Islam’, *Témoignage Chrétien*, No. 156, (27 June 1947)

Their notion of 'sovereign justice' conflicted with the secular meaning of justice in Left-wing politics. Massignon believed this distinction to be crucial to the preservation of Islamic culture:

'[...] the materialists, without any higher calling, would object, saying that the only real association to justice that should be established between a de-Christianised Europe on the one side, and a still Islamised Maghrib on the other, consists of improving the human condition of the North African proletariat, by "quietly" de-Islamising, at least in France, their valid social demands for their traditional Arabic language.'<sup>928</sup>

In adopting a more religious approach when advocating Maghribi nationalist interests to the French authorities, Louis Massignon and the CCEFI not only thought they were integrally fulfilling the demands of North-African nationalism, they were defending religious culture throughout the destructive process of decolonisation.

Massignon, André de Peretti, Jean Scelles and other CCEFI adherents, which included Robert Barrat and Emmanuel Mounier<sup>929</sup>, were seeking to ensure that French anti-colonial movements, with their secular intellectual culture, did not de-religionise<sup>930</sup> the decolonisation movement. Massignon believed that North Africans were more receptive to such an approach:

'Since 1947 the Committee has not stopped denouncing [...] those painful events that have taken place in Tunisia and Morocco. For several months, the metropolitan opinion has started to take heed of its responsibilities. [...]'

'Reactions amongst Catholic circles in particular have awakened immense hope amongst the Muslim population in North Africa: hope in seeing the metropolis playing an arbiter's role between the different interests in the name of justice.'<sup>931</sup>

<sup>928</sup> Massignon, L., 'Heure critique entre la France et l'Islam', *Combat de la résistance à la révolution*, (22-23 June 1947)

<sup>929</sup> CCEFI, 'Liste de membres d'après le fichier de Jean Scelles', Archives Privée de André de Peretti, Paris

<sup>930</sup> Meaning here both the removal of religious content as well as approaching the issue from a secular epistemic sphere.

<sup>931</sup> CCEFI, 'Communiqué', 27 Mars 1953, Archives Privée de André de Peretti, Paris

The idea that French catholic intellectuals were particularly sensitive to the sufferings and demands of Muslims for justice gave Christians in France a specific function in France's public and political life at the time.

The committee also defended Islam and religious culture in Muslim societies against attacks from the anti-clerical colonial administration and by the dismissive Christian community in the colonies. One of the Committee's reoccurring interests was to preserve the rights of pilgrims of all religious denominations to access Holy sites in Palestine at the onset of the Israeli-Palestine conflict<sup>932</sup>. It also defended the preservation of the Moroccan monarchy because the Sultan was the country's patron of Islam. They publicly condemned the French authorities for supporting the Mohammed V's deposition in 1953. They underlined France's hypocrisy for claiming to defend Moroccan Islam and its figurehead, the Sultan, at the outset of the French Protectorate:

'Article I of the 1912 Treaty stipulated that the Protectorate regime would "safeguard the religious situation, the traditional respect and the prestige of the Sultan, the practice of Islam and of religious institutions". Article III is written as such: "The government of the republic undertakes to be a constant support to His Majesty the Sherif against all dangers which would menace his person or his throne or which may compromise the tranquillity of the State. The same support will be lent to those inheriting the throne and his successors."'

'Beyond the political dimension to the violation of this Treaty, the *Comité Chrétien d'Entente France-Islam* underlines the severe repercussions which no doubt will result in a comparable isolation of Morocco's religious traditions. It denounces the machinations of all those who practice inconsiderately the worst case scenario which will risk pushing the Muslim masses to despair, loyal to France, but for whom the Sultan is also the chief of religious life, [...].'<sup>933</sup>

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<sup>932</sup> 'Lettre de Jean Scelles, de la part du Comité Chrétien d'Entente France-Islam, au Président Robert Schuman, Ministre de Affaires Etrangères', 7 April 1950, Archives Privée de André de Peretti, Paris

<sup>933</sup> CCEFI, 'Communiqué 3 juin 1953', Archives Privée de André de Peretti, Paris

While few doubted the hypocrisy of France's *politique musulmane* at that time, this Committee clearly prioritised safeguarding Islamic religious culture over abuses in political relations.

So Massignon's involvement in anti-colonial advocacy was distinct from that of most French intellectuals. It sought especially to preserve religious culture in Islamic society. He was defending Muslim subjects of French colonies *because* they were pious Muslims, not in spite of their faith. His support of Islamic societies during the period of decolonisation, particularly in North-Africa, seems to have gone hand in hand with other endeavours to promote a common religious culture. This is evident particularly since Massignon's position vis-a-vis the French colonial government was somewhat ambiguous. His background did not suggest anti-colonial tendencies. In the aftermath of the First World War, he was conscripted as a translator and advisor to François-Georges Picot, co-author of the notorious Sykes-Picot Agreement. He also, as late as 1945, took part in a quasi-colonial, quasi-diplomatic enterprise touring Islamic academic institutions worldwide to promote French intellectual influence abroad<sup>934</sup>. So Massignon was not conditioned as an anti-colonialist. His involvement in anti-colonial advocacy was instead inspired by the French colonial authorities increasingly attacking the place of religion in North Africa.

Prior to the Second World War, Massignon consulted for the Inter-Ministerial Commission for Muslim Affairs (CIAM) in order to secure a more respectful treatment of Islam in French colonies. When the colonial authorities began to blatantly disregard religious rights in its *politique musulmane*, Massignon began to break away from the

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<sup>934</sup> 'Lettre du Général d'Armée Paul Beynet, Grand Officier de la Légion d'Honneur, Délégué Général et plénipotentiaire de France au Levant à Son Excellence Monsieur Georges Bidault, Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, Paris'. A copy of this letter was forwarded to the *Collège de France* to notify them of his prolonged absence from Paris ; Archives Collège de France, Paris, Carton Louis Massignon, Carton 'Louis Massignon'

colonial fold. According to Waardenburg, Massignon ‘suffered bitterly under the views, attitudes, and practices taken in France publically and privately towards Islam, Muslims in general, and Algerians in particular in the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s’<sup>935</sup>. He resigned from the Academy of Colonial Sciences in 1951 after twenty five years of membership on the grounds that the Academy had supported the nefarious activities of the French colonial authorities<sup>936</sup>. Massignon was therefore not necessarily against the political principal of French colonialism. He was conditioned within the Orientalist tradition that accepted it, even groomed it. However he clearly disapproved of anti-clerical and anti-Islamic policies put forward by the French authorities. The activities of the CCEFI can therefore be seen as a continuation of his consultancy at CIAM, turning to public opinion to influence France’s political treatment of Islamic religious culture.

## **The Significance of Paris’ Catholic Milieu**

### **The Massignon Cohort**

Like Jacques Maritain and Emmanuel Mounier, Massignon sought to create a religious environment that offered an alternative to the secular climate at the time, whether that was cultural or epistemological. Because of his fame and notoriety across the Muslim world, his response stood as the most notable alternative narrative to religious encounters in Paris among Muslim migrants from the north of Africa.

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<sup>935</sup> Waardenburg, J., ‘Louis Massignon (1883-1962) as a student of Islam’, *Die Welt des Islams*, 45 : 3, (2005), p. 318

<sup>936</sup> ‘M. Louis Massignon donne sa démissions de l’académie des sciences coloniales’, *Le Monde*, (17 February 1951), Archives Collège de France, Paris, Carton Louis Massignon, Carton ‘Louis Massignon’

There is no doubt that Massignon was influential in his approach. He was a prominent feature of the Parisian intellectual milieu, featuring in many accounts by migrants from Muslim societies, especially after the Second World War. A detailed analysis of his influence and interactions with his Muslim and Christian students would be greatly revelatory of the impact that Massignon had on religious encounters in Europe. While an attempt has been made by this author to gather as much material relating to those interactions, such an analysis is limited by the fact that much of his private correspondences were destroyed. Following a thorough exploration of his private archives currently held by his daughter-in-law Nicole Massignon, but which is soon to be transferred to the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, little has remained of his correspondence with his students beyond the administrative. Considerable sensitive material was destroyed upon Massignon's death by his family, following his explicit wishes<sup>937</sup>.

Evidence suggests that Massignon believed correspondences to be a testament to an individual in the mystical sense. Thus he did not like documentation of grievances and altercations to be written, as manifested in a letter to a student who had evidently caused much frustration:

'Dear *mademoiselle* and friend,

Thank you for returning the two volumes of *Shifâ*. You will also find attached the letter you wrote me this morning; I entrust you with it so you may destroy it, as it contains at the end a sentence (marked in blue crayon) which bears witness against you, - and I want to forget it, that and many others, - in order only to remember the friendship, supernatural (and disinterested), that God has placed between us for our souls, so dear as they are to us.

In respectful and faithful thought before God'.<sup>938</sup>

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<sup>937</sup> The matter was discussed at the Annual General Assembly of the *Association des Amis de Louis Massignon*, in Paris, on Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> May, 2011

<sup>938</sup> 'Lettre 12 Juillet 1935, De Massignon à Goichon', Carton 57, Archives Privée de Louis Massignon, at Mme Nicole Massignon, Paris, Carton 57

Writing was an act of religious expression. So while his lengthy correspondences with his Christian friends Paul Claudel, Jacques Maritain, Jean-Mohamed Abdeljalil and Père Charles de Foucauld remain largely intact, these have been preserved precisely because they testify to their mystical contemplation.

Because of the restrictive quality of colonial policy towards intellectual migration from the north of Africa up until World War Two, Muslim students, especially from North Africa, were not well integrated into the French academic milieu, especially in Orientalist scholarship<sup>939</sup>. As a result the majority of Massignon's students up until the 1950s were European. This of course does not include students auditing classes at the *Collège de France*. Because this institution did not offer degrees, there are no records of the specific make-up of each lecture's audience, only the material delivered<sup>940</sup>.

Louis Massignon predominantly engaged with students and intellectuals at his home, holding regular appointments every Sunday. Massignon found spiritual nourishment from his personal encounters, so he took a much more personal and direct approach to teaching, inviting students to his home on *rue Monsieur*, in the seventh arrondissement, to converse and enquire. As they were private encounters, not too dissimilar to Paris' traditional *salon* culture, little trace remains of those conversations. The only material available pertaining to those conversations can be gathered by the fleeting accounts of students who were either inclined or important enough to record them. These include Malek Bennabi, Abderrahman Badawi, Shusha Guppy, Iranian academic Ehsan Naraghi and famous Iranian intellectual 'Ali Shari'ati. This is what the following analysis will be based on. While they are not necessarily

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<sup>939</sup> Brisson, 'Le savoir de l'autre', p. 158

<sup>940</sup> Detailed synopsis of lecture contents were published in the *Annuaire du Collège de France* from 1919 to 1954, reproduced in *EMI*

of North African provenance, their accounts provide some indication of the structure, nature and quality of encounters that students from the north of Africa may have experienced at *rue Monsieur*.

According to Iranian student and friend Ehsan Naraghi, students would make regular visits, sometimes every two or three weeks, from as early as 8 in the morning, demonstrating Massignon's tremendous generosity in hospitality and conversation:

'I arrived at eight o'clock in the morning; our first talk was very warm and extremely enriching at all levels. At the end he said to me: Listen, every Sunday, I'm here for my friends, visit whenever you like.'<sup>941</sup>

Students, passing scholars or simply inquisitive Catholics and Muslims would visit him for a variety of reasons, but primarily to discuss matters to do with Islamic scholarship, Islamic culture and politics of the Middle East.

Some students visited to request his counsel or intervention in one matter or another, concerning either their education provision or regarding the French colonial administration's policies. Malek Bennabi contacted him on two occasions to request his intervention, first when he was turned down from the School of Oriental Languages on political grounds, the second time on behalf of his father who had been relocated again because of what Bennabi believed to be his political activities<sup>942</sup>. Massignon, in his position as advisor to the French government's Inter-ministerial Committee on Muslim Affairs (CIAM), was increasingly seen across much of the Muslim world as the go-to intermediary between Muslims from across the globe and the French administration. As Malek Bennabi was told by his father: '[...] the professor is he not able [to intervene], since he is the expert

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<sup>941</sup> Naraghi, E., 'Massignon et les Iraniens, rencontre' in *Massignon et l'Iran*, ed. Pierunek, E., Richard, Y., (Leuven, 2000), p. 25

<sup>942</sup> Bennabi, *Mudhakkirat*, pp. 241-242

advisor to the French government in Islamic affairs?<sup>943</sup> His archives are full of such requests.

Although requests for his assistance and benevolence were a prominent feature of his interaction with migrants like Malek Bennabi, most of his visitors were simply hoping to meet and dialogue with the famous great Orientalist. He was a prominent feature of the Parisian milieu, almost a touristic attraction. If you study Islam in Paris, you must go to see Louis Massignon. His prominence in the accounts of Iranian migrants has to do with the rising numbers of Iranian students during the 1950s and 60s, funded either by the French or Iranian authorities. It is also connected to the establishment of the Institute of Iranian Studies in 1947<sup>944</sup>, in which Massignon was heavily involved.

It is not clear whether Massignon communicated or imparted upon visitors his approach to his faith and scholarship in the same way that a Sufi Master would on his disciples when instilling the secrets of his *tariqa*. Probably the most likely individual to be considered a disciple in this approach was Henri Corbin because of his relationship with Suhrawardi mysticism. However the causational relationship between Massignon's approach and that of his student has not been made explicit. According to Jacques Waardenburg, Massignon influenced other Catholics in undertaking interfaith dialogue and in studying Islamic scholarship, including Louis Gardet and George Anawati. He was also said to have influenced other Orientalist scholars such as Henri Laoust, Gaston Wiet and Maxime Rodinson<sup>945</sup>, although these related more to an academic inspiration rather than

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<sup>943</sup> Ibid., p. 241

<sup>944</sup> Massignon et l'Iran, p. 7

<sup>945</sup> Waardenburg, J., 'L'Impact de l'œuvre de Louis Massignon' in *Louis Massignon au cœur*, pp. 296-297

inspiring others in his mystical way. This said, some of his students and acquaintances did remark how Massignon represented a special strand of ‘urban spirituality’:

‘Massignon felt that next to the philosophical side of mysticism, there was a spirituality experienced by the urban masses!’<sup>946</sup>

There is little doubt that he represented an alternative narrative to Paris’ anti-clerical intellectual milieu. Many of his students, or students who became aware of Massignon, generally expressed their admiration of the man or even the idea of this man. Some were struck by his deep sympathy and understanding of the Muslim world, and others were struck by his own religiosity and spirituality, as was Shusha Guppy, who referred to the scholar as a ‘holy man’:

‘[Massignon] was one of France’s greatest Arabist and Islamic scholars, [...] whose deeply spiritual nature combined a formidable intellectual with simple piety.’<sup>947</sup>

Massignon’s Iranian student Ehsan Naraghi, who became a publishing academic, noted in his testimony of Louis Massignon how he was struck by Massignon’s religious epistemological approach to the study of Islam, and therefore his greater capacity to understand the religious significance of Islamic studies:

‘Massignon said to me, contrary to what most people think, Islam is not only a culture or civilisation worthy of study, but it is also an indispensable element of our intellectual lives, to our being balanced.’<sup>948</sup>

Others like ‘Ali Shari’ati simply did not mention Massignon’s Christian faith, but were struck simply by his literary style and quality of scholarship<sup>949</sup>.

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<sup>946</sup> Naraghi, ‘Massignon et les Iraniens’, p. 25

<sup>947</sup> Guppy, *A Girl in Paris*, p. 101

<sup>948</sup> Naraghi, ‘Massignon et les Iraniens’, p. 26

<sup>949</sup> Richard, Y., ‘Ali Shari’ati et Massignon’, in *Massignon et l’Iran*, p. 117

By consequence, Massignon above all others represented abroad the alternative narrative to Paris' secularising influence. Yet he was considered the exception that proved the rule. Louis Massignon's reputation was not framed by his shared malaise regarding the spiritual crisis in the modern world, a framework which might have brought into question existing rhetoric concerning Western secularism. He was better known for generating an increasingly 'respectful interest in Islam' in European scholarship<sup>950</sup>. Yet the degree of respect and admiration he received from his Muslim students was undoubtedly a result of Massignon's rejection of secular knowledge.

### **Personalism and Islamic Humanism**

Another religious current in Paris to have had a notable impact on intellectual migrants from Muslim societies, including those in the north of Africa, was Mounier's Personalist movement and Henri Bergson's theories of intuition. The most explicit impact of French catholic thought on Islamic discourse is in the writings of Moroccan philosopher Mohamed 'Aziz Lahbabi.

Mohamed 'Aziz Lahbabi was a Moroccan philosopher of the mid-twentieth century who dealt particularly with Muslim-Christian relations, the Islamic revival and civilizational studies. He also wrote considerably to combat European racist and discriminatory attitudes towards non-European peoples and scholarship. Lahbabi is an important intellectual producer of the twentieth century, founding the *Maison de la Pensée* in Rabat, the Arabic

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<sup>950</sup> Malek, I. H., *Islam and Modernity, Muslims in Europe and the US*, (London, 2004), p. 130

review *Aflaq* and being the laureate of numerous literary prizes worldwide<sup>951</sup>. He had a remarkable connection with Emmanuel Mounier's Personalist movement.

Lahbabi's essays are clearly influenced by Emmanuel Mounier's Personalist movement and Bergsonian philosophy. He wrote a book on *Muslim Personalism* which explores the universal and therefore Islamic Personalist quality of spiritual intuition. Lahbabi also quotes Emmanuel Mounier throughout his work. The articles he contributed to Ouazzani's PDI French language media organ *La Démocratie* are often headed by Mounier's citations. Lahbabi was therefore also disseminating knowledge about the French catholic intellectual movement back in Morocco.

Lahbabi was also influenced by Henri Bergson's ideas about the religious basis for epistemology and ontology in the context of Western science<sup>952</sup>. And these ideas influenced in turn not just his perception of Moroccan and Islamic culture and civilisation; it affected his perception of modern governance<sup>953</sup>.

Having been in Paris in the mid-fifties and completed his thesis in 1954<sup>954</sup>, Lahbabi only caught the tail end of the Personalist movement, which began to fade in the 1950s. Given that the founder died in 1950, it is very unlikely, if not impossible that Lahbabi had the opportunity to meet the French Catholic intellectual. While Lahbabi was a Moroccan student in Paris in the 1950s, he did not produce any account of his time or experience in the city. He nonetheless was clearly influenced by this alternative religious current in France.

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<sup>951</sup> 'Lahbabi (Muhammad Aziz)', *Who's Who in the Arab World, 1978-1979*, 5<sup>th</sup> Ed., (Lebanon), p. 1750

<sup>952</sup> Lahbabi, M.A., *Liberté ou libération? (A partir des libertés bergsoniennes)*, (Paris, 1956)

<sup>953</sup> Lahbabi, M.A., *Le gouvernement marocain a l'aube du XXe siècle*, (Rabat, 1958)

<sup>954</sup> 'Mohammed Aziz Lahbabi', accessed 20 December 2012, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/327932/Mohammed-Aziz-Lahbabi>

Algerian nationalist Ahmed Taleb-Ibrahimi, who later became Algerian Minister of Information and Culture, was also greatly influenced by Emmanuel Mounier's Personalist movement. Despite, like Lahbabi, arriving in Paris after Mounier's death<sup>955</sup>, he nonetheless read the *Esprit* journal avidly, and during a stint in prison as an FLN militant, read the entirety of Mounier's writings:

'In a word, Mounier is the occidental thinker that struck me the most in my youth. Whether that was because of the presence of religious content, the need to spiritualise the revolution, the need for integrity, for a dialogue with the communists, or his refusal to sit in the camp of defenders of money, my ideas found in Mounier's writings their most clear and eloquent expression. I'm absolutely convinced that these ideas took root in the depths of me and constitute a part of me.'<sup>956</sup>

The presence of an alternative religious discourse in Paris to the dominant secularist discourse did therefore have an impact, albeit a more limited one. This narrative of religious encounters helped to placate cultural relations, rendering them less antagonistic. It produced a context for the mutual engagement of ideas in response to socio-economic and political developments affecting much of the world at that time while remaining culturally authentic and firmly Islamic.

## Conclusion

The secular and irreligious quality of urban centres is considered in the discourse on cultural encounters as another feature of Western culture. It is represented by authors and polemicists as a nefarious import brought over by intellectual migrants, a corrupting influence on their new generation of European educated elites. Paris was known as the capital of hedonism and well reputed for its licentious clubs. But a closer look at the

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<sup>955</sup> Taleb-Ibrahimi, *Mémoires*, p. 86

<sup>956</sup> *Ibid.* p. 90

experience of migrants through the material they produced suggested that feature was not as pervasive as it was made out to be and it existed first and foremost in the imaginary of literary representation and the expectation of certain, but not all migrants. The social and sexual liberalisation of students was influenced as much by the act of travelling abroad to study independently as it was by exposure to Western culture.

Furthermore, the absence of religion from Paris' urban milieu also overstated. Though atheistic philosophies certainly dominated French academia, forcing a confrontation between religious and secular knowledge, there were religious currents in the city that presented an alternative to the secular narrative. Massignon was well known across Islamic societies as a feature of the Parisian intellectual milieu. Yet he did little to counter the blanket association of secularism with Western culture and Western materiality; nor did Catholic intellectual discourse in Paris at the time. The spiritual/material dialectic overwhelmingly dominates popular and scholastic perceptions of cultural encounters resulting from intellectual migration, despite the fact that modern secularism was not readily accepted across European society.

## Conclusion – The Age of Intellectual Migration: an example of historical conjuncture between 1914 and 1962

An attempt has hereby been made to present intellectual migration as a subject of study and a method of assessing narratives of cultural encounters. The focus on North Africans situates that narrative within the three different culturally specific fields, modern Arabic cultural production, Maghribi decolonisation and the spiritual/material dialectic in Islamic discourse.

Since little work has been undertaken on this specific migratory subset, this study has shed light on a new possibility in migration studies. This subject focus could and should be undertaken in relation to the migration of the intellectual elite from different regions of the world and to alternative destinations. It is a movement that is widely recognised as having a formative impact on a new and emerging Western educated class in the colonies, yet very few attempts have been made to understand fully the nature of that impact beyond the transference and adoption of Western forms. This in turn has led to assumptions regarding the development of ideas globally in the modern age.

An overview of North African intellectual migration thus provides insight into the source of many antagonistic perceptions of East-West encounters in the early twentieth century. Framed by the premise of European superiority and non-European inferiority, it entrenched perceptions regarding non-Western intellectual developments that have been sustained until this day. Deliberately contrived by the French authorities, uncontested by

the wider populace and corroborated by migrants themselves, the supposed apprenticeship of colonial migrants to European centres of knowledge, culture and politics has overshadowed the creative influence that this migratory pattern and these migratory destinations had upon modern global developments. Whether relating to cultural production, political or religious thought, the assessment of intellectual migration has traditionally pointed the vectors outward from its European epicentre; a form of social remittance, the exportation of a foreign culture. Paris was thus reduced to a museum of Western culture, to be viewed, experienced and emulated. But Paris and its intellectual diaspora, with its transnational and transmigratory infrastructure, created an original set of circumstances, generating novel ideas that contributed to the modern development of Europeans and non-Europeans, that helped bring about the post-colonial age.

But since global interactions have increased multi-fold in the second half of the twentieth century, why is this period noteworthy? The answer lies in the historical conjuncture and the unprecedented nature of this process. We now live in a global society and many urban theorists talk about modern metropolises as 'global cities'<sup>957</sup>. But two factors distinguish global encounters in urban spaces today from those between 1914 and 1962. Firstly, global culture is increasingly homogenised and no place is that more evident than in global metropolises, where people from all continents of the world dress the same, speak the same language (or at least the same coding language) and share the same references in popular culture. Secondly, we are all acceptant of our globalised reality. People travel long distances for short holidays; they read daily world news and practice exotic religions far from their epistolary origins. In the first half of the twentieth century, coming into contact with unfamiliar cultures was unprecedented bar limited

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<sup>957</sup> Sassen, S., *The Global City, New York, London, Tokyo*, (Princeton, 1991)

representations of the exotic in a few sensationalist magazines. These cultures were truly unfamiliar. Coming into contact with plurality on a large scale, and not just in a dichotomous way where one alien is submerged in the world of another, but in a way where differences were presented in variegated forms, is much more remarkable to the individual and the collective.

In a broad sense the intellectual implications of that diversity are wide ranging and often contradictory. It opened individuals both to the reality of plurality and the potential for universalism in an extremely profound way. It made people question their assumptions or in some cases reassert them with greater vigour as if to defend them against the plurality that undermined them. Roxanne Euben talks about post-foundationalist era in philosophy when the ontological and moral certainties of many world views are torn from under their feet<sup>958</sup>. In a world turned upside down by two World Wars, epistemological and ontological certainty became increasingly meaningless, a process reflected clearly in the philosophies of that time and space, from post-World War One surrealism to post-World War Two existentialism. In the context of identity politics, these circumstances contributed to the narrowing of national identities to ethno-religious definitions. It also broadened political identities to transnational groupings, whether as Pan-isms or international political blocs such as colonised and colonisers, Third-Worldism, aligned or non-aligned nations.

Global contacts in this context therefore are profound because of their circumstances. It is not a replicable set of circumstances that could be modelled and reproduced to enhance a town's creativity, productivity or political standing. They do not boil down to theories of creative clusters, though this study has identified the significance of

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<sup>958</sup> Euben, R., *Enemy in the mirror: Islamic fundamentalism and the limits of modern rationalism: a work of comparative political theory*, (Princeton, 1999), p. 3

the Left Bank in these intellectual developments. These processes are historical and result from a conjuncture in time and place that are no longer possible to recreate without undoing many of the forces of globalisation.

This interpretation of global interactions in the first half of the twentieth century relates to some of the recent Deep Histories of Migration<sup>959</sup> undertaken by Filipe Fernández-Armesto and David Northrup. The processes examined in Paris during this period are an important part of the global re-convergence of disparate societies. While it cannot be accredited with social liberalism or the global justice movement, our conceptions about our world order being divided into developed and third-world countries, our ideas of race and racism, cultural hegemony, nationality and membership to nation-states and the role of religion in the modern world were all deeply affected by this conjuncture.

Post-structuralist historiography is generally quite uncomfortable with teleological visions of history. But given the swelling of global population numbers and our advances in communications technology, it would take some global calamity to cause such a degree of disconnection between different sections of the globe. To say that we are moving towards a post-globalised world therefore is not filling history writing with contemporaneous buzz-words. It is to highlight how our historical development has reached a point of no return, and to recognise that the historical conjuncture that had been so intellectually creative in the first half of the twentieth century or so was both unprecedented and impossible to reproduce.

The re-convergence is accredited to have begun in earnest in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The unprecedented rise in elite migration to a select number of

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<sup>959</sup> 'The Deep History of Migration', 21 February 2013, *Centre for Global History, University of Oxford*

metropolitan centres in the first half of the twentieth century is an important and specific chapter in that re-convergence; an age of intellectual migration which was particular to that time and those spaces. Soaring international mobility, the homogenisation of global culture and the creation of an integrated world system (if maybe somewhat unbalanced) has since rendered the historical processes in question unparalleled. It is worth remembering at this stage how during this period, in all four countries, students still had an elevated social status as the intellectual elite, considered the future movers and shakers of the region. In the north of Africa, the results of baccalaureates were published in local journals, as were the members of student missions to Europe. Articles were often written about students who received bursaries to study abroad or achieved outstanding results, as were Taha Husayn and Doria Shafik in Egypt<sup>960</sup> and Mehdi Ben Barka in Morocco<sup>961</sup>. Though we would not consider students today as intellectuals, they were in the first half of the twentieth century a notable class, undergoing a notable process. 1914 to 1962 therefore should be considered an Age of Intellectual Migration.

Methodologically, centring the study of intellectual migration in Paris and exploring its effects on intellectual developments traces the way in which the traditional rhetoric of cultural encounters is interwoven with the historical reality, misrepresenting it, but also determining it. It is also a way of ascertaining the importance of direct encounters, thereby contrasting the rhetoric of cultural relations with the reality. Remote encounters, fed by some direct encounters, create and perpetuate images and rhetorical narratives of the other. Direct encounters are always engaging with and renegotiating those narratives with their own experiences. So the disjuncture between rhetoric and reality is partly fed by this

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<sup>960</sup> Shafik's photo was published in *l'Egyptienne* with a note about 'this valiant feminist' departing to study in France, Nelson, *Shafik*, p. 34

<sup>961</sup> Ben Barka, *Mon frère*, p. 35

bi-fold nature of cultural encounters. It is also self-perpetuating; a certain image pulls people abroad, thereby determining their reason for migrating. This in turn pre-determined the way they behaved in the city and the way they engaged with that environment. This cycle of experience, representation, influence, reputation and stereotyping has been explored throughout the thesis, whether it concerns the image of Paris as a centre of modern knowledge, politics or misdemeanour.

Ultimately, there is a great deal of confusion in the way in which we talk about global intellectual developments during this period of transition and accelerated global connection. As circumstances were changing at a highly accelerated rate and cultures increasingly came into contact with each other, they fed off previously formed stereotypes and rhetorical narratives in order to interpret and rationalise their responses. These were then projected forward, helping to sustain them. While this study has shown there is a significant disjuncture between rhetorical and historical understandings of causality, it also shows there to be a plural truth, a diverse reality of experience that is affected by individualism and evolving circumstances.

International intellectual migration was a key process in bringing about an international dialogue on all matters from art, culture, politics, identity, justice, governance and even religion. It was an act of globalisation, helping to define nationality and making different ontological and epistemological frameworks confront each other and the implications of religious, cultural and political plurality. Methodologically, the study of intellectual migration is a way of seeing, tracing and explaining the impact of globalisation on ideas, while at the same time emphasising the role of specific localities in staging that globalisation. It shows that globalisation and global history, while seeming like this huge,

all-encompassing quantity or meta-narrative, is in fact a series of local, or micro-level interactions occurring at an accelerated rate.

By tracing such developments to a particular world stage, this study localises globalism. Though a lens through which to view such physical and metaphysical confrontations, let us not forget that it is the confrontation of an elite. Most of the people seen in this study were by definition cosmopolitan. They opened themselves up to the world and rose to the confrontation, rather than shirking away from it. They were the elite and their stories were important in shaping cultural relations. They spear-headed cultural contacts and Paris provided an opportunity, a space, a milieu for these contacts to take place. Intellectual mobility, especially student mobility, provided a reason for these contacts to take place.

It could be said that the common thread through all these themes is ways in which individual actors were grappling with, as C. Wright Mills puts it, the 'pervasive transformations of the very 'nature' of man and the conditions and aims of his life'<sup>962</sup>. That they are all grappling with fast changing circumstances of the time, giving meaning to those changes and their life trajectories within them. Thus the subject of this study has been the product of that struggle, their cultural production, their activism, their militancy and even their faith. Intellectual migration was both the cause of and a confrontation with those changes; their outcome was a response to that confrontation.

The contemporary popularity of global history attests to the fact that historians are realising the need to explore the way in which the world from the nineteenth and twentieth century was becoming increasingly connected. It attests to the fact that these global

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<sup>962</sup> Mills, *The Sociological Imagination*, p. 13

connections were important in driving many key developments of the modern age. But global history does not have to be a history of grand-narratives. Globalisation is as much a local phenomenon as it is a global one. The processes of globalisation are a series of local level developments connected to another series of local level developments. The study of North African intellectual migration shows how global history does not preclude the study of local history, instead it addresses the reality of the modern age in the twentieth century, that of global connection.

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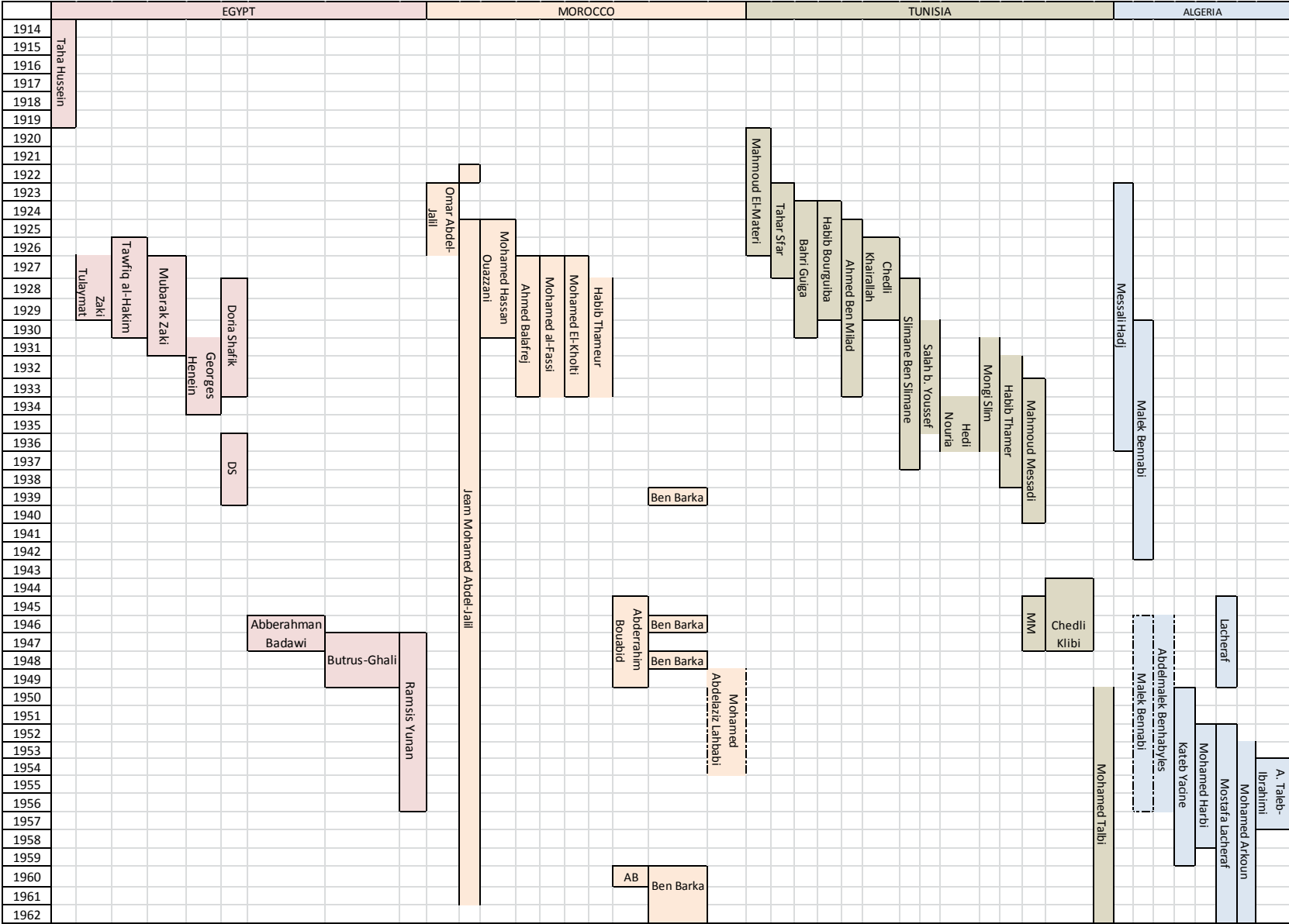
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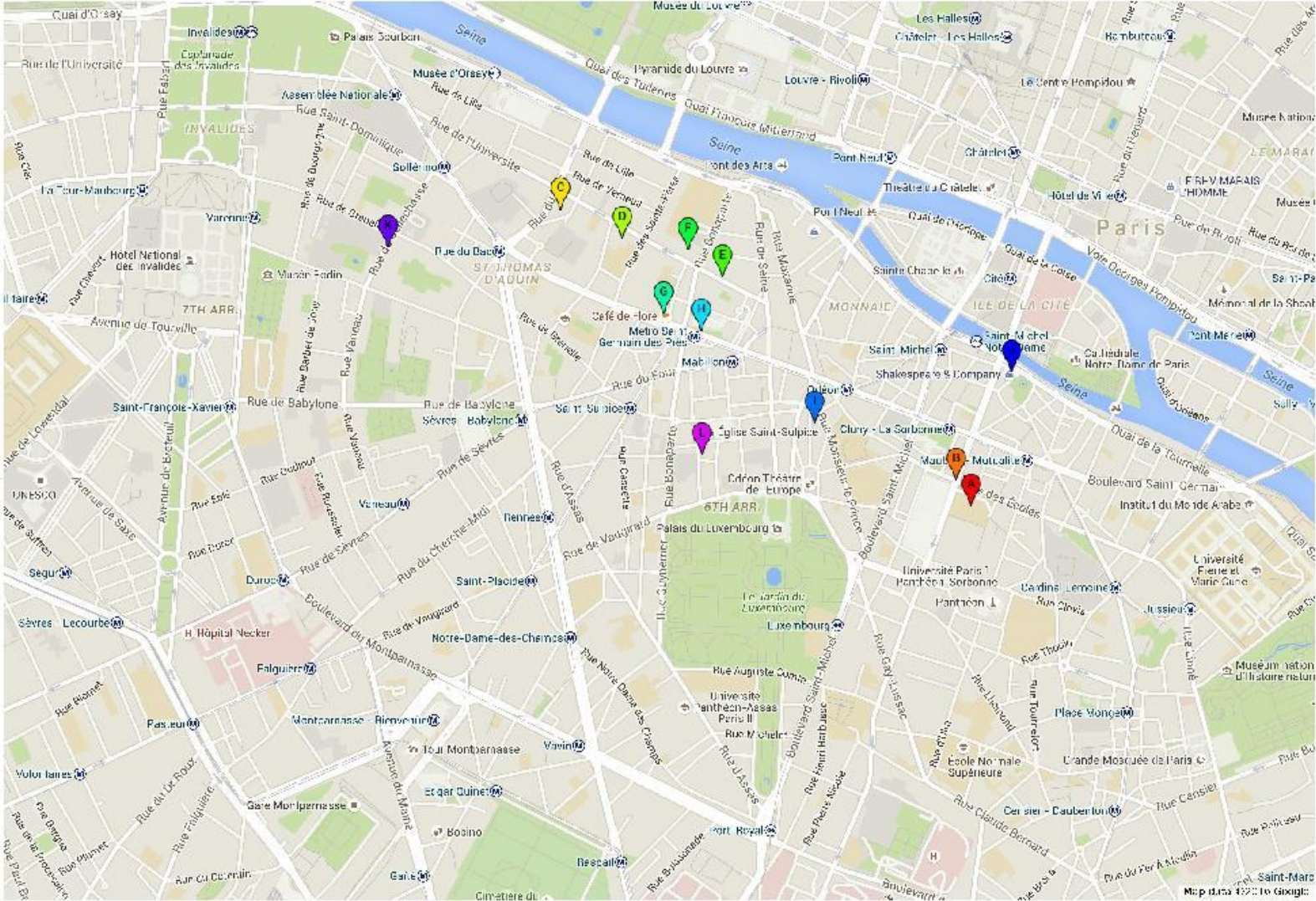
## Appendices

Appendix A – Notable Intellectual Migrants in France between 1914 and 1962



# Parisian Creative Cluster

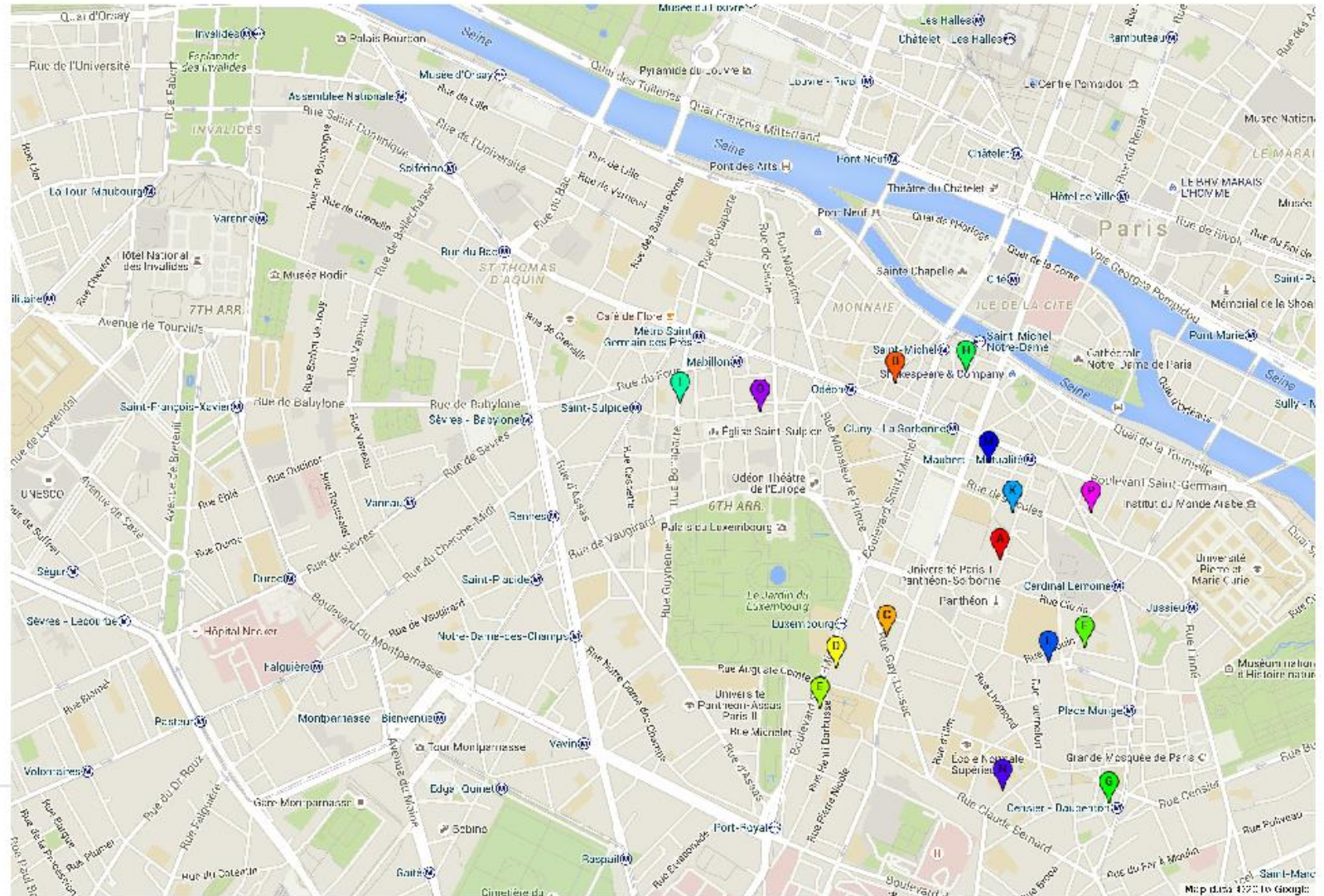
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  - Collège de France
  - Sorbonne
- Ed. Gallimard & Nouvelle Revue Francaise**
  - Ed. du Seuil
  - Esprit
  - Les Temps Modernes
  - Café de Flore
  - Les Deux Magots
- La Maison des Amis du Livres**
  - Shakespeare and Co.
- Comite Superieur des Oeuvres Sociales en faveur des etudiants**
  - Editions Reider



## Colonial Metropolis

### Colonial Institutions

- Collège Sainte-Barbe
- Foyer Marocain, Pension Laveur
- Cercle Intellectuel de la Méditerranée
- International House
- AEMNAF
- AEMA 1930-1937
- Centres de Propagande Révolutionnaire pour les Colonies Françaises & Paris journal
- Fédération de France - MTLD
- Residence Marocaine - 'Grand Hotel de Paris'
- Orient-Paris
- AEMF - Association des Etudiants Martiniquais en France
- Tunisian Student residence
- AMI
- Foyer des étudiants indochinois
- Association des Etudiants Anticolonialistes
- Maison de la Mutualité



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