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EDITORIALE

Dopo la pubblicazione del primo numero, continua la “palestra” di *Maydan*. La metafora della “palestra”, che regolarmente in questi anni abbiamo affiancato al nome della rivista, coincide con il senso stesso di questo progetto: creato fin dalla sua nascita come percorso di formazione continua, finalizzato alla riflessione sulla ricerca e allo sviluppo delle abilità necessarie per la produzione, la redazione e la divulgazione di articoli scientifici.

Durante questo secondo anno di lavoro, abbiamo realizzato due obiettivi maggiori a cui abbiamo mirato sin dall'inizio del nostro percorso: da una parte, la registrazione della rivista; dall'altra, l'internazionalizzazione di quest'ultima e delle sue attività di formazione, confronto e riflessione che hanno reso *Maydan* anche “piattaforma” di dialogo.

La registrazione della rivista rappresenta sia per noi editrici e editori, sia per le autrici e gli autori, il riconoscimento di un lungo percorso iniziato nel 2020. Attraverso l'ottenimento dell'ISSN, *Maydan* potrà infatti indicizzare e rendere molto più fruibili i suoi contenuti, inclusi i contributi pubblicati nel suo primo numero. Tale riconoscimento, inoltre, permette di radicare ulteriormente la rivista nel panorama accademico e renderla un fenomeno strutturale, essenziale per la formazione delle prossime generazioni di giovani studiose e studiosi dei mondi arabi, semitici e islamici.

Il secondo obiettivo coincide con l'internazionalizzazione. *Maydan* ha mosso i suoi primi passi in ambito italiano: è stata pensata e fondata a Napoli, con il desiderio di crescere a poco a poco e di ampliare i suoi orizzonti anche in ambito internazionale. Così, durante questo secondo anno, abbiamo concentrato le nostre energie affinché il sito internet, le pagine social, tutti i documenti relativi alle diverse fasi del processo di scrittura scientifica e la comunicazione con le nostre autrici e i nostri autori fossero anche in lingua inglese. Questo ha permesso a giovani studiose e studiosi non italo-fone/i di poter avvicinarsi alla nostra rivista e collaborare con noi. Siamo felici, infatti, di accogliere all'interno di questo secondo numero, circa la metà dei contributi redatti da autrici e autori di altre lingue madri.

In questi mesi, poi, ci siamo soffermati a riflettere su questioni teoriche e metodologiche che riguardano le discipline e le aree di studio di *Maydan*. Da una parte, abbiamo voluto dedicare due momenti di riflessione partecipata e condivisa con esperte ed esperti del settore, all'interno dei *Webinar di SeSaMO su Ricerca e Medio Oriente 2021-2022*,

confrontandoci sul ruolo della ricerca sul campo negli studi culturali e la decolonizzazione dei nostri settori di studio. D'altra parte, abbiamo invitato autrici e autori a riflettere criticamente nei loro contributi sul concetto di studi d'area e a problematizzare nozioni e approcci culturalisti che reiterano una visione essenzialista e fondamentalmente coloniale dei mondi arabi, semitici e islamici. Assieme a questo, riteniamo importante sostenere tutti quegli approcci che guardano alle dinamiche di interconnessione e interdipendenza tra diversi contesti. Tutto questo è fondamentale nella visione della ricerca sviluppata da *Maydan* sia per cogliere le specificità dei mondi che essa studia, sia per estrarli da una definizione “eccezionalista”. Per questo, abbiamo ritenuto necessario anche quest'anno dare spazio a proposte capaci di decostruire lo sguardo e le metodologie di ricerca già esistenti e di elaborare metodi di investigazione e domande di ricerca originali. A tal fine, abbiamo incoraggiato la presenza di contributi dallo spiccatissimo interesse teoretico e metodologico, fondamentale nella pratica e nella riflessione accademica. Nello specifico, poi, questo secondo numero si distingue per il fatto di raccogliere ricerche che studiano diversi aspetti e fenomeni della modernità: dagli albori della *nahda* fino ai giorni nostri.

Il contributo “Deliberation in the Name of the People? Assessing the Role of the Diwan of Cairo, 1798-1801”, di Robin F.C. Schmahl, rappresenta un primo tentativo di studio dell'esperienza del Diwan istituito durante il mandato napoleonico al Cairo attraverso le lenti interpretative della teoria deliberativa habermasiana. L'autore propone un'analisi delle deliberazioni avvenute all'interno di questo organo attraverso tre dimensioni analitiche: *politics*, *policy* e *polity*. Tale indagine si basa sullo studio dei verbali del Diwan conservati nella Bibliothèque Nationale de France e dei resoconti presenti nel periodico di al-Ǧabartī. Il contributo di Chakib Ararou, intitolato “La Palestine comme métaphore marocaine. Les guerres israélo-arabes de 1967 et 1973 dans la littérature marocaine de langues arabe et française”, ci permette di riscoprire l'impatto che la questione palestinese ha avuto nel campo letterario marocchino della seconda metà del XX secolo. Adottando una prospettiva d'analisi al tempo stesso “interna” ed “esterna” ai testi, propria alla sociologia della letteratura, Ararou si sofferma sui dibattiti generati da quest'ultima non soltanto nel “sottocampo” arabofono, ma anche nel “sottocampo” francofono del Marocco, offrendo una panoramica generale dello stato del suo campo letterario a cavallo fra la “guerra dei sei giorni” del 1967 e la “guerra d'ottobre” del 1973. Nell'articolo “La ‘Chiesa dell'Islam’ nella teologia di Padre Dall'Oglio e nella missione della comunità al-Ḥalīl”, Chiara Cetrulo esplora con attenzione il pensiero di Padre Paolo Dall'Oglio e il suo profondo interesse e impegno nel dialogo interreligioso, espresso nel concetto di “Chiesa dell'Islam”. Dall'analisi teorica del pensiero del gesuita emergono le fondamenta per le pratiche di dialogo portate avanti nella comunità fondata da Dall'Oglio in Siria. L'articolo affronta con attenzione e profondità i temi centrali del pensiero di Dall'Oglio, rendendo giustizia a una figura fondamentale per la storia re-

cente del dialogo interreligioso e della stessa Siria.

Per quanto riguarda la sezione dei *working paper*, in “Transplanter, coexister... normaliser ? La transplantation d’organes entre Israélien·ne·s et Palestinien·ne·s dans la presse locale”, Samirah Jarrar sviluppa un’analisi discorsiva delle rappresentazioni del fenomeno dei trapianti d’organi nel contesto israelo-palestinese, visto dalla stampa locale. Il contributo esplora in termini originali e critici il rapporto tra rappresentazioni discorsive ed esperienze dei corpi e delle comunità all’interno di un contesto coloniale, mettendolo in relazione con le rivendicazioni politiche e le costruzioni identitarie delle collettività coinvolte. L’autrice si focalizza, così, non solo su ciò che viene enunciato ma anche sui silenzi, le assenze e le sfumature narrative, per coglierne la funzione nei processi di normalizzazione politica dell’occupazione israeliana e di resistenza palestinese. “Arabizi: A Linguistic Manifestation of Glocalization in the Arabic Language Area?”, redatto da Giulia Brabetz, analizza invece il cosiddetto *Arabizi*, un sistema ortografico dell’arabo caratterizzato dall’uso dei caratteri latini, legandolo al concetto sociolinguistico della “glocalizzazione”. L’autrice mira a dimostrare come questa varietà ortografica costituisca una manifestazione della glocalizzazione nel mondo arabofono, presentandone tutte le caratteristiche, quali, ad esempio, la digrafia con l’alfabeto latino.

Anche quest’anno, infine, le recensioni includono letture approfondite di volumi di recentissima pubblicazione, usciti fra il 2020 e il 2022. In particolare, Annalisa Campa mostra come l’ultimo libro di Lorenzo Trombetta (*Negoziazione e potere in Medio Oriente. Alle radici dei conflitti in Siria e dintorni*. Milano: Mondadori Università. 2022) esplori le dinamiche di potere nel contesto Medio Orientale e si interroghi su problemi metodologici dello studio della regione, contrapponendo un accurato studio del contesto a semplicistiche generalizzazioni. Sophia Mouttalib recensisce uno studio di Zaid Al-Ali (*Arab Constitutionalism. The Coming Revolution*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2021) che fa luce sulle mobilitazioni del 2011, rifiutandosi di leggerle come eventi eccezionali, ma inserendole nel quadro delle tradizioni politico-giuridiche preesistenti dei paesi arabi in questione. Chiudono questo secondo numero di *Maydan*, la recensione di Sara Zanotta (Leonardo Davoudi. *Persian Petroleum. Oil, Empire and Revolution in Late Qajar Iran*. London/New York: I.B. Tauris. 2021), sul ruolo che ebbe la prima scoperta del petrolio in Persia all’inizio del XX secolo, e quella di Samuele Carlo Ayrton Abrami (Mehmet Hakan Yavuz. *Nostalgia for Empire. The Politics of Neo-Ottomanism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2020) sulle cause socioculturali, gli attori e le correnti che hanno svolto un ruolo fondamentale nella costruzione del neo-ottomanismo in Turchia.

Un elemento che caratterizza *Maydan* è la sua stretta relazione con una fase di formazione accademica che si interrompe con la conclusione del percorso di dottorato. Pertanto, vogliamo approfittare di questo spazio per ringraziare alcune delle nostre

colleghe, oggi addottorate, che lasceranno la redazione, ma che con cura e attenzione hanno visto nascere e hanno fatto crescere la rivista fino ad ora, accompagnandola lodevolmente. Allo stesso tempo, la formazione di nuove editrici e nuovi editori proseguirà nei prossimi mesi con i membri che hanno da poco raggiunto la nostra redazione, continuando ad alimentare e impreziosire *Maydan* con nuove idee ed energie.

Dopo aver omaggiato Beirut nel primo numero, rievocando l'esplosione che ha distrutto il suo porto, quest'anno la nostra copertina guarda all'Iran. Poiché essere donna, decidere di sé e del proprio corpo non può ancora continuare a essere un atto di coraggio, o una scelta degli *altri*, in nessun contesto e a nessuna condizione, dedichiamo questo numero a Mahsa Jina Amini e a tutte le iraniane e gli iraniani uccisi quest'anno per aver provato a chiedere la *loro* libertà.

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Caporedattrice di *Maydan*

ARTICOLI

Deliberation in the Name of the People? Assessing the Role of the Diwan of Cairo, 1798-1801

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ABSTRACT

Over the last two decades, deliberative theory has moved from its incipient stage to a reflective phase, addressing the discipline's hitherto unaddressed conceptual weaknesses. Although the field has to offer promising methodological outlooks, its focus was traditionally set on post-WWII democratic polities situated in the global North. Building on alternative approaches, this article intends to move deliberative theory away from its oftentimes Eurocentric perspective to analyze the role of institutionalized deliberation in a non-European historical context. As a case study, I focus on the Diwan of Cairo operating under French colonial rule in 1798-1801. While historical works on Napoleon Bonaparte's so-called expedition into Egypt oftentimes allude to the Diwan, no proper institutional study of it has been put forward yet. Utilizing two Arabic manuscripts of the Diwan's minutes held in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (Mss. Arabe 2455 and 7272) as well as the chronicles of al-Ǧabartī, the paper intends to offer a first step for this endeavor. It will follow a tripartite structure adopting an analysis of the Diwan along three political dimensions: politics, policy, and polity. Ultimately, my research aims to show new ways for the application of deliberative theory within historical analyses of non-European societies and non-democratic state structures.

KEYWORDS

Deliberative theory / Egypt / French Expedition / deliberation / Diwan of Cairo

1 - Introduction

In early October 1798, Napoleon Bonaparte instructed Gaspard Monge and Claude Louis Berthollet, two chairmen of the newly instituted Institut d'Égypte and the prospective French *commissaires* of the General Diwan in Cairo, to supervise the assembly's deliberations and take note of any proposed consultations so that the Général en Chef would "know what has to be done for the good of the people".¹ In his letter, he famously declared that the main ambition for Diwan's convocation was to "accustom the notables

¹ « [...] savoir ce qu'il faut faire pour le bonheur du people [...] » (Bonaparte 1860:32).

of Egypt to the ideas of assembly and government".²

Although the Diwan had several institutional predecessors in Egypt's Ottoman system of governance, it would become one of the most prominent reforms introduced by the French in 1798-1801. Even though the Diwan experienced several episodes of institutional change depending on the current political situation and military successes of the French army, it consistently stood out as a cornerstone of the French efforts to engage with the local population in a non-violent fashion.

While studies of the Expedition oftentimes allude to the Diwan, it has never been scrutinized from an institutionalist standpoint. A consistent methodological approach for exploring the Diwan's inner operations and power dynamics is still missing. This working paper is a first step towards such an endeavor.

Even though the Diwan had a limited influence on French policy-making in 1798-1801, it was conceived as a consultative body operating in a deliberative way. Hence, it appears reasonable for any novel methodological approach for analyzing the Diwan to turn to deliberative theory. Despite being primarily developed for other – i.e. European or Western, contexts – the inner discussions within this subdiscipline of political theory pushed the field more and more to explore institutions outside the European context.

The present study will try to showcase how an analysis of the deliberation taking place within the Cairo Diwan can contribute to deliberative theory today. For this purpose, I will first sketch out how my approach fits into the ongoing debate within research and whether deliberative theory offers a pertinent theoretical framework for such an endeavor. In a second step, I will briefly allude to an episode of deliberation recorded in the minutes of the Cairo Diwan and show possible points of analysis for scholars of deliberative theory. This paper aims to explore how histories of non-democratic polities offer worthwhile possibilities for the application of deliberative theory and how these approaches might conduce to a reflection of Western-centric methodologies in the field.

From a methodological viewpoint, the present paper constitutes an effort in theory testing as opposed to theory building. As such, it will trace the efforts undertaken within deliberative theory to develop a coherent approach to deliberation as an operative research category and to what degree this is suitable for an innovative analysis of the Cairo Diwan representing a case study beyond the contexts in which deliberative theory is usually applied to. The paper will rely on tracing the deliberative process documented in two manuscripts of the Diwan's minutes and an eyewitness account by one of its members, the 18th-century chronicler al-Ǧabartī, along three different political dimensions (politics, policy, polity). These findings will then be embedded into current

² «Le but de la convocation du divan général, Citoyens, est un essai pour accoutumer les notables d'Égypte à des idées d'assemblée et de gouvernement.» (Bonaparte 1860:32).

debates within deliberative theory.

2 - Deliberation in the Diwan? A contested methodology

Over the last few decades, deliberative theory has established itself as a subdiscipline within the humanities and social sciences. While it has produced a plethora of eminent studies in political science, economics, and history (Curato *et al.* 2017), it is still facing a number of conceptual challenges that are highly relevant to its theoretical and methodological coherence. Chambers has argued that in light of the internal discussions deliberative theory has moved from its incipient phase mostly focused on theoretical delineations to a «working theory stage» characterized by an influx of empirical research on deliberation in economic, judicial, and political contexts (Chambers 2003:307). Now, the field has entered a third phase that tries to reconcile some methodological incoherencies originating from deliberative theory's development over the last years (Bächtiger *et al.* 2010).

Arguably, Habermasian notions are most prevalent in idealist conceptions of deliberation. Following Habermas' work, modes of communication have to fulfill an extensive catalogue of discursive criteria in order to constitute true deliberation (Habermas 1996; Oquendo 2002; Olson 2011). Although the Habermasian conception, with its well-defined categorical understanding of deliberation, is a reasonable approach for normative and highly theoretical endeavors, it proves to be almost unattainable in real-life situations. Taking such an idealist conception out of the realms of theory usually results in the disillusioning realization that Habermasian true deliberation does rarely, if ever, take place under the oftentimes chaotic conditions within real-life discursive formations.

Therefore, social scientists focusing on deliberation have often opted for more minimalist conceptions of the term that allow for empirically grounded studies. For instance, Austen-Smith and Feddersen adopt a minimalist conception merely stating that «a group of people who talk prior to making a collective choice *deliberate*» (Austen-Smith & Feddersen 2008: 191). However, with such an approach, new issues arise. In the 70s, Sartori warned about the effects of what he coined «concept stretching» in accumulative theory building³ (Sartori 1970). As scholars try to broaden the scope of their respective disciplines, they risk inflating the meaning of key terminology. Consequently, analytical categories might lose their explanatory power. Based on Sartori's work, Steiner has made this case with regard to deliberation (Steiner 2008). To avoid Sartori's concept stretching, idealist understandings of deliberation should be constructed as Weberian ideal-types in social science that, though constituting an (inter-) subjective factor, serve

³ Most recently, a similar phenomenon has been described in social psychology, though under the term of «concept creep» (Haslam & McGrath 2020; Haslam *et al.* 2021).

for categorizing and ultimately understanding real-world phenomena (Lindbekk 1992; Weber 2017). In other words, a Habermasian conception of true deliberation can serve as the theoretical backdrop for more empirically driven endeavors as a minimalist definition is not applied to capture true deliberation *per se*, but merely *degrees* thereof in the real world (Steiner 2008).

Using different idealist conceptions of deliberation as a Weberian ideal-type opens the possibility for theory testing not merely according to internal (e.g. conceptual coherence and consistency) but also external criteria, i.e. the theory's capability to «represent, summarize, or capture something outside the theory» (List & Valentini 2016:16). For instance, if we were to analyze the degrees of deliberation within an Ottoman municipal council in the 18th century, it appears worthwhile to consider an idealist conception stemming from the Ottoman Islamic tradition instead of relying exclusively on Habermasian categories of deliberation. Being open to ideal-types grounded in other traditions would render the application of deliberative theory more suitable for analyzing institutions of non-European contexts and moving beyond already existing categories of analysis.

Most recently, scholars have started to put deliberative theory's general Eurocentric focus into question (Kapoor 2002; Sass & Dryzek 2014). As the vast majority of studies have examined deliberation in contexts originating from post WWII societies in the West and global North, the field has opened its analysis to understanding deliberation in African, Middle Eastern, and East Asian contexts. Here, the idea is not merely to apply established methodology of deliberative theory in geographically different contexts but also to problematize its current outlook on at least two deeper conceptual levels.

First, a deeper reflection of the euro-centric preconceptions that underlie the field's terminology could follow in the future (Bailey 2014). A direct example of such a reflective process could be the problematization of the term “deliberation” as carrying no linguistic equivalent in non-European societies that fully captures the depth of the term. Other linguistic contexts must rely on translating it with a variety of words that range from terms such as conversation, consultation, or speech – each carrying its own backlog of related conceptions and contexts that cannot be found within the European tradition of political theory. Here, to take up the example of the Ottoman municipal council again, an analysis could rely on a notion like *šūrā* that includes a variety of deliberative practices and institutions of consultation (Ayalon 1999:73-78). Similar to deliberation in Europe, *šūrā* has become a concept that is now widely discussed in Islamic contexts concerned with pre-democratic forms of political conduct (Demichelis 2015), democratic education (Davids & Waghid 2019:91-98), or democratic theory (Tønnessen 2009). As we will see, even the members of the Diwan made use of this notion to conceptualize their deliberation within the colonial administration of 1798-

1801. Reliance on notions such as *šūrā* for an analysis of deliberation in 18th century Egypt does also appear feasible considering the long tradition of juridical and political councils in Cairo ranging back throughout Ottoman and Mamluk history, as well as the emergence of deliberative merchant forums in the first half of the 19th century (Ghazale 2012; Rapoport 2012; Baldwin 2017).

Secondly, given the field's traditional situatedness in democratic theory, deliberative analyses are mostly concerned with social, cultural, or economic phenomena within institutions of democratic polities. In parallel, historical analyses, such as Habermas' seminal study *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit*, are predominantly concerned with examining how certain historical trends led to the development of (Western) democracies today (Habermas 2018). However, such a perspective neglects the manifold roles deliberation carries in semi-democratic, perhaps even authoritarian contexts. Authors like Wedeen and Lynch have repeatedly pointed out this issue and formulated alternative approaches for applying deliberative theory in non-democratic contexts, e.g. Yemen or Iraq (Wedeen 2004; 2007; Lynch 2003; 2006). Similarly, several scholars have tried to adapt notions of deliberative theory such as the Habermasian conception of the public sphere for assessing deliberation in Arab contexts (Shami 2009; Abbott 2016). Many of these approaches stem from a focus on deliberative processes during or in the wake of the Arab Spring (Kraidy 2017; Maboudi 2020) or the facilitation of public deliberation through contemporary mass media (Badran 2013; Abdelmoudia 2015) and digitalized forms of communication (Salvatore 2013; Riegart 2015). Here, however, an exploration of deliberation within pre- or early modern historical contexts as well as colonial institutions is still missing – an approach that this paper intends to formulate.

Habermas' general outlook on historical trends in Europe might be feasible for an analysis of Ottoman Egypt, albeit with some adaptions. He describes how in the 18th century a bourgeois public sphere that was closely tied to the rise of capitalism and predicated on commodity exchange was able to emerge (Habermas 2018:122-148). He famously attested how this public sphere would express itself in salon culture with its small discussion groups enabling various forms of politically relevant deliberation that eventually led to mass media discourses in the 19th century. Social historians of 18th-century Egypt have noted similar developments that might play a role in our assessment of deliberation in the Diwan. André Raymond (1974), and especially Peter Gran (1998) after him, have documented the emergence of capitalist economic and societal structures in 18th-century Ottoman Egypt. Ghazale (1995) has shown how these structures influenced the guild system setting up a semi-stringent state-economy dichotomy with the guilds being mostly independent from the state in questions of organization and internal discursive formations. Furthermore, this dichotomy would later be enforced through various reforms that stripped many of the local merchants from their politically influential functions, giving rise to state-enforced merchant tribunals privileging

foreign traders (Ghazale 2012). Most importantly, in her study of 18th century Egyptian cultural history, Nelly Hanna (2003) noted how the spread of books and general literacy among a bourgeois middle class was not merely due to the importance of classical institutions of learning but also due to the ever-increasing growth of trade and business. The practice of *maġālis*, or small assemblies among the middle class to discuss matters of culture and politics, coincided with these trends in education and literacy. Especially this development shows striking similarities to the salon culture discussed by Habermas (Hanna 2003:156). Given that the Diwan under the French would later be dominated almost exclusively by people embedded in these practices suggests the applicability of deliberative theory to an analysis of this institution. Furthermore, this implies that the claim of European exclusivity to deliberation in general but also as a modern innovation brought by the French to Egypt is questionable.

Although deliberative theory is closely connected to democracy studies, its application does not imply the notion that Bonaparte's rule in Egypt, or Europe for that matter (Coller 2010:29-31), was democratic or an act of sincere democratization according to today's standards. Far from that, it has been shown repeatedly that Bonapartism challenged core tenets of democratic conduct, such as popular sovereignty, whilst upholding republican symbolism (Grab 2010). In addition, the notion of modernity-export, i.e. Bonaparte and the French sowing the seed for what would later become the so-called Modern Middle East, has been challenged extensively for two decades now (Gran 1998; Marsot 1999; Conermann 2002; Ze'evi 2004; al-Shalaq 2005). Following this line of thought, the present article does not argue in any way that Bonaparte's rule was truly democratic, nor would such a dubious assessment be necessary for my argumentation here. The application of deliberative theory for an analysis of the Diwan does merely challenge the counter-intuitive – and frankly non-sensical – assumption that deliberation as a tangible concept for political theory does not play a role in structures of governance within non-European and non-democratic contexts. As we will see, deliberation played an important role for the operations of the Diwan within the French colonial, i.e. non-democratic, administration of Egypt in 1798-1801. As such, this article provides a reflection on how to adapt core tenets of deliberative theory outside a conventional western, democratic case-study, situating it among the works cited above dealing with authoritarian contexts and the Arab world through the perspective of deliberative theory.

However, some historians of 1798-1801 characterized the activities of the Diwan primarily as acts of defiance or, at best, staged debates coerced by the threat of violence. The episode of al-Šarqāwī, the Diwan's president, theatrically refusing to wear a tricolored cloth and cockade is enigmatic of such a perspective and a commonplace in many historical studies of the Expedition (Cole 2007:149-150; Coller 2010: 32). Even though some of the jurists taking part in the Diwan were engaged in anti-French resistance struggles (Ramadan 1986:109-156), a perspective that ignores the administrative role

of the Diwan and the deliberative practices testified by numerous archival sources appears to be over-simplistic. Especially conservative and Islamist thinkers have tried to argue along these lines neglecting the different modes of engagement and cooperation between Egyptian society and the French administration. Kishk for instance sought to stress the role of the azharite muftis in anti-French resistance struggles claiming that the first Cairo revolt was a «100 percent national» uprising (Kishk 1990:276). However, he thereby neglects the complicated political situation involving a multifaceted array of actors in 1798 Cairo. Writing from an Islamist perspective, Kishk insinuates that the ulema boycotted the Diwan set up by the French. Yet, this view not only ignores the notable paper trail left by the muftis' engagement with the institution but also the fact that its most eminent members, al-Sharqawī and al-Bakri – both being of the highest rank among the Cairene ulema – tried to appease the revolutionaries on behalf of the French administration. After being met with gunfire on their way to al-Azhar, the two shaykhs had to retreat to the French camp in fear of being attacked by the rebellious crowd. This episode showcases the complicated entanglement of the ulema with the French administration as well as their willingness to cooperate through the Diwan. Furthermore, it is evident from our source material that the Diwan came to an end due to Bonaparte himself and not a boycott by the jurists, since the *Général en Chef* suppressed the institution against the will of the muftis after the uprising (Schmahl forthcoming).

In this regard, Afifi and Raymond (2003) have contributed most to our understanding of this institutional aspect by editing two manuscripts of the Diwan's minutes and offering a very short though valuable introduction to the Diwan's activities. The present paper intends to build on this approach to propose a study based on historical, i.e. archival, work as well as an institutionalist analysis grounded in deliberative theory.

As such, and to properly differentiate deliberation from a common talk (Mansbridge 1999; Kim & Kim 2008), we can conceptualize the workings of the Diwan as *institutionalized* deliberation. A similar demarcation can be found in Habermas' *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit*, where he differentiates between informal and formal opinions with the institutionalization of their respective areas of communication serving as the dividing line (Habermas 2018:352-356). Accordingly, the deliberations taking place within the Diwan fall into the category of formal opinions as opposed to, for instance, a discussion taking place in one of the cultural *mağālis* described by Hanna (2003). Authors like Warren have shown the importance of institutionalization for deliberative processes, while empirical studies testify how not merely individual participants affect deliberation, but also how the institutional context in which deliberation takes place affects the deliberative process itself (Cohen 2002; Warren 2007; Goodin 2008). Here, a study of the Diwan contributes to our understanding of how different institutional contexts affect deliberation.

The following case study is a short exploration of how these points of reflection

might be put into practice. By focusing on the Cairo Diwan, I intend to show how deliberative theory can benefit from broadening its scope beyond predominantly democratic and Eurocentric outlooks by offering a brief analysis of a deliberative institution in the colonial context of the French Expedition. Following the simple definition of an institution as «stable, valued, recurring patterns of behavior that persist beyond the tenure of individual leaders» (Huntington 2006:12; Fukuyama 2014:6), I will structure this study according to a three-dimensional institutionalist approach based on polity, politics, and policy (Palonen 2003; Leca 2012) to assess institutionalized forms of deliberation within the Diwan. The limited scope of this article does not allow for an exhaustive account of all three dimensions but rather necessitates a focus on what aspects appear to have had a direct influence on the deliberation taking place within the Diwan.

3 - Assessing the role of the Diwan of Cairo

Bonaparte initially intended to base his governance in Egypt on a system of different *diwans* with its centralized venue of deliberation in Cairo culminating in what the French themselves called an Egyptian Estates General in October 1798 (Schmahl forthcoming). Although Bonaparte's initial aspirations for the Diwan came to a sudden halt with the first Cairo revolt in late October, it would function more or less continuously until the end of the Expedition in varying institutional constellations. Between 1798-1801 it carried a variety of roles including the assessment of possible municipal and provincial reforms, communicating financial demands and orders of the French to the local population, or offering a venue for processing petitions.⁴ All in all, it served as the core of Bonaparte's Islamic policy – an ambitious endeavor to win the hearts and minds of Egyptians, in particular the Muslim population, for his project in Egypt (Cherfils 1914; Roux 1925; Tageldin 2011:33-65). It therefore also constituted an institution for cultivating legitimacy for the French by, for instance, lavishly organizing festivities of the Islamic calendar, writing public letters to the Sharif of Mecca, and occupying a central role in the Islamic judicial system.

The Diwan in its different forms has produced a considerable amount of archival traces whereas sources are most abundant for its latest phase of existence starting in November 1800 until July 1801. This period of the Expedition under the Generalship of Jacques-François “Abdallah” de Menou (1750-1810) was characterized by several administrative reforms within the financial and judicial sector that purported the establishment of a sustainable form of governance (Rousseau 1900). Although the Expedition would eventually end with the last evacuation of French troops in July 1801, during the reorganization of the Diwan in November 1800, Menou had the ambition to utilize this

⁴ The most important accounts of the Diwan's role during 1798-1801 can be found in Laurens's (1989) and Raymond's (1998) studies of the Expedition.

institution as one cornerstone of a permanent French administration in Egypt (Raymond 1998:227-270).

His Diwan, as an institutional successor to the Diwan under Bonaparte and even the Ottoman Diwan, took over a number of different roles (Lafi 2011:192–205). In addition to its position within the French Islamic policy, it also functioned as a court of cassation while performing its newly defined role as chief ministerial council overseeing the whole of the Islamic judicial system in Egypt (Urban 2014). The Diwan's minutes were presumably collected to form the basis of an Arabic journal called *al-tanbih* printed by the *Imprimerie Nationale* in Cairo similar to the French *Courier de l'Egypte* (al-Bustānī 1954). Apparently, this project was never fully realized, though parts of the Diwan's minutes have survived until today within two Arabic manuscripts⁵ held in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (Afifi & Raymond 2003). The ambitious enterprise of creating an Arabic journal is indicative of one important non-administerial role of the Diwan, often overlooked in research. The French Islamic policy under Menou moved beyond being a mere means of legitimizing French rule by projecting a certain continuity of the Ottoman Islamic system. The institution was also exceedingly used for the spread of propaganda and even false information to prevent another uprising in Cairo. For instance, with British and Ottoman forces making serious military gains in June 1801, the Diwan was informed that the French had allegedly conquered vast parts of the British Isles and were winning the war in Europe.⁶

It is important to understand this aspect of the Diwan and how it shaped the deliberation taking place. Utilizing the institution for propagandistic purposes inevitably resulted in it negotiating conceptions of legitimacy, right rulership, good political conduct, and mediation, as well as the relationship between rulers and their subjects. These notions were a frequent topic of deliberation and oftentimes discussed subliminally during sessions on more concrete ministerial matters. Hence, analyzing this deliberative subtext is central to assessing the politics-dimension of the institution.

3.1 - Polity-dimension

The polity-dimension describes formal aspects of the Diwan's operations. It constitutes how, when, and where deliberation took place. Luckily, our source material offers ample information about these facets of the institution's functioning. The Diwan under Menou had its inaugural session on November 3, 1800, and was supposed to assemble regularly with 10 sessions per month. The chronicler al-Ğabartī,

⁵ Ms. Arabe 2455 and Ms. Arabe 7272.

⁶ Ms. Arabe 2455, folia 15-17.

who was himself a member of the Diwan, informs us through his eyewitness accounts of the institution that a session would usually last «for about three hours before noon up to the call for the evening prayer or even a little beyond – all according to need» (al-Ǧabartī 1994, vol. III:138). Its nine members were exclusively recruited from the ulema and most of all had already served in the Diwan under Bonaparte. They assembled in the refurbished women's compartment of a former Mamluk palace in ‘Ābidīn. In addition to its nine permanent members, the Diwan also employed translators, scribes, guardsmen, a minute taker, and a *qādī*. Although the assembly elected a president and a secretary from among its permanent members, the most powerful position was held by a French *commissaire* [*wakīl*] who reported to the *Général en Chef* on its activities. The *commissaire*, Jean-Baptiste Joseph Fourier (1768-1830), was not merely the representative of the French administration within the council but he also actively oversaw its deliberation, by setting its agenda and passing orders to the assembly. He was also in charge of organizing the institution's archives carrying the title of chief judicial administrator or overseer of sharia politics [*nāzir ‘alā siyāsat al-aḥkām al-ṣar‘iyya*].⁷

Matters to discuss were brought forward mostly by the *commissaire*, but sometimes also by the members themselves. In addition, the Diwan's deliberation was held publicly and allowed for others to attend a session while actively engaging through voicing specific needs or forwarding a petition. After deliberation on a given matter, the outcome would usually be written down and passed as a note to administrators relevant to the issue at hand. Sometimes, the Diwan would also select a responsible person among the members to be tasked with executing what the institution has deliberated upon. Other than the moderating interventions by the *commissaire*, most of the Diwan's deliberations did not seem to follow a specific protocol that would stipulate the speaking order or timeslots for interventions. Indeed, sessions were also frequently interrupted by members of the audience intervening in the deliberative process. For selecting personnel including the Diwan's president and secretaries, the institution resorted to voting by secret ballot. In case of selecting *qādīs* for the judicial system, candidates had to be proposed by the *Qādī l-Quḍāt* in advance.

All these aspects indicate high degrees of institutionalization and with that notions of institutionalized authority that are characteristic of Habermas' (2018:353) notion of formal opinions. It's reasonable to assume that the strict institutional structure was put in place to endow the Diwan's authority with legitimacy gained from its procedural features – a common aspect of deliberative practices seeking legitimacy independent of the contents of deliberation (Peter 2013:1264). Given Bonaparte's and Menou's Islamic policy, questions of legitimacy and authority of the colonial administration seemed to be at the heart of the Diwan's function. The *commissaire*'s Arabic title as overseer of

⁷ Ms. Arabe 7272, fol. 120.

sharia politics also points to this characteristic. During the early modern Ottoman caliphate, the legalistic distinction between *siyāsa* as worldly politics and sharia as religious law was more and more softened to grant the emerging bureaucratic structure of the Ottoman state supreme authority (Meshal 2014:41-68). Hence, it is not surprising that the deliberation of the jurists in the Diwan was characterized as *siyāsat al-ahkām al-shar'iyya* whereas the novel post of *nāzir* was instituted with a French representative of the *Général en Chef* overseeing this structure.

3.2 - Policy-dimension

The policy-dimension describes all contentual aspects of the institution's deliberation. It constitutes the actual reasons, content, and outcomes of the deliberation. As the institution dealt with a variety of issues, its policies concerned, for instance, the fate of Mamluk exiles, the functioning of the Islamic judicial system, questions concerning regulations of sharia law, financial demands and taxes, civil unrest in Cairo and the provinces, organization of guilds, conflicts between groups and individuals, or urban infrastructure, among many others. For the purposes of this study, I will focus on one example that also offers an apt subject for exploring the politics dimension in the following section.

During the Diwan's sixteenth session in December 1800,⁸ a group of merchants visited the assembly with a request concerning a financial demand that had been imposed by the French administration on crafts and trades in the City.⁹ Their petition was presented to the assembly by al-Šarqāwī (1737-1812), the Diwan's president.¹⁰ It revolved around the proposition to levy the imposed tax per head. Since the trades-community's representatives were not able to extract the necessary funds themselves, they pleaded for repartition instead of imposing the tax on the community as a whole. This petition led to a heated discussion between the *commissaire*, the Diwan's members, the petitioners, as well as the audience present during the session.

While the members were sympathetic to the petitioners' proposal, the *commissaire* was highly skeptical and pointed out possible organizational obstacles to a poll tax. The assembly discussed whether women and children should be included as relevant for levying the tax, but also who would be deemed financially able enough for taxation. At this point, the *commissaire* asked the audience to give their opinion, and someone cried out that previous taxation did already cost him all of his financial resources. The

⁸ Ms. Arabe 7272, folia 105-113.

⁹ al-Ǧabartī dubbed this imposition the «million tax». For his account on this tax and the discussion surrounding it, see (al-Ǧabartī 1994, vol. III:139–141).

¹⁰ al-Šarqāwī was also rector of al-Azhar and the most eminent mufti in Cairo at that time. On al-Šarqāwī, see Delanoue 1982:94–97; al-Ǧabartī 1994, vol. IV:159–163.

Diwan's secretary al-Mahdī (1737-1815)¹¹ interceded to point out the overall high financial burden put on the population and pleaded for the annulation or at least reduction of this specific tax. After Fourier insisted that an annulation was not possible, both the merchants and some members pleaded to have old Cairo and Būlāq added to the City of Cairo and thereby also included for levying the tax. Though yet again, the *commissaire* responded that this was not possible. Since both Būlāq and old Cairo were distinct districts, they had to be taxed independently. After some back and forth, a compromise was reached. Upon suggestion by the *commissaire*, the merchants and al-Mahdī should meet with him after the session to draft a petition to the *Général en Chef* calling for reducing the tax or at least levying it per head. al-Ǧabartī informs us that the issue was resolved with the institution of a commission assessing the income and wealth of Cairo's inhabitants, excluding women and children, *faqihs*, servants, and the poor for taxation (al-Ǧabartī 1994, vol. III:141).

This policy example demonstrates that the Diwan's activities were neither acts of outright defiance to the colonial administration nor instances of coerced debate under the direct threat of violence. It was possible for its members, and even the public, to address issues that touched upon the authority of the colonial administration. In a next step, these issues would then be discussed through meaningful deliberation between the petitioners, the Diwan's members, and the *commissaire* as a representative of the administration. Those deliberations were meaningful in the sense that they resulted in tangible results leading to actual policy decisions or reform of previous policies with an impact on the daily life of the population. While the colonial administration and the *commissaire* undoubtedly held pre-eminent positions within this process, the contents of deliberation were not dictated exclusively by the higher echelons of the colonial hierarchy. Although the general structure of governance was of course characterized by an uneven distribution of power with the *Général en Chef* ultimately holding autocratic authority, the activities of the Diwan also show how compromise reached through deliberation was a way of engaging with the political system not much unlike in other deliberative and even democratic contexts (Weinstock 2017; O'Flynn & Setälä 2022). Furthermore, while this instance seems to follow a core tenet of deliberative theory stating that the successful implementation of action is preceded by communicative action based on a competition of arguments between interlocutors (Habermas 1990:160; Martínez-Bascuñán 2016:202-204), it breaks with another wide-spread conviction that this communicative action must occur between equal citizens (Cohen 1991:345).

3.3 - Politics-dimension

The politics-dimension describes procedural aspects of the Diwan. It is concerned

¹¹ On al-Mahdī, see (al-Ahnaf 1999).

with questions of who debated with whom, why, in what fashion, and how interventions were justified. The discussion described above poses an apt object of analysis in this regard, since it is replete with political notions of how the French administration, the Diwan, as well as the local population were envisioned to engage with one another. As such, it offers an insight into how deliberation was structured within the specific hierarchical context of the Expedition.

First of all, the episode described above shows how deliberation did not primarily take place as a discussion between the permanent members of the Diwan. Instead, the ulema were principally in agreement with one another on the proposal brought forward by the petitioners. Rather, the actual debate took place between the members and the *commissaire* as a representative of the French administration. The deliberative front-lines, so to speak, remained intact even when confronted with an intervention from the audience. As the *commissaire* enticed someone from the public to voice his opinion *against* the petitioners' proposal for levying the tax per head, the members were quick to build on his opinion for their deliberative purposes, and called for the annulment of the tax altogether.

Confronted with the assembly as a coherent block voicing its opposition to the tax, Fourier turned the discussion into a reminder of the imposed limits and boundaries of the Diwan's deliberation:

[...] and the *Commissaire* said: the result of this talk is that the subjects [*ra'iya*] came for consultation [*mušāwara*] about the repartition [of the tax], but the '*u-lamā'* want to push back [*mudāfa'a*] and [its] remission. But he who wants its remission must have the power to oppose, while he who cannot do so, has to be content with what the *Général en Chef* has imposed. And if he insists on pushing back he suppresses [*raf'*] the *dīwān*, and we will not accept any intercession. [...] and the eminent al-Fayyūmī said: what is asked is mercy [*rahma*] and not remission, so if with this the *Général en Chef* was to take advantage of it, it would accrue to him because of the appeal [*du'ā*] of the people to him. The *Commissaire* said: This talk feels like something else, and that is the reduction [of the tax] and not its repartition [...] and I know that in this is discomfort for the minds [*fī-hi taqla 'alā al-nufūs*], but opposition [*mušādama*] to it is not possible (Ms. Arabe 7272, fol. 109).¹²

Fourier reminded the Diwan that repeated open opposition to the will of the *Gé-*

¹² This is my own translation of the passage. Unfortunately, until today there is no complete translation of the Diwan's minutes. A partial French translation of the text, which is mostly a summary of the minute's contents, can be found in Afifi's and Raymond's (2003) commentary.

néral en Chef constitutes a red line and will not be tolerated. He goes as far as warning the members that their deliberation might even result in suppressing the institution altogether. As such, they are forced to reformulate their intentions within the imposed deliberative boundaries.

Here, they characterize the Diwan's interventions as merely constituting negotiation (*mufāwada*) and consultation (*mušāwara*).¹³ Upon the Diwan's repeated pushbacks, the discussion moves on to the topic of the right way to intercede on behalf of the people. The members invoke Menou's original ambition for the Diwan as a venue for the "anxious" to appeal for aid (*istīqāṭa / iġāṭat al-malhūf*).¹⁴ The *commissaire*, however, insists that proper intermediation does not purport an intervention on every possible occasion, but rather to intercede cautiously only after an issue has been closely examined, for "it is upon the intermediary to mediate according to reasoning" ('alà al-waṣā'iṭ anna yatawasatū bi l-‘aql).¹⁵ Lastly, the member(s) justify their intervention by stressing that during the generalship of Kléber (1753-1800, the *Général en Chef* himself would come to the ulema to consult (*yatašāwara*) on what the law (*šar'*) states with regard to this issue since he did institute his Diwan for his counsel (*nash*). As such, there should be time allotted for a meeting between the Diwan and Menou himself, so as not to put the *commissaire* in the difficult position to receive reproach from both sides.¹⁶ At this point, Fourier seems to give in to the arguments of the members. Finally, a compromise is reached stating that, together with the help of the *commissaire*, the Diwan and the merchants can draft a petition directly to Menou. Indeed, the minutes contain a summary of this draft showing that its contents were directly shaped by the discussion during the session. For instance, the document explicitly stresses that the merchants have no other way for raising the issue with Menou than through the Diwan. It seems that this passage was included so as not to draw any reproach unto the *commissaire* and the Diwan for opposing the tax. In addition, the documents stress that the people rejoice in the institution as it poses a venue for the "anxious" to receive aid (*istīqāṭat al-malhūf*).¹⁷

This episode shows how the specific political context of the Diwan shaped the deliberation taking place. Operating in an institutional framework that is characterized by a highly uneven distribution of authority, the deliberative process had to adapt to the given realities of power. At the risk of being shut down altogether, the Diwan had to refor-

¹³ «Fa-qila la-hu laysa dalika ‘alà sabil al-mu‘āraḍa inna-mā huwa ‘alà sabil al-mufāwada wa-l-mušāwara [...]» (Ms. Arabe 7272, folia 107-108).

¹⁴ Ms. Arabe 7272, fol. 110.

¹⁵ Ms. Arabe 7272, fol. 110.

¹⁶ Ms. Arabe 7272, fol. 110.

¹⁷ Ms. Arabe 7272, folia 112-113.

mulate its deliberative interventions so as not to infringe upon the boundaries imposed on it from outside. For this purpose, the members alluded to the practice of consultation or *mušāwara*, itself a concept with a long tradition in Islamic political philosophy (Lewis 1981). On a conceptual level *mušāwara* as a derivative of *šūrā* designates a form of political consultation that traces its roots to the Qur'an and consultative practices during the reign of the Rashidun. Over time, several institutions offering consultation within an Islamic context have adopted this notion to conceptualize their political function (Findley 2012). Arabic and Ottoman commentators on European political structures in the 19th century have often described Western parliamentarianism or any of its institutions to their respective audiences with an allusion to either *šūrā* or *mušāwara* (Ayalon 1987:110-126). Therefore, over the course of the 20th-century *šūrā* has oftentimes been presented as an Islamic approach to democracy (Shavit 2010; Soage 2014).

On an institutional level, the term was more closely connected to the growing importance of consultation practiced by the Ottoman Empire during the 18th century. At this time, Ottoman authorities or the Sultan himself resorted more and more to consultative cooperation with imperial as well as provincial notables on any given matters of pressing importance for the state. In his work on cooperative and collective aspects of rule in the 18th and 19th century Ottoman Empire, Yaycioglu (2016:114) concedes that the principles of political deliberation, as well as consultation on grounds of *šūrā*, were not applied coherently across the whole of Ottoman realms missing an Empire wide consultative institution in the 18th century. However, his work testifies how these principles were applied vividly on a regional level (Yaycioglu 2016:65-155). As such, the reign of Selim III was characterized by the institution of the *Mejlis-i Meshveret*, a grand consultative assembly of notables and an institutional driver for Selim's reform projects, as well as a plethora of smaller permanent councils that played a vital role within the Empire's regular administration (Shaw 1971:71-85). Since these practices grew ever more important during the second half of the 18th century, it is reasonable to assume that the Diwan's evocation of *mušāwara* for the purpose of justifying their deliberation also alluded to the institutional framework under the reign of Selim III. For the Diwan to be able to operate within the restrictive context posed by the Expedition in Egypt, deliberation was not merely justified *qua* being a collective decision-making process but had to assume additional legitimizing mechanisms drawn from outside the French colonial administration. However, it is questionable whether the Diwan's deliberation was deemed legitimate among the wider population in Cairo. While Bonaparte and later Menou opted to institute the Diwan as a means of gaining legitimacy through deliberation, given the events of the first Cairo revolt it seems unlikely that Bonaparte's deliberative project was approved of by most strata of Egyptian society (Schmahl forthcoming).

Indeed, this poses a theoretical question. As shown by the example discussed above, the deliberative practices put in place by the French show instances of politically

meaningful deliberation that successfully produced policies via compromise. But as the Diwan was in a constant struggle for legitimating its activities both vis-à-vis the colonial administration as well as the local population, characterizing its communicative action as a form of proto-democratic deliberation à la Habermas seems unfeasible. As such, it might be more reasonable to conceptualize these practices as a subcategory of what has been dubbed “authoritarian deliberation” in deliberative theory. This term has been introduced predominantly by scholars working on authoritarian China to assess deliberation that develops governance and constructs authority but is not captured by idealized notions of democratic practice (He 2014; He & Warren 2017). In the case of the Diwan and the context of the French expedition, we can detect a similar deficiency when it comes to assessing the role of deliberation. While the deliberative process produced feasible political and administrative policies, the Diwan was unable to oppose the colonial authority and develop its own notion of legitimacy independent from the French administration.

6 - Conclusion

This case study aimed to show how an analysis of deliberation in non-democratic contexts can be situated within the central debates of deliberative theory. With a minimalist conception of deliberation that fits for more empirically driven endeavors, we are able to describe and assess the processes taking place in the Diwan of Cairo. However, the proposed Weberian ideal-type of the current deliberative analysis might yet again pose a theoretical problem. If we were to simply accept a Habermasian conception, we would come to the counter-intuitive result, that it is not deliberation that we encounter in this institution. Given the French administration forcibly imposing limits on the deliberative process, it appears that the degree of true deliberation is at a minimum, if present at all.

On the other hand, simply understanding the Diwan’s discussions as common talk or a fully enforced way of communication also appears to be misguided. Rather, the deliberative processes in the Diwan were not only institutionalized but also had specific political and ministerial purposes differentiating it from an everyday talk. In addition, this example shows that it was possible to engage in meaningful discussions and, to a limited degree, pronounce resistance to the imposition of the *Général en Chef* in a deliberative manner. Even more so, the discussions clearly had a positive outcome in the formulation of the petition to Menou and ultimately in the establishment of a commission tasked with levying the tax per head. All of these characteristics point to the conclusion that there was indeed some form of deliberation that took place within the Diwan.

A more idealist-conception that is based on modern notions of democratic theory is clearly anachronistic and not apt for assessing the processes taking place within the

Diwan. To ensure the appropriate application of deliberative theory in such a context, we should adopt a conception based on how deliberation is ideally conceived within the sources. In our example, a possible substitute could be the practice of *šūrā* and its connected notion of *mušāwara* that is repeatedly alluded to when legitimizing the Diwan's interventions within its minutes. Furthermore, the purpose of the Diwan's deliberation points to the fact that its institutionalized discursive practices can be conceptualized as a form of authoritarian deliberation characterized by the boundaries within the hierarchy of French colonial rule in Egypt.

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La Palestine comme métaphore marocaine.¹

Les guerres israélo-arabes de 1967 et 1973 dans la littérature marocaine de langues arabe et française

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ABSTRACT

Post-1948 Palestine holds a special place in the relationship between the Moroccan literary field and the Mashriq region: the Palestinian cause is central in Moroccan political and cultural speeches, whereas the Mashriqi hegemony on the SWANA cultural production is polarized in Cairo and Beirut rather than Palestine. This paper studies a selection of creative and critical works written in the aftermath of the two Arab-Israeli wars, aiming to describe the evolution of the Moroccan literary field from an original angle: the resonance of these conflicts in Moroccan literature. Relying on the Bourdieusean theory of fields, I analyse the aesthetical and political debates about these conflicts in Morocco, a double literary periphery (Casanova 1999) with two main subfields, arabophone and francophone. The article offers a state of the field in the mid-1960s and shows the compromise made by its most dissensual margins about the Palestinian case after the 1967 *Naksa*, the impact of the event on the field's positional space, and highlights the beginning of a Moroccan appropriation of the Mashriqi space through an in-depth analysis of two novels taking one of these wars as a frame, Ḥanāta Bannūna's *al-Nār wa-l-iḥtiyār* and Mubārak Rabī's *Rifqat al-silāḥ wa-l-qamar*.

KEYWORDS

Maroc / Palestine / littérature / périphérie / guerre

1 - Introduction

La réflexion que je propose ici se situe au croisement de plusieurs questions. À partir des années 1930 s'amorce au Maroc le processus de formation d'un champ littéraire au sens où on l'entend depuis les travaux de Pierre Bourdieu, à savoir un microcosme social revendiquant son autonomie et se structurant progressivement autour d'un espace positionnel inégal (Bourdieu 1992). Au Maroc, le processus de formation

¹ Ce titre est un clin d'œil au recueil d'entretiens de Mahmoud Darwich publié en France. Cf. Darwich 1997.

d'un champ littéraire commence par la constitution d'anthologies proposant un corpus de littérature marocaine, moderne (al-Qabbāğ 1929) puis classique (Gannūn 1938), et par des débats instituant la critique comme instance autonome de production de la norme (Ğārī 2008). Dès cette étape, le champ littéraire marocain se constitue en double périphérie littéraire,² vis-à-vis de la France s'agissant de la littérature de langue française et, pour la littérature arabophone, des grands centres culturels et éditoriaux du Machrek. Comme le montre Khalid Zekri, ce processus d'autonomisation est toujours en cours au milieu des années 2000, et fait face au manque de professionnalisation du métier d'écrivain·e et d'une forte pression de la part d' « instances de légitimation extérieures », qu'elles soient politiques, diplomatiques ou économiques (Zekri 2006:40-42).

La Palestine occupe une place à part dans la polarisation machrekine qui s'observe dans le champ littéraire marocain. On y associe à la fois une cause politique dont l'écho est profond et une littérature fortement légitimée, dans l'aire littéraire arabe³ puis dans le système littéraire mondial, notamment à partir des années 1970 où s'amorce une réelle dynamique de traduction de la littérature palestinienne. Cependant, comme le note Sbeih Sbeih, la Palestine perd avec l'occupation israélienne à partir de 1948 la souveraineté sur certains de ses centres urbains les plus dynamiques culturellement (Jaffa, Haïfa) et se trouve privée de voies d'accès à la production en langue arabe. Pauvre en imprimeries, la Palestine d'après 1948 se trouve ainsi isolée dans le champ littéraire arabe, et ses écrivain·e·s demeuré·e·s sur place strictement contrôlé·e·s voire réprimé·e·s par les autorités d'occupation (Sbeih 2022:215). De ce fait, la Palestine ne dispose pas des ressources fonctionnelles et politiques dont ont pu bénéficier l'Égypte ou le Liban pour asseoir leur centralité dans le champ.

La littérature marocaine offre un ensemble important de textes littéraires au sujet de la Palestine, en langue arabe surtout mais aussi en français, dont je n'aborderai ici qu'un versant par souci de cohérence et de brièveté. En me concentrant sur ceux qui traitent de la *Naksa* du 5 juin 1967⁴ et de la participation marocaine à la guerre d'octobre 1973, je voudrais montrer comment l'écho des guerres israélo-arabes contribue à redéfinir le jeu de forces au sein du champ littéraire marocain et à repositionner le Maroc

² J'emploie ici le terme périphérie au sens que lui donne Pascale Casanova (1999:133), désignant les marges du système littéraire mondial et leur situation de forte hétéronomie par rapport à des centres concentrant capital culturel, moyens de communication et de diffusion des textes et instances légitimantes.

³ J'emploierai dans cet article, au sujet du Maroc, l'expression de "champ littéraire" lorsqu'elle correspond à la définition du "champ littéraire plurilingue" tel qu'énoncée par Tristan Leperlier : champ où « la langue est d'importance symbolique et structurelle dans le champ » (Leperlier 2021:191). Je parlerai en revanche d'aire arabophone ou francophone conformément à ses développements sur l'aire polycentrique arabe et l'aire monocentrique francophone (Leperlier 2020:4-9).

⁴ Jour de la défaite de l'Égypte, de la Syrie et de la Jordanie face à l'Etat d'Israël.

sur la carte de l'aire littéraire arabophone, à partir de la question palestinienne vis-à-vis de laquelle se mettent en place des formes de solidarité transcoloniales (Harrison 2005:227). Ces évènements contribuent en effet à créer des passerelles entre les deux principaux sous-champs, à faire émerger pour la première fois une figure d'écrivaine soutenue par le centre du champ (Hanāta Bannūna), à élargir enfin le spectre thématique et géographique du roman marocain et à y introduire des problématiques de genre pour la première fois. J'étudierai ici les débats esthétiques et politiques occasionnés par les deux guerres dans le champ littéraire marocain. Après avoir décrit la situation du champ littérature marocaine à la veille de la *Naksa*, je montrerai d'abord le compromis qui s'est construit à partir de cet évènement entre le groupe d'écrivain·e·s francophones de la revue *Souffles* et les marges du sous-champ arabophone. J'étudierai ensuite la discussion engagée en 1969 par deux critiques, Ibrāhīm al-Sūlāmī (n. 1938) et Muḥammad Anaqqār (1946-2018), sur la production poétique marocaine portant sur la *Naksa*. Enfin, j'analyserai le traitement de chacune des deux guerres dans le roman marocain, à travers deux œuvres : *al-Nār wa-l-iḥtiyār* (1969) de Hanāta Bannūna (n. 1940) et *Rifqat al-silāḥ wa-l-qamar* (1975) de Mubārak Rabī^c (n. 1935).

2 - Situation de la littérature marocaine à la veille de 1967

Au cours des années 1960, se développent au Maroc deux sous-champs monolingues (Leperlier 2020:191), l'un de langue arabe, l'autre de langue française. Ce développement se fait dans le sillage de l'apparition du roman moderne à la charnière des années 1940 et 1950. D'un côté, avec Ahmed Sefrioui (1915-2004) puis Driss Chraïbi (1926-2007), la littérature marocaine d'expression française émerge à la périphérie de l'aire francophone centralisée autour de Paris, où ces deux auteurs sont publiés ; de l'autre, apparaît un groupe d'écrivains⁵ soudés par l'expérience politique commune du militantisme anticolonial, qui conduit les figures les mieux dotées dans les capitales machrekines (Le Caire, Damas, etc.) à partir des années 1930. En Égypte, le poète 'Abd al-Karīm Bin Tābit (1917-1961) et les romanciers 'Abd al-Karīm Ḍallāb (1919-2017) et 'Abd al-Maǵīd Bin Ḍallūn⁶ (1919-1981) poursuivent des études supérieures en langue arabe et militent au sein du Bureau de Libération du Maghreb Arabe. Ils y subissent l'influence du roman égyptien et de la poésie du groupe Apollo et du Pen Club (Zarqūn Naṣr 1996 ; Campbell 2013). Dans le roman, la phase amorcée au début des années 1950 est dominée par des narrations à substrat autobiographique, relatant pour l'essentiel des épisodes récents du passé colonial marocain. Parmi eux, figurent, en arabe, *Fī l-ṭufūla* de 'Abd al-Maǵīd Bin Ḍallūn et *Dafannā al-mādī* de 'Abd al-Karīm Ḍallāb et, en français,

⁵ Aucune écrivaine, à ce stade, n'émerge dans les deux sous-champs à ma connaissance.

⁶ Les patronymes des auteur·ice·s de langue arabe sont translittérés, tandis que les auteur·ice·s principalement francophones sont cité·e·s dans l'orthographe usuelle de leurs publications.

Passé simple de Driss Chraïbi.

La production romanesque marocaine des années 1950 et 1960 en langue arabe, très limitée, se publie pour bonne part hors du Maroc. Parmi les quatorze titres recensés par le chercheur ‘Abd al-Rahīm ‘Allām’ entre 1950 et 1969, quatre paraissent dans des maisons cairote, deux à Beyrouth, soit près de la moitié d’un corpus encore très mince. Notre recherche sur les publications en revue au Machrek de 52 écrivain·e·s marocain·e·s de langue arabe fait ressortir une forte participation des auteur·ice·s aux périodiques machrekins, majoritairement égyptiens jusqu’au mitan des années 1950, puis syriens et libanais jusqu’à la fin des années 1970.

Les revues littéraires marocaines en arabe du début des années 1960 sont en outre fortement focalisées sur la vie littéraire machrekine. Le premier numéro de la revue *Aqlām*, paru en janvier 1964, en témoigne. Proche de l'aile gauche du mouvement nationaliste (UNFP), *Aqlām* ouvre le sous-champ arabophone à l'expérimentation littéraire et au débat idéologique (Fernández Parrilla 2014:119). La revue propose dans sa première version une section de brèves d'actualité littéraire et culturelle, *Anbā’ taqāfiyya* (Anonyme 1964a:132-38). Dans le premier numéro, cette rubrique comporte 28 notices. 17 sont consacrées au Machrek, dont 10 à la seule Égypte, contre deux seulement à propos du Maroc. En bref, ces deux sous-champs sont largement dépendants des aires littéraires transnationales dont ils forment une marge : le francophone regarde vers Paris, l'arabophone d'abord vers Le Caire, puis vers Beyrouth à partir du milieu du XX^e siècle.

Sur le plan interne, l'évolution du champ littéraire marocain dans la première moitié des années 1960 se caractérise par le développement parallèle de ces deux sous-champs. S'opposant à la hiérarchie héritée du protectorat, imposant le français comme langue principale d'administration et d'éducation, le pôle institutionnel du sous-champ arabophone, proche du parti de l'Istiqlal, manifeste une hostilité radicale vis-à-vis de l'usage du français dans la culture. La langue coloniale est présentée comme vectrice d'aliénation, coupant « la personnalité marocaine » de sa « culture authentique ». ‘Abd al-Karīm Ḍallāb, cas d'écrivain multipositionnel (Boltanski 1973:3-26) à la fois fonctionnaire du ministère des affaires étrangères, directeur du quotidien du parti de l'Istiqlal *al-‘Alam* et membre d'institutions savantes arabes comme le Mağma‘ al-luġa l-‘arabiyya de Bagdad ou l'Académie tunisienne (Jay 2005:191-192), assigne à la littérature un rôle pionnier dans la réarabisation du Maroc : insérer la *umma l-dayyiqa* (“nation étroite”) dans la *umma l-kubrā* (“grande nation”). Nulle légitimité pour lui à l'expression littéraire dans une autre langue (Ḍallāb 1965a:36-38). Dans le même temps, des groupes d'écrivain·e·s plus jeunes, lié·e·s politiquement à la scission de gauche du mouvement de l'Istiqlal, l'UNFP de Mehdi Ben Barka, créent des espaces d'expressions, et notamment

⁷ “Biblyūgrāfyā l-riwāya l-maqribiyya l-maktūba bi-l-luġa l-‘arabiyya”. Ittihād kuttāb al-Maqrib. <http://uemnet.free.fr/livres/allam/allam.doc>. Consulté le 09/04/2022.

des revues comme la *Mağalla li-l-qışşa wa-l-masrah* de Muḥammad Barrāda (1938), ‘Abd al-Ğabbār al-Sahīmī (1938-2012) et Muḥammad al-‘Arabī al-Masārī (1936-2015), puis la revue *Aqlām*, qui ignorent dans un premier temps la production littéraire marocaine en français pour se concentrer sur le Machrek et la littérature mondiale.

En langue française, la première génération d'auteur·ice·s, et particulièrement Driss Chraïbi qui publie six romans entre 1954 et 1962 chez un éditeur central de la place parisienne, Denoël, s'affirme directement dans le champ littéraire national français, où se trouve son principal public. Au Maroc, c'est la fondation de la revue *Souffles* à Rabat au début de l'année 1966 qui redynamise le sous-champ sur le plan interne, en s'adressant d'abord à un lectorat marocain et maghrébin. Son lancement par Abdellatif Laâbi (n. 1942), Mostafa Nissabouri (n. 1943) et Mohammed Khaïr-Eddine (1941-1995), se fait sur une proposition inclusive transnationale. Le prologue du premier numéro (1^{er} trimestre 1966) annonce : « “SOUFFLES” ne se réclame d'aucune niche ni d'aucun minaret et ne reconnaît aucune frontière. Nos amis écrivains maghrébins, africains, européens ou autres sont invités fraternellement à participer à notre modeste entreprise » (Laâbi 1966a:6). La vocation maghrébine de *Souffles*, d'emblée affirmée, se borne en fait à la publication de poètes de langue française comme l'Algérien Malek Alloula. C'est l'évolution de cette revue et de son positionnement dans le champ à partir de juin 1967 que j'analyserai à présent, par le prisme de la *Naksa*.

3 - La revue *Souffles* et la rupture de la *Naksa*⁸

Dans cette première version de la revue *Souffles*, centrée sur les questions esthétiques et à vocation francophone, la littérature marocaine de langue arabe est tout juste présente (deux poèmes traduits de Hamid El Houadri).⁹ Abdellatif Laâbi, son principal animateur, se pose dans un premier temps en défenseur de l'écriture en langue française. Dans une perspective à la fois anticoloniale et antinationaliste, il exhorte à « entretenir au départ une méfiance vis-à-vis de la langue d'expression qu'on emploie, que cette langue soit le français, l'arabe ou n'importe quelle autre » (Laâbi 1966b:12). En outre, il critique violemment une production littéraire marocaine de langue arabe qui « illustre parfaitement (à quelques rares exceptions) le prototype d'une littérature retardataire, en marge des secousses de l'histoire » (Laâbi 1966b:12). « La langue arabe au Maroc, estime-t-il alors, n'a pas encore trouvé d'écrivains qui puissent l'exécuter, s'en servir d'une manière singulière » (Laâbi 1966b:12). Bref, tout comme les auteurs arabophones les mieux dotés de la période refusent l'idée d'une littérature marocaine francophone,

⁸ Cette section reprend les éléments touchant directement à la *Naksa* dans l'évolution de *Souffles*. Elle recoupe en partie les observations de Kenza Sefrioui (2013:33-140).

⁹ Je n'ai trouvé d'informations ou de textes sur cet auteur ni dans la thèse de Kenza Sefrioui, ni dans les revues littéraires marocaines consultées au cours de mes recherches.

Laâbi oppose ici une pure fin de non-recevoir à la production marocaine en langue arabe de son époque.

La situation qui prévaut dans la vie littéraire marocaine à la veille du conflit israélo-arabe de 1967 est donc celle d'une cohabitation de deux sous-champs aux polarisations différentes, entretenant une guerre des langues (Leperlier 2021:193-195) d'intensité variable. L'« avant-dire » qui ouvre le 6^{ème} numéro de la revue *Souffles*, au 2^{ème} trimestre de l'année 1967, proclame le moment que vit le monde arabe comme historique : « La guerre du Moyen-Orient vient de nous distordre [...] » (Laâbi 1967:3). Dans l'entretien que j'ai eu avec lui et son épouse Jocelyne Laâbi (n. 1943), actrice majeure de *Souffles*, à l'été 2020, Laâbi confirme à une cinquantaine d'années de distance le caractère de rupture de ce moment et en explicite les termes :

On était dans une problématique marocaine et maghrébine. Tout ce qu'on appelle *al-‘umq al-‘arabī*, ou *al-imtidād al-‘arabī* etc., ça n'existe pas dans la génération de *Souffles*. On était véritablement ancrés dans un combat pour créer une culture nouvelle dont l'ambition était marocaine et maghrébine. Après 67, effectivement, le monde arabe va faire irruption dans nos préoccupations et dans nos liens.¹⁰

Cette irruption contribue à engager une refonte complète de la démarche de *Souffles*.

Le numéro 9 (premier trimestre 1968) de la revue publie en traduction le manifeste *Bayān Ḥāmis Ḥuzayrān 1967* (“Le Manifeste du 5 juin 1967”) que le poète syrien Adūnīs avait fait paraître immédiatement après la défaite des armées arabes dans la plus importante revue beyrouthine de l'époque, *al-Adāb* (Adūnīs 1968:1-11). Le texte qui introduit le manifeste indique le motif de sa publication en traduction française :

Nous tenons à remercier notre amie Etel Adnan de nous avoir communiqué ce manifeste par lequel nous comptons inaugurer une série d'approches des réalités culturelles et idéologiques du monde arabe d'aujourd'hui, et ceci en corrélation avec les situations proprement maghrébines qu'il est devenu caduc de séparer de leur contexte collectif arabe.

L'appartenance au monde arabe sera désormais revendiquée par le groupe *Souffles*. La revue ne renie pas sa ligne antérieure explicitement, mais justifie son évolution par les évènements rendant « caduc » le rejet de cette appartenance. Ce geste sera prolongé par une redéfinition de la notion même de littérature arabe, dans laquelle les auteurs francophones s'incluent à égalité avec les arabophones, indépendamment du critère linguistique. L'appel aux écrivains maghrébins sur la Palestine exhorte à « une

¹⁰ Cet entretien avec Abdellatif et Jocelyne Laâbi a eu lieu le 14 juillet 2020 à Créteil.

réorientation géoculturelle radicale dans le sens du développement du dialogue et de la confrontation avec les créateurs du Machreq ». La littérature marocaine, désormais, « quelle que soit sa langue d'expression, et dans cette phase précise de la décolonisation, fait partie intégrante de la littérature arabe, avec laquelle son destin est de toute manière lié » (Laâbi *et al.* 1969:100).

Dès le numéro 10-11 (3^{ème} trimestre 1968), *Souffles/Anfās* entame sa formule bilingue par un dossier sur la littérature maghrébine, intégrant l'essentiel des animateurs de la revue *Aqlām*. Sont présentées directement en langue arabe des œuvres de Muham-mad Barrāda, Aḥmad al-Maġġātī (1936-1995), ‘Abd al-Rafī‘ al-Ǧawāhirī (n. 1944), Idrīs al-Ḥūrī (1939-2022), Muḥammad Zafzāf (1943-2001) ou Binsālim Ḥimmiš (n. 1948). Cette initiative se poursuivra à partir de 1971 avec la publication à part d'une version arabo-phone de la revue, *Anfās*, où ces mêmes contributeurs seront inclus ponctuellement, malgré la prédominance de plus en plus marquée du discours politique sur la culture et la littérature. La centralité de la question palestinienne, introduite par la *Naksa*, ne se démentira plus : un numéro entier de *Souffles* y est consacré au troisième trimestre 1969 (Sefrioui 2013:90-101). Son incidence est majeure sur l'évolution de *Souffles*. Elle est l'un des vecteurs par lequel s'opère la politisation d'une revue dans un premier temps orientée vers l'affirmation de l'autonomie de l'art et de la littérature. Pour Kenza Sefrioui, « la réflexion sur la culture nationale ne sera plus la préoccupation exclusive de la revue : elle devient un chantier parmi d'autres, ceux-là ouvertement politiques (...) ce qui a fait dire par la suite à certains auteurs que c'est par le biais de la Palestine que la revue a glissé vers le politique » (2013:93).

Plusieurs éléments mis en avant par Sefrioui et ses interviewé·e·s complexifient cette affirmation. Soulignons seulement la forte politisation étudiante à travers les syndicats, les scissions au sein du mouvement national engendrant de nouvelles pratiques politiques et culturelles inspirées par les différentes tendances du marxisme (Nissabouri *in* Sefrioui 2013:309). Sur le plan littéraire, cette politisation se double d'une politique linguistique renouvelée accordant toute sa place à la littérature arabophone marocaine et aux littératures arabes : en plus des écrivains marocains, des auteur·ice·s du Machrek trouveront désormais à s'exprimer dans les colonnes de *Souffles* (Etel Adnan, Samīḥ al-Qāsim, ‘Abd al-Wahhāb al-Bayātī, etc.), mais pas dans son pendant arabophone, *Anfās*, lancé en mai 1971 après quelques numéros bilingues.

Cette double ouverture est suivie d'effets sur l'aire littéraire francophone. Le numéro 15 de *Souffles*, consacré à la question palestinienne, contient la première traduction par Abdellatif Laâbi d'un poète palestinien, en l'occurrence Samīḥ al-Qāsim (1969:3). Cette pièce sera la première d'une série de textes sélectionnés par Laâbi, comprenant également des œuvres de Maḥmūd Darwīsh, Tawfiq Ziyād et Fadwā Ṭūqān, réunies dans une anthologie parue en France en 1970 sous le titre *Poésie palestinienne de combat*, publiée par Pierre-Jean Oswald à Honfleur et simultanément par Laâbi lui-même aux

éditions Atlante à Casablanca. C'est la première anthologie de poésie consacrée à la Palestine en langue française et le début d'un itinéraire traductif que Laâbi poursuivra par la publication de traductions de Samîḥ al-Qâsim et Mahmûd Darwîš encore, mais aussi de Ǧassân Kanafânî ou d'Ašraf Fayyâd.¹¹ L'introduction de la poésie palestinienne traduite dans l'aire francophone est donc la conséquence indirecte des transformations du champ littéraire marocain au tournant des années 1960 et 1970. C'est ici la périphérie qui, par le biais d'un petit éditeur non-parisien spécialiste de littérature engagée, agit sur le centre de l'aire. Une décennie plus tard, Abdellatif Laâbi, sorti de prison, poussera plus loin son travail sur la poésie palestinienne en traduisant deux volumes de poésie de Darwîš pour les éditions de Minuit, acteur central du champ éditorial français.¹²

Lorsqu'éclate la guerre d'octobre 1973, *Souffles* et son pendant arabophone *Anfâs* sont déjà stoppés net dans leur activité par une vague d'arrestations amorcée en janvier 1972, qui concerne plusieurs de ses contributeur·ice·s et débouchera sur leur inculpation pour « complot contre la sûreté de l'État » (Sefrioui 2013:125). Début septembre 1972, Abdellatif Laâbi est condamné à dix années de prison dans le cadre des grands procès politiques de la période des “années de plomb” (*sanawât al-raṣaṣ*) (Daoud 2007). La phase des années 1967-1973 de la revue *Souffles* a donc produit à la fois une radicalisation politique dans laquelle la question palestinienne est centrale, l'ouverture d'un dialogue sans précédent jusqu'alors entre les deux principaux sous-champs de la littérature marocaine largement due à la reconnaissance d'une cause politique et culturelle commune autour de la Palestine, et une première mise à disposition d'œuvres de poètes palestiniens dans l'aire francophone. Il apparaît donc que ce moment de 1967 participe d'une redéfinition temporaire des clivages structurant le champ littéraire marocain, linguistiques notamment. Par ailleurs, comme le note Olivia C. Harrison (2016:228), « c'est [...] à travers les engagements transcoloniaux de la revue, notamment auprès des Palestiniens, qu'il faut aborder l'entreprise de “décolonisation culturelle” amorcée dans *Souffles/Anfas* ». La revue dirigée par Abdellatif Laâbi, dont l'objectif initial était de dépasser l'« immense lettre ouverte à l'Occident » (Laâbi 1966a:4) que fut selon lui la littérature maghrébine d'expression française dans sa première génération, trouve en effet dans ce moment palestinien matière à un redéploiement de ses réseaux, de ses contributeur·ice·s et de son imaginaire même. Cet imaginaire palestinien, nous allons le voir à présent, a largement irrigué la littérature marocaine de cette période, au-delà du cas de *Souffles/Anfas*, et servi de point d'appui à des débats cruciaux pour ce sous-champ.

¹¹ La bibliographie exhaustive d'Abdellatif Laâbi traducteur est disponible sur son site : “Œuvres traduites de l'arabe par Abdellatif Laâbi”. Site de l'écrivain Abdellatif Laâbi. <http://laabi.net/index.php/2018/04/18/oeuvres-traduites-de-larabe-par-abdellatif-laabi/>. Consulté le 27/03/2022.

¹² *Rien qu'une autre année* (1983) et *Plus rares sont les roses* (1989). Le prix Nobel de littérature de Samuel Beckett (en l'an 1969) avait définitivement consacré Minuit comme un éditeur central du champ littéraire français.

4 - Quel poème après la Naksa ?

Jusqu'à la guerre de 1967, il est à noter que les écrivain·e·s de la jeune littérature marocaine moderne s'essayent rarement à la représentation du Machrek ou à la discussion de la relation qu'elles et ils entretiennent avec lui, domaine critique excepté. On trouvera trace de quelques poèmes à la gloire du Nil (Bin Ġallūn 1944:263), de pastiches de littérature sentimentale égyptienne (Barrāda 1958), de récits de voyages officiels (Ġallāb 1965b). L'après-1967 voit apparaître au Maroc comme dans le reste de l'aire arabophone, et particulièrement en poésie, une topique de la *Naksa*. Cette topique, transversale au sous-champ de langue arabe, nous permet de comparer différents regards marocains sur des questions politiques et esthétiques cruciales.

Celles-ci sont abordées dans un article paru en 1969 dans la revue de l'Union des écrivains marocains, *Afāq*, où sont examinées les principales productions poétiques publiées après la *Naksa* au Maroc, de la poésie la plus traditionnaliste représentée par al-Mahdī Bin Idrīs al-Wadgīrī (1917-1987) aux jeunes poètes modernistes d'alors, comme Aḥmad al-Maġġātī ou ‘Abd al-Rafī‘al-Ġawāhirī (al-Sūlāmī & Anaqqār 1969:48-59). Notre sous-titre s'autorise ici une référence au « poncif d'Adorno » (Ishaghpor 2018) sur la poésie après Auschwitz¹³ dans la mesure où, sans questionner fondamentalement la légitimité de l'écriture poétique comme le fait le théoricien allemand, le texte que je me propose d'étudier considère l'évènement historique de la *Naksa* comme un point de bascule pour la littérature en général et la poésie en particulier. La crise de 1967, comme dans le reste du monde arabe, fait immédiatement l'objet d'une appropriation très large dans le champ culturel et intellectuel pour devenir le « moment de rupture engendrant de nouveaux paradigmes critiques et de nouvelles sensibilités esthétiques » (Halabi 2017:27). Ceci est explicité par le recours, dès le titre, à l'expression *ši‘r mā ba‘d al-naksa* (« poésie post-Naksa »).

Deux critiques, Ibrāhīm al-Sūlāmī et Muḥammad Anaqqār, exposent d'abord leur lecture de la situation de la poésie marocaine en 1969. Les termes de cette lecture recoupent en partie les antagonismes précédemment exposés entre arabophonie et francophonie, celles d'un tiraillement entre l'influence de « l'école poétique orientale » et l'emprunt aux formes du modernisme occidental, dont peinerait à émerger une « personnalité marocaine » originale en littérature. C'est donc bien, dans des espaces distincts, les uns liant les différentes langues d'expression, les autres se limitant à la littérature de langue arabe, un même débat qui se mène. Examinant les textes consacrés à la cause palestinienne dans les deux années qui suivirent la *Naksa*, les deux critiques commencent par opérer une dichotomie générationnelle, opposant un *ṭgil al-ṣuyūh* (« génération des anciens ») correspondant en vérité aux intellectuels issus du courant nationaliste et devenus cadres des institutions du Maroc indépendant, constituant le pôle le plus conser-

¹³ Il s'agit du débat engagé par Theodor Adorno dans *Prismes : critique de la culture et société* (1951) sur le destin de l'art et de la culture après la Shoah, à partir du postulat selon lequel « écrire un poème après Auschwitz est barbare ».

vateur du champ et le plus lié au pouvoir politique, à un *ḡīl al-ṣabāb* (“génération des jeunes”) plus autonome, en recherche de transformations et de voies nouvelles. Cette opposition générationnelle, caractéristique des champs littéraires modernes en émergence¹⁴, n'est pas nouvelle dans le Maroc de la fin des années 1960. On en trouve déjà trace dans les débats littéraires des années 1930 (Gārī 2019), puis dans les revues les plus marginales du champ au début des années 1960 (Anonyme 1964b:1-11). À l'intérieur de cette lutte pour la légitimité entre deux groupes d'écrivains antagonistes, l'évocation poétique de la *Naksa* est choisie comme révélateur esthétique et politique fondamental.

L'attaque contre les *šuyūh* est concentrée sur deux textes, l'un anonyme et l'autre d'al-Mahdī Bin Idrīs al-Wadgīrī. Les données biographiques dont je dispose au sujet de ce dernier permettent de dégager chez ce dernier les traits caractéristiques des acteurs des institutions culturelles mises en place par le nouveau régime : études à la Qarawiyine de Fès, participation au mouvement nationaliste dans les années 1940-1950, œuvre fortement teintée par la rhétorique patriotique, références machrekines situées dans le corpus le plus légitimé de la *Nahḍa* (Ahmad Šawqī).¹⁵ Sont reprochées à al-Wadgīrī et à son acolyte anonyme deux dimensions de leur approche poétique de la *Naksa* : d'une part, le traitement distancié par lequel ces poètes abordent l'évènement comme une « question historique sans relation avec leur destin ni leur avenir propres » (al-Sūlāmī & Anaqqār 1969:51) ; d'autre part, une lecture exclusivement religieuse de la guerre qui en dépolitise les enjeux – le poème d'al-Wadgīrī est en effet structuré autour de l'imploration du croyant qui s'est détourné de Dieu et s'en remet à lui en quête de victoire, promettant de réformer sa conduite.

L'autre groupe mis en avant, *ḡīl al-ṣabāb*, est présenté comme hétéroclite, et marqué par différentes tendances. Deux poèmes représentent le poème engagé le plus explicite et obvie : citons seulement celui de Muhammad Bin Daf'a (n. 1934), *Mukālamāt ṣahiyūniyya* (“Conversations sionistes”). Deux procédés le caractérisent : l'apostrophe récurrente à la femme politique israélienne Golda Meir et la répétition de l'expression *ṣamt al-‘arab* (“le silence des Arabes”), renversant *ṣāwt al-‘arāb* (“la voix des Arabes”), radio égyptienne servant de relai régional à l'idéologie nassérienne. Une seconde tendance, qualifiée de symboliste par les critiques, est développée par ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Tabbāl (n. 1931), Ahmad al-Maġġāṭī, Muḥammad Abū ‘Asal (1936-2010). Le premier cherche à sensibiliser le lectorat marocain à la cause palestinienne à partir d'images tirées de la vie quotidienne des Palestiniens, largement empruntées à la poésie de Darwīš. Le second représente la *Naksa* au miroir de l'effondrement intérieur qu'il suscite chez le poète.

Enfin, l'orientation la plus radicale trouve à s'incarner dans un poème de Muḥammad

¹⁴ La notion de conflit générationnel en littérature et son rôle dans le développement des champs littéraire en France et en Europe ont été étudiés de manière détaillée (Moraru 2009:52-68).

¹⁵ Éléments tirés de sa notice dans le répertoire de la Fondation du prix Abdelaziz Saoud al-Babtain : “al-Mahdī al-Wadgīrī”. Al-Moajam. <http://www.almoajam.org/lists/inner/1281>. Consulté le 08/04/2022.

Zafzāf, *al-Ra's wa-l-qubba'a* ("La tête et le chapeau"), dont je reprends et traduis ici l'extrait proposé :

يا أصحاب القصائد المفقة / يا تماثيل من التبن / أتحداكم جميعاً / وأكتب قصائد / محترقات من البلاستيك /
من الميكا ومن جذوع الأشجار / أهشم القوافي / أدوس الخواطر المصبوغة / بدماء مفتعلة.

Auteurs de poèmes rimés / Statues de paille / Je vous défie tous / Et j'écris des poèmes / Faits de brûlures de plastique / De mica¹⁶ et de troncs d'arbres / Je fracasse les rimes / Je piétine les pensées fardées / De larmes factices. (*in al-Sūlāmī & Anaqqār* 1969:56-57)¹⁷

Zafzāf, qui se fera mieux connaître à partir du début des années 1970 comme l'un des principaux novateurs de la fiction marocaine de langue arabe, associe ici une critique formelle portant sur la structure du poème classique rimé à une dénonciation de l'artificialité et du pathos dans la posture du poète. Selon les critiques, Zafzāf pousse le plus loin les conclusions à tirer de la crise globale de la *Naksa* en refusant tout compromis avec les formes et les postures littéraires antérieures, pour appeler à une refonte d'ensemble des valeurs esthétiques et politiques.

5 - De l'effondrement à l'affirmation : *al-Nār wa-l-ihtiyār*

Cette refonte, de large envergure, ne tarde pas à se traduire dans le domaine de la prose narrative. Parmi les approches relevées par al-Sūlāmī et Anaqqār dans cette poésie marocaine de la *Naksa*, celle qui aborde la défaite par le biais de la subjectivité blessée trouve en effet une traduction dans un bref roman¹⁸ de Hanātā Bannūna, *al-Nār wa-l-ihtiyār*, paru en 1969. Ce roman narre l'errance d'un personnage, Layla, qui abandonne ses responsabilités professionnelles auprès d'une institution nommée "Centre al-Nahda" et qui suspend son choix d'épouser un fiancé fortuné. La condition de ce mariage était l'abandon par Layla de sa vie professionnelle, auquel le personnage ne se résout pas. Ses pensées sont tournées vers la défaite arabe de juin 1967,¹⁹ cause directe de son "effondrement intérieur" (*inhiyār dāhilī*). Le texte alterne des dialogues typiques du roman à thèse, dans lesquels Layla défend sa critique de la société arabe devant plusieurs interlocuteurs diversement hostiles, et des séquences d'errance urbaine où

¹⁶ Je traduis le mot dans le sens que lui donne l'arabe littéral. Il signifie également « plastique » en arabe marocain.

¹⁷ Ce texte et les extraits des deux romans étudiés ci-après, sont traduits par mes soins.

¹⁸ Le genre du texte a fait débat (Lḥamdānī 1979:90-91).

¹⁹ Le Maroc n'a pas participé militairement au conflit.

s’illustrent les données du problème et son issue.

Ce qui nous frappe d’emblée est la manière dont des questions d’ordre géopolitique sont directement et explicitement mises au regard de questions sociétales, comme celle du mariage. Layla oppose une résistance au mariage qu’on lui organise, au nom d’un vide de sens, d’une improvisation généralisée motivée par l’intérêt immédiat qui, selon elle, participent d’un crime politique dont la *Naksa* est le symptôme. L’institution du mariage est ouvertement critiquée, non pas dans son principe mais en tant qu’elle exclut les femmes d’un effort collectif dépassant le cadre familial et auquel elles devraient prendre part. Ceci vaudrait au Maroc comme dans l’ensemble des pays arabes ayant été ou demeurant confrontés à une domination coloniale dont pâtissent les femmes autant que les hommes (Bin Mas‘ūd 2002:143). Le roman, marqué formellement par l’usage intensif du monologue intérieur, est jalonné des refus de la protagoniste. Le personnage est peu caractérisé. Le lecteur connaît seulement sa situation familiale et professionnelle et la teneur de ses rapports avec les personnages secondaires. Il s’agit d’un personnage-discours dont la fonction est symbolique.

Une autre singularité de ce texte, relevée par Gonzalo Fernández Parilla (2017:341), est d’inaugurer via la Palestine un élargissement de l’horizon problématique du roman marocain au-delà des seules questions marocaines, dont on a vu qu’elles dominaient ce secteur de la production littéraire. Si le roman se déroule au Maroc, cet élargissement ne se réduit pas au commentaire politique de la *Naksa*. On y trouve un dialogue d’une grande virulence entre un personnage marocain, la protagoniste Layla, et un mystérieux “hôte oriental” (*al-dayf al-ṣarqī*) toujours ainsi nommé. Dans cette confrontation, c’est l’ascendant politique et symbolique du Machrek sur la région qui se trouve contesté avec vigueur. Le discours démissionnaire prononcé le 9 juin 1967 par le président Égyptien Gamāl ‘Abd al-Nāṣir à l’issue de la défaite est brocardé en ces termes : « Quoi qu’il en soit, votre chef a réussi à vous anesthésier avec ses larmes pour vous faire oublier qu’il n’a engendré que des pleureurs : s’il avait bien agi, il aurait fait de vous des travailleurs pour vous trouver en harmonie avec son cri quand il vous appelait au combat » (Bannūna 2006:46). “Chef” rend ici le mot *kabīr* (“grand”), substantivé dans le roman pour parler de Nasser, mais aussi de toutes les figures d’autorité masculines, du supérieur hiérarchique professionnel au dirigeant politique, poupées gigognes d’un unique pouvoir pyramidal contesté par Layla.

De l’intérieur d’une rhétorique panarabe identifiable et relativement conventionnelle,²⁰ Bannūna dessine dans *al-Nār wa-l-iḥtiyār* une double critique de la société marocaine et du leadership machrekin sur la région, qui pose un jalon. Deuxième roman publié par une femme au Maroc après celui de Fāṭima al-Rāwī, *Ġadan tatabaddal al-ard*,

²⁰ Le critique Aḥmad al-Yabūrī (2000:142) considère le roman de Bannūna comme la première *riwāya qawmiyyā* marocaine.

à l'écho modeste, *al-Nār wa-l-iḥtiyār* trouve de puissants relais à l'intérieur des champs littéraire et politique marocains, comme celui du chef du parti de l'Istiqlal, ‘Allāl al-Fāṣī (1910-1974). Celui-ci jouit d'une position centrale dans ces deux champs, cumulant les titres de leader du mouvement pour l'indépendance et de poète consacré. ‘Allāl al-Fāṣī aide à sa publication. Il signe une très élogieuse préface pour le livre, dans laquelle il valorise à la fois travail politique de conscientisation des marocain·e·s aux causes arabes, et ses qualités esthétiques qu'il juge dignes de Gide et de Dostoïevski (*al-Fāṣī in Bannūna* 2006:7-12). Lauréat du Prix du Maroc du livre décerné par le ministère de la culture marocain, mis au programme de l'enseignement secondaire en 1986, *al-Nār wa-l-iḥtiyār* fera l'objet d'un appui rarissime de la part des institutions marocaines de l'époque. Le caractère abstrait de la critique adressée à ces institutions, peu identifiables dans le roman, faisant de la société marocaine une simple métonymie d'une société arabe pensée comme homogène, a pu favoriser cet appui.

L'origine sociale de l'autrice, issue d'une grande famille de la bourgeoisie de Fès proche de l'Istiqlal, entre pour bonne part dans l'appui rencontré par le livre à sa sortie. Son premier recueil de nouvelles, *Li-yasqut al-ṣamt* (À bas le silence, 1967), avait déjà fait l'objet d'un article élogieux (Gannūn 2013:14-16) de la part du polygraphe érudit ‘Abd Allah Gannūn (1908-1989), qui cumula dans les premières décennies de l'indépendance du Maroc d'importantes responsabilités institutionnelles, tant religieuses que culturelles ou politiques.²¹ Le texte de Bannūna fournit, par son positionnement quant à l'actualité, une critique limitée et organique bienvenue dans une période politiquement bouillante au Maroc. S'y dessine néanmoins un tableau de crise associant les questions sociales et de genre à l'évènement militaire. Zeina Halabi (2017:26) nomme “*telos* de la *Naksa*” la cristallisation dans cet évènement particulier d'obstacles et de désenchantements de nature et d'origine hétéroclites à l'intérieur de l'aire arabophone postcoloniale : ici, ce sont les crises de l'autorité politique et familiale au Maroc, et les tensions autour du statut de la femme, qui trouvent à s'exprimer dans cette cristallisation.

Premier roman écrit par une femme à recueillir un réel écho dans le champ culturel marocain, *al-Nār wa-l-iḥtiyār* est également le premier, dans cette littérature marocaine moderne de langue arabe, à formuler une critique systématique de l'autorité masculine, du leader politique à l'époux putatif en passant par le patron, *via* un personnage féminin mis au centre du dispositif romanesque. Dans sa « recherche du héros perdu » (al-Nāqūrī 1976:89), en contrepoint de son entreprise de destitution du leader politique masculin, le personnage de Layla se réfère régulièrement à un modèle féminin, celui de la combattante palestino-nigériane Fāṭima Barnāwī, condamnée à la détention

²¹ Éléments recueillis dans sa notice biographique sur le site de l'Union des Écrivains du Maroc : “‘Abd Allāh Gannūn”. *Ittihād kuttāb al-Mağrib*. <http://uemnet.free.fr/guide/kaf/kaf07.htm>. Consulté le 15/04/2022.

à perpétuité en Israël pour une tentative d'attentat à la bombe sur un cinéma de Jérusalem-ouest, quelques mois après la guerre de juin 1967 (Awar 1996:11).

La guerre de 1967 donne donc lieu à une intensification de la politisation du champ littéraire marocain. Des discours de contestation émergent aussi bien des marges en quête de légitimation, représentées par le jeune Muḥammad Zafzāf et sa critique radicale des valeurs poétiques, qu'à partir du centre qui met en valeur ce roman de Ḥanāṭa Bannūna. À la marge du champ, l'alliance entre deux groupes d'écrivains des sous-champs francophone et arabophone se scelle sur la question palestinienne, et la *Naksa* sert de point de départ ou de prétexte à une attaque des formes esthétiques légitimes. Au centre émerge avec Ḥanāṭa Bannūna une forme nouvelle au Maroc, le roman panafricain (*al-riwāya l-qawmiyya*), qui déborde dans ses préoccupations les seules questions du passé marocain récent. Cette forme trouvera un nouveau prolongement avec *Rifqat al-silāḥ wa-l-qamar* de Mubārak Rabī‘ à la suite de la guerre d'octobre 1973.

6 - Une fictionnalisation rédemptrice

Publié en 1975, *Rifqat al-silāḥ wa-l-qamar* se déroule pour l'essentiel en Syrie, avec des incursions au Maroc, au Caire et dans les camps palestiniens du Liban, ainsi que des analepses où l'un des personnages évoque la guerre de décolonisation en Indochine. Ceci est principalement dû au fait qu'à la différence de celle de 1967, la guerre d'octobre 1973 a vu l'envoi de bataillons marocains au Machrek en vue du conflit avec Israël, dans le désert du Sinaï et sur le plateau du Golan. Roman de guerre à la structure éclatée, l'œuvre de Rabī‘ est l'un des premiers romans marocains en langue arabe à choisir pour principal cadre d'action un lieu hors du Maroc. Il reçoit l'année de sa parution le prix du Maġma‘ al-luga l-‘arabiyya du Caire, première distinction reçue par un roman marocain au Machrek.

Plus dialogique que le roman de Ḥanāṭa Bannūna, il met en scène le stationnement dans des tranchées de plusieurs soldats marocains côtoyant des combattant·e·s venu·e·s d'Egypte, de Palestine et de Syrie. Les discussions y sont nombreuses et d'ordre militaire et politique pour l'essentiel. De ce fait, on n'y trouve pas de représentation de la Palestine, à peine de la Syrie, ni de personnage israélien·n·e. Peu soucieuse de coïncider avec la réalité vécue par les soldats marocains sur ce terrain militaire, la narration de Rabī‘ se clôt par une victoire triomphale qui ne correspond à aucune étape attestée de l'itinéraire des militaires marocains. La liesse décrite au retour des soldats au Maroc, fictionnelle, contraste avec le bilan et la perception nettement plus mitigés de ce conflit dans la société marocaine (Campbell 2015:144-152).

Les événements cités dans les premières pages du livre, comme dans les dernières, se situent lors d'une procession triomphale de l'armée marocaine. Le narrateur exalte le ḡihād islamique et la guerre arabe accomplis par les troupes marocaines en Syrie, et compare cette célébration au souvenir des soldats marocains ayant participé à la guerre

d'Indochine, décrite en ces termes :

[...] والمعياه إلى الصدر والطحالب تلتف الأقدام، والسلاح مرفوع فوق الرأس. أو حالة قتال وجihad لا كالجهاد وبلا غبار، بلا حج، ولا دمشق الشام، ولا عز العروبة، ولا زغاريد بلا هناف التحايا والترحاب. (Rabī‘ 2009:824)

[...] de l'eau jusqu'à la poitrine, des algues s'enroulant autour des pieds, l'arme tenu au-dessus de la tête. Ou une situation de combat et de *gīhād* sans en être, sans poussière, sans *haġġ*,²² sans Damas du Šām, sans gloire de l'Arabité, sans youyous ni acclamations de salutation ni de bienvenue.

Ce parallèle est central dans le roman. Il s'incarne dans la relation entre un père, al-Hāġġ Maymūn Rigrāġī, ancien combattant d'Indochine, et son fils Sallām qui part combattre en Syrie. Le père encourage le fils et envisage son expédition comme un renouement avec l'esprit d'héroïsme qui « s'est perdu dans la jungle d'Indochine et les batailles de Naples » (Rabī‘ 2009:825). Le sacrifice de Sallām au front prend sens en tant que réparation d'une guerre coloniale subie par la guerre de 1973, considérée à la fois comme un devoir religieux et comme un service rendu à la cause arabe.

La mise en scène, dans les tranchées, de la rencontre entre ces soldats marocains et des combattant·e·s arabes est pourtant l'occasion de discussions complexes et parfois polémiques sur la place des femmes, l'athéisme et la foi ou la stratégie militaire. Celles-ci soulignent la distance qui sépare les protagonistes issu·e·s des différents pays. Le roman est moins audacieux que celui de Bannūna dans la contestation de la masculinité. Rabī‘ met néanmoins en scène la découverte par ces soldats marocains des femmes combattantes, notamment en raison de la conscription mixte syrienne (Rabī‘ 2009:872-873). Comme l'a relevé Ian Campbell, le roman met en scène un débat stratégique central de la période, qui oppose la stratégie militaire interétatique arabe au modèle de la guérilla des *fidā'iyyīn*, sur fond de contestation de l'autorité des régimes. Le dénouement par une victoire militaire, due à une initiative personnelle et non à l'efficacité de la chaîne de commandement, contient à l'évidence une critique implicite de la première approche, d'autant plus que ce triomphe arabe au Golan est entièrement fictionnel (Campbell 2015:148-151). Quoique moins explicitement, cet unique roman dédié à la guerre d'octobre 1973 propose donc à nouveau une double critique de l'autorité et de la masculinité, *topoi* de cette littérature marocaine *post-Naksa*.

7 - Conclusion

²² Le pèlerinage du *haġġ* et le *gīhād* sont les justifications religieuses du conflit dans le roman.

On voit se dessiner, au terme de ce parcours, une dimension fondamentale commune au Maroc et au reste de l'aire arabophone dans la réflexion sur cette période de conflits. Une ère du soupçon s'ouvre, où l'autorité du chef politique, du référent intellectuel et plus généralement de l'homme entrent ensemble en crise, comme c'est le cas au Machrek à la même période (Aghacy 2009). Émergent, dans cette “décennie palestinienne” de la littérature marocaine qui va du milieu des années 1960 au milieu des années 1970, des compromis transversaux aux pôles les plus éloignés du champ marocain, sous-champs francophone et arabophone notamment. L'étude de type de configurations historiques fait voir de la manière la plus nette le bénéfice d'une lecture conjointe des œuvres produites simultanément par ces deux sous-champs (Laachir 2016). La récente parution d'une *Anthologie de la poésie palestinienne d'aujourd'hui*, co-établie par un écrivain francophone (toujours Abdellatif Laâbi) et un écrivain arabophone (Yasin 'Adnān), dans une phase tout aussi critique de la relation palestino-marocaine, montre les prolongements de ces compromis.²³ Les guerres israélo-arabes, enfin, ont ouvert la possibilité aux écrivain·e·s marocain·e·s d'aborder ouvertement le Machrek comme l'un des lieux de leur propre imaginaire esthétique et politique, en ouvrant des passerelles culturelles transcoloniales, et non plus simplement comme celui de la production de la norme régissant une partie de leur littérature.

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²³ Cette anthologie a été publiée à l'hiver 2022 en arabe et en français (Adnan & Laâbi 2022a; Adnan & Laâbi 2022b).

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La “Chiesa dell’Islam” nella teologia di padre Dall’Oglio e nella missione della comunità di al-Halil

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ABSTRACT

The spiritual experience of Father Paolo Dall’Oglio (1954) and the al-Halil community, that he founded in 1991 in Mār Mūsà (Syria), represent a further step in the interfaith dialogue between Christianity and Islam in the Middle East. Continuing the path of dialogue and knowledge of common roots, Father Dall’Oglio and the al-Halil community work to bring the monotheisms back to talking about God and with God, under the Tent of Abraham, trying not to give in to the allure of syncretism. In a process of inculturation, Father Dall’Oglio and his community embrace the concept of a “Church of Islam”, which becomes the spiritual and material expression of a new space of communion and dialogue between Christ and Muhammad. The main purpose of this paper is to clarify the meaning of “Church of Islam” in Father Dall’Oglio’s thought and its realization in the daily life of the monastic community of al-Halil.

KEYWORDS

Interfaith dialogue / Christianity and Islam / Father Dall’Oglio / Inculturation / Church of Islam

1 - Introduzione

La presenza cristiana in Siria è attestata già nel primo secolo dopo Cristo; è qui, infatti, che si creano le prime comunità a seguito delle opere di evangelizzazione dei primi apostoli ed è qui che avranno origine poi alcune dispute e controversie teologiche, fautori della frattura tra Chiesa d’Occidente e Chiesa d’Oriente.¹ In generale, ancora oggi

¹ La letteratura in materia è ampia. Riguardo le origini del Cristianesimo, si ricordano qui i volumi di Filoromo, Lupieri e Pricoco (2006), Prinzivalli (2015) e Norelli (2018). Testimonianze attestanti la presenza cristiana in Siria si ritrovano anche nel Nuovo Testamento: negli atti degli Apostoli, ad esempio, la città di Antiochia, appartenente ai territori dell’antica Siria, viene citata come una delle prime comunità a costituirsi, ma soprattutto in AT 11, 26 essa viene descritta come la prima città in cui ci si riferisce ai seguaci di Cristo come “cristiani”, attuando in questo modo una netta distinzione dagli altri gruppi nati in seno al giudaismo. Il Medioriente, culla del cristianesimo, diede i natali a molti Padri della Chiesa, ai concili e alle maggiori dispute teologiche. Per una trattazione più esaustiva di questi argomenti, si rinvia al testo di Prinzivalli e

la Siria conserva la sua pluralità religiosa cristiana, sebbene tutte queste sue espressioni facciano parte delle minoranze del paese. Oltre alla Chiesa Cattolica Romana, che entrò in territorio siriano solo nel periodo medievale, sono presenti: la Chiesa Armeno-Cattolica, la Chiesa Maronita, la Chiesa Cattolica Caldea, la Chiesa Cattolica Greco-Melchita, la Chiesa Cattolica Sira. Per quanto riguarda le Chiese non cattoliche, in Siria si trovano la Chiesa Apostolica Armena, la Chiesa Episcopaliana, il Patriarcato Greco-Ortodosso di Antiochia e di tutto l’Oriente, il Sinodo Evangelico Nazionale di Siria e Libano, il Patriarcato Siro-Ortodosso di Antiochia e di tutto l’Oriente della Chiesa Siriaca Ortodossa e l’Unione delle Chiese Evangeliche Armene nel Vicino Oriente. La componente cristiana presente nel territorio siriano, dunque, si costituisce come un caleidoscopio di ritualità, al quale vanno aggiunte quelle appartenenti all’Islam, da non ridurre esclusivamente alle due correnti predominanti, quella sunnita e quella sciita (si pensi agli stessi alawiti, minoranza sciita a cui appartiene la famiglia al-Asad, da sessanta anni al potere). Tutte queste realtà convivono in Siria da secoli e, con la Rivoluzione del 2011 e la guerra civile che ne è seguita, l’equilibrio nei rapporti si è fatto sempre più fragile. Il regime baathista, guidato al momento da Bashar al-Asad [Baššār al-Asad], da quando è alla guida dello Stato ha esercitato il proprio potere sulla “cosa religiosa”, controllando finanziariamente le istituzioni religiose, provvedendo alla nomina degli imam ed esercitando la propria pressione sugli indirizzi delle scuole religiose. Sebbene con la Rivoluzione e la guerra civile si sia assistito a un cambiamento di questo controllo, con una sempre maggiore frammentazione del sunnismo nel paese e una difficoltà per il potere centrale di controllarlo, lo Stato e quindi il regime sono ancora attori operanti nell’ambito religioso (Khaddour 2019:2). Nonostante la dichiarata laicità dello Stato (Moussalli 1996:316), l’appartenenza a una minoranza ha permesso alla famiglia al-Asad di presentarsi alle altre del paese, tra cui anche quelle cristiane, come loro protettrice anche contro il fondamentalismo islamico.² Alcuni cristiani siriani, complici i decennali rapporti di potere di parte dell’establishment cristiano con il regime e l’acuirsi del settarismo, hanno sostenuto l’operato del regime durante gli scontri e nella guerra civile.³

La famiglia al-Asad ha trovato il modo di inserirsi anche nelle attività di dialogo delle rappresentanze religiose del paese: lo stesso Gran Mufti Ahmād Kuftārū nel 1979, in un periodo di grandi incertezze e instabilità per il territorio, partecipò a una conferenza internazionale sul dialogo interreligioso e legittimò con le sue parole l’operato del regime (Szanto 2008:97). Oltre alla vicinanza con il potere, va sottolineato anche l’impe-

Simonetti (2012), che fornisce una panoramica delle dottrine e correnti teologiche della Chiesa antica, che portarono poi alle fratture tra Cristianità d’Oriente e d’Occidente.

²Cfr. “Syrian Christians Face a Grim Dilemma”. Providence. <https://providencemag.com/2018/04/syrian-christians-face-a-grim-dilemma-assad/>. Ultimo accesso 12/07/2022.

³Cfr. “Patriarchi siriani con Bashar”. Vocevangelica. <https://www.voceevangelica.ch/voceevangelica/home/2018/05/Siria-ortodossi.html>. Ultimo accesso 12/07/2022.

gno di Kuftārū contro il fanatismo e per un maggior dialogo tra le parti e la sua azione continuò sia per il decennio successivo che negli anni Novanta, quando la situazione politica sembrava volgere a favore del regime. In Siria, il dialogo interreligioso ha visto protagonista non solo Kuftārū ma anche altri personaggi. Tra questi, vanno ricordati Muḥammad Ḥabaš, che auspicava uno governo laico, ma retto da un capo musulmano con l'applicazione del *fīqh*, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Kuftārū, figlio del Gran Mufti, che riteneva il dialogo interreligioso una componente già esistente nel paese data la sua natura pluri-confessionale; e infine padre Paolo Dall'Oglio, gesuita italiano che auspica il ritorno alle radici comuni per migliorare il dialogo e avvicinare le confessioni abramitiche (O'Neill 2020:22-23). Quella portata avanti dal gesuita romano è una missione di comunicazione e interazione che ben si inserisce nell'approccio contemporaneo della Chiesa Cattolica alle altre religioni, iniziato con Paolo VI e che, come si vedrà, continuerà con i suoi successori.

Secondo la concezione della Chiesa Cattolica, espressa nel 1984 dal Segretariato per i non cristiani (oggi Dicastero per il Dialogo Interreligioso), il termine dialogo «indica non solo il colloquio, ma anche l'insieme dei rapporti interreligiosi, positivi e costruttivi, con persone e comunità di altre fedi per una mutua conoscenza e un reciproco arricchimento» (Segretariato per i non cristiani 1984). Sulla scia dei lavori del Concilio Vaticano II, seguendo le orme di Paolo VI, i successivi pontefici Giovanni Paolo II, Benedetto XVI e l'attuale Francesco hanno cercato di intensificare le relazioni e gli scambi con le altre religioni attraverso encicliche, viaggi e documenti condivisi.⁴ Il dialogo interreligioso, però, non è prerogativa delle istituzioni religiose, ma è oggetto di studi, percorsi e pratiche che vedono protagonisti il mondo accademico, quello dei fedeli e comuni cittadini, e può essere considerato un valido strumento per facilitare i processi di interazione nelle società multietniche. La letteratura in materia è ampia, soprattutto quella che riguarda l'incontro tra Islam e Cristianesimo, che ha conosciuto un incremento negli ultimi decenni, con la produzione di articoli, studi, conferenze e incontri.⁵

⁴ Paolo VI, con i lavori del Concilio Vaticano II, l'enciclica *Ecclesiam suam* (1964) e la costituzione del Segretariato per i non cristiani, ha dato lo slancio iniziale al dialogo interreligioso nella Chiesa Cattolica Romana. Successivamente Giovanni Paolo II ha consolidato l'impegno nel dialogo attraverso i suoi viaggi e i discorsi rivolti alle comunità non cristiane. Si ricorda in particolare il discorso tenuto nel 1986 ad Assisi in occasione della Giornata Mondiale di Preghiera per la Pace. Seguendo l'operato del suo predecessore, Benedetto XVI si è fatto garante dell'impegno della cattolicità nel dialogo interreligioso, contribuendo al confronto con la sua enciclica *Caritas in veritate* (2009) e attraverso la convocazione nel 2011 di un secondo incontro tra 180 rappresentanti religiosi, sempre ad Assisi, per una giornata di preghiera. Infine, si ricorda Papa Francesco, e il suo impegno nel dialogo, testimoniato dal *Documento sulla Fratellanza Umana* (2019) e dall'enciclica *Fratelli tutti* (2020) che ribadisce la centralità della solidarietà e della fratellanza nel suo pontificato.

⁵ Si ricordano qui solo alcuni volumi sul dialogo interreligioso tra cristiani e musulmani: Abu-Nimer & Khoury & Welty (2007), Smith (2007), Borrman (2016).

La stessa esperienza spirituale di padre Dall’Oglio in Siria e della comunità monastica di al-Ḩalīl, da lui fondata negli anni Novanta del secolo scorso, può essere considerata come una particolare declinazione del dialogo tra le due confessioni abramitiche. La missione di comunicazione, apertura all’altro a cui padre Paolo Dall’Oglio ha votato la propria vita, si realizza anche seguendo il senso paolino di evangelizzazione espresso nella Prima Lettera ai Corinzi. In questo modo, applicando l’insegnamento di Paolo alla propria esperienza, padre Dall’Oglio si è fatto “arabo tra gli arabi” e “musulmano tra musulmani”, tenendo come direttrice l’ideale cristiano dell’amore di Cristo per ogni creatura.⁶

Attraverso un approccio storico-religioso, il presente studio esplora lo sviluppo del concetto di “Chiesa dell’Islam” nella visione di padre Dall’Oglio, mettendo in relazione il pensiero del gesuita con quello del suo maestro Louis Massignon (1883-1962). L’articolo, inoltre, presenterà il modo in cui la comunità al-Ḩalīl si sforza di realizzare quotidianamente l’ideale dell’amore cristologico nei confronti del credente musulmano, percepito come fratello. Sebbene la letteratura sul dialogo interreligioso sia ampia, essendo questo un campo di studi in continua evoluzione e produzione, ancora poche fonti sono disponibili sull’esperienza spirituale di padre Dall’Oglio e sulle pratiche della comunità, soprattutto rispetto all’idea di “Chiesa dell’Islam”, e alla sua applicazione. Di seguito si discuteranno alcuni studi che hanno approfondito il pensiero di padre Dall’Oglio e di Louis Massignon, affiancati agli scritti dello stesso gesuita e a stralci di una intervista riguardanti il tema del presente studio rilasciata da suor Carol Cooke Eid, monaca e responsabile di uno dei monasteri della comunità, quello di San Salvatore a Cori. I testi e la testimonianza aiuteranno a comprendere meglio il carattere innovativo del pensiero della comunità e la semplicità con la quale i monaci e le monache affrontano quotidianamente la loro missione di pace, soprattutto in tempo di guerra.

2 - La riscoperta del monastero di Mār Mūsà al-Ḩabašī e la nascita della comunità di al-Ḩalīl

Era il 1982 quando un giovane gesuita romano percorse a dorso di mulo una strada deserta e brulla che dal piccolo villaggio di al-Nabk, a circa 100 km da Damasco, porta

⁶ Parlando della sua missione di evangelizzazione, san Paolo scrive: «Mi sono fatto come Giudeo per i Giudei, per guadagnare i Giudei. Per coloro che sono sotto la Legge – pur non essendo io sotto la Legge – mi sono fatto come uno che è sotto la Legge, allo scopo di guadagnare coloro che sono sotto la Legge. Per coloro che non hanno Legge – pur non essendo io senza la legge di Dio, anzi essendo nella legge di Cristo – mi sono fatto come uno che è senza Legge, allo scopo di guadagnare coloro che sono senza Legge. Mi sono fatto debole per i deboli, per guadagnare i deboli; mi sono fatto tutto per tutti, per salvare a ogni costo qualcuno. Ma tutto io faccio per il Vangelo, per diventare partecipe anch’io» (1 Corinzi, 9:20-23). Per il testo biblico, di qui in avanti citato, si è fatto riferimento all’Edizione CEI (2008).

al monastero di San Mosè l’Abissino (*dayr Mār Mūsà al-Habaṣī*). Le pietre che compongono l’edificio sorgono in mezzo alle montagne desertiche da oltre 1300 anni e hanno resistito ai secoli, alle intemperie e finanche all’abbandono da parte dell’ultimo monaco, avvenuto a ridosso del 1900. La cristianità in Medio Oriente è sempre più minoritaria, ma comunque presente: quel luogo, come tanti altri, ne rispecchia ancora oggi l’importante passato. Bastò davvero poco a padre Paolo Dall’Oglio per innamorarsi del monastero di Mār Mūsà: immerso nel deserto, casa prima di eremiti, poi di monaci e infine luogo di rifugio per i pastori della zona. Il monastero non era soltanto il posto perfetto per pregare in solitudine e riconnettersi al divino, ma, contrariamente al panorama brullo intorno, rappresentava il terreno ideale per la crescita di un seme, quello del dialogo tra le religioni abramitiche. Padre Dall’Oglio ne capì subito le potenzialità; dirà che un luogo cristiano, così vicino ai musulmani, aveva ancora qualcosa da dire (de Montjou 2014:101) e così decise di lasciarlo parlare.

Ci vollero dieci lunghi anni per poter costituire una comunità monastica a Mār Mūsà. Le sfide più grandi non vennero dalla ricerca di fondi per finanziare il restauro; infatti, con l’aiuto del governo italiano e di quello siriano, la cappella affrescata con iscrizioni arabe del 1058 e il complesso architettonico del VI secolo, ricevettero presto le cure di équipe di restauratori e volontari, italiani e siriani, cristiani e musulmani, un’opera che anticipava già la nuova missione del monastero (de Montjou 2014:106-107).⁷ Nemmeno le iniziali ritrosie di parte della comunità locale e le controversie che ne derivarono, come racconta lo stesso Dall’Oglio nel libro intervista con la giornalista de Montjou (de Montjou 2014:146-147), fermarono il processo di costituzione: il principale ostacolo per padre Dall’Oglio fu rappresentato dal suo stesso ordine, la Compagnia di Gesù. Infatti, ai tre voti che deve onorare un gesuita (povertà, castità e obbedienza) se ne aggiunge un quarto. In virtù di questo voto, detto di obbedienza *circa missiones*, strettamente legato alla figura del Papa, coloro che decidono di seguirlo si affidano al discernimento del Pontefice che conosce e indirizza verso i luoghi del mondo dove è opportuno recarsi per svolgere la propria missione.⁸ A volte, però, la metà assegnata a

⁷ Nel 1983, poco dopo la cerimonia di diaconato, padre Dall’Oglio inviò due lettere: una all’allora ministro degli Esteri, Giulio Andreotti e un’altra alla Congregazione orientale del Vaticano. Le risposte non si fecero attendere e dopo i primi sopralluoghi, arrivarono i finanziamenti sia dal Vaticano sia dalla soprintendenza di Damasco. I lavori proseguirono per i successivi tre anni e la campagna di restauro fu oggetto del volume del 1998 a cura anche dell’Istituto Centrale per il Restauro di Roma (Istituto centrale per il restauro 1998).

⁸ La Compagnia di Gesù nacque per volontà di Sant’Ignazio di Loyola e fu approvata da papa Paolo III con la bolla *Regimini militantis ecclesiae* nel settembre del 1540. Si configura come un istituto religioso maschile di diritto pontificio, che già dalle origini dimostra un carattere internazionale, sia per la provenienza dei “compagni”, chiamati così proprio in virtù del rapporto che decidono di avere con Cristo, sia per la missione di evangelizzazione che porta i suoi membri a vivere in vari contesti del mondo. Per maggiori informazioni sulla storia e le attività che ad oggi svolge la Compagnia di Gesù nel mondo si rimanda al sito dell’Ordine, in particolare per i passi

tale scopo segue le inclinazioni del singolo: successe anche a padre Paolo, anni prima, con la missione che lo portò in terra siriana.

L’attaccamento di padre Dall’Oglio a Mār Mūsà e il suo progetto di stabilirsi lì rischiavano di compromettere la sua permanenza all’interno dell’Ordine, e per questo motivo l’allontanamento dal monastero sembrò essere l’unico modo per riportarlo all’obbedienza. Dopo alcuni periodi di lontananza stabiliti dai superiori, sia per compiere e concludere il dottorato a Roma, sia per svolgere una missione nelle Filippine, gli venne affidata una parrocchia a Homs [Hims], in Siria. Benché la città si trovasse a solo un’ora dal monastero, padre Paolo visse questo incarico come l’ennesimo ostacolo sul cammino della sua personale missione, quella che lo legava a Mār Mūsà. Ecco che alla vigilia dell’incontro con il vescovo di Homs, al quale padre Dall’Oglio voleva chiedere la possibilità di diventare sacerdote del monastero, il gesuita fu vittima di un violento incidente di ritorno da Damasco. Lo shock vissuto fece scattare nel gesuita la necessità di non rimandare oltre e comunicò al suo superiore e al vescovo di Homs la decisione di stabilirsi a Mār Mūsà, contravvenendo agli ordini. Lasciando la Compagnia di Gesù, padre Paolo si fece incardinare in una diocesi, passando quindi sotto la giurisdizione di un vescovo. Era il 1992 e solo dopo cinque anni padre Dall’Oglio ritornerà nell’Ordine, grazie all’aiuto del vescovo Moussa Daoud [Mūsà Dāwwūd] (de Montjou 2014:140-150; 172). Dopo varie vicissitudini, quindi, nel 1991 padre Dall’Oglio, insieme all’amico padre Jacques Mourad, fondò la comunità, che prende il nome dall’appellativo coranico di Abramo, padre di tutti i profeti e “amico di Dio” (in arabo *halīl*) (O’Neill 2020:4-6).

Le monache e i monaci che decidono di far parte della comunità di al-*Halīl* si consacrano a essa e alle sue tre regole: vita spirituale, lavoro manuale, ospitalità. La prima di queste trova nel deserto il suo luogo per eccellenza. Nella ricerca, nella scoperta e nell’incontro con Dio, Mosè, Elia, Giovanni Battista e Gesù si trovano in un deserto, perché, come spiega padre Dall’Oglio nel dialogo con la giornalista de Montjou, il deserto è vuoto ed è questa sua caratteristica che permette la comunicazione con il divino:

Parce qu’au désert, on dépasse la présence spirituelle équivoque qui se trouve dans la nature verte (dans la nature abondante, les esprits sont partout, on risque de se perdre dans l’agriculture, d’y voir une multitude de signes). Le désert c’est moi et Toi, Dieu. L’homme est le sommet de l’espace. Il n’y a pas d’arbres. L’homme est la tête la plus haute, il l’a déjà dans le ciel. Il parle avec les étoiles. Là se forme, immédiatement, un espace sacré de rélation (de Montjou 2014:93).

della Formula della Compagnia di Gesù, istituita da Paolo III, disponibili sul sito dell’Ordine: cfr. “Formula dell’Istituto della Compagnia di Gesù approvata da Paolo III”. Gesuiti. <https://gesuiti.it/lettura/formula-istituto-paolo-iii/>. Ultimo accesso 12/07/2022.

La seconda regola, il lavoro manuale, diventa necessaria per una perfetta comunicazione tra corpo e anima e rievoca, come si legge nello Statuto di fondazione della Confederazione monastica,⁹ l'esempio della famiglia di Nazareth. Come terza e ultima regola, padre Paolo sceglie l'accoglienza, un atto, quello dell'ospitalità, che è fatto «di servizio, misericordia e perdono, ospitalità di saggezza e direzione spirituale, ospitalità della mensa comune e del silenzio, ospitalità dell'accoglienza dell'altro nella sua ricchezza e nel bisogno» (Dall'Oglio 2011a:185). Mār Mūsà non ha solo tre pilastri, ma anche un orizzonte. La comunità è consacrata all'amore di Cristo per i musulmani in quanto uomini e per il mondo musulmano in quanto *umma*, comunità dei credenti. Le sofferenze di ieri e di oggi servono a creare una base per «la mutua comprensione e il mutuo amore nella considerazione e nel rispetto reciproci» (Dall'Oglio 2011a:185). La consacrazione dei monaci, secondo il testo statutario (Dall'Oglio 2011a:183-189), avviene abbracciando tali principi e con essi quelli della castità, della povertà e dell'obbedienza evangelica, e candidandosi al martirio in tutte le sue forme: il martirio della fatica, della malattia, del fallimento, dei propri cari e della famiglia, il martirio dell'obbedienza e della pazienza. I monaci e le monache che decidono di entrare nella comunità devono avere una solida conoscenza, teorica e pratica, della liturgia orientale e devono anche sviluppare una sensibilità ecumenica. Seguendo la dottrina della Chiesa, espressa nel Concilio Vaticano II,¹⁰ i membri della comunità si consacrano a un approccio basato sull'apertura all'altro, tanto che devono sviluppare un'adeguata conoscenza del mondo musulmano per poter partecipare attivamente alla costruzione del dialogo religioso.

3 - L'incontro tra Islam e Cristianesimo secondo Massignon e padre Dall'Oglio

La natura stessa della comunità di al-Ḥalīl e della missione a cui si è votata si pone in contrasto con l'immaginario comune delle relazioni tra Islam e Cristianesimo, che ha prodotto scontri secolari, conflittualità e violenza. Quell'incontro disarmato a Damietta,

⁹ Nello statuto di costituzione, di cui è possibile leggere alcuni estratti in Dall'Oglio 2011a:183-189, viene utilizzato il termine “Confederazione monastica di al-Ḥalīl”.

¹⁰ Il Concilio Vaticano II (1962-1965) rappresenta per la cristianità un importante passo in avanti nel dialogo interreligioso. In linea generale, le gerarchie ecclesiastiche all'inizio degli anni Sessanta arrivarono a definire la volontà di intraprendere un cammino di comunione con gli altri due monoteismi, costruendo un rapporto con gli ebrei e cancellando l'accusa rivoltagli per secoli di aver condannato Cristo alla crocifissione, e superando le inimicizie con l'Islam che nel corso della storia avevano mietuto vittime e provocato guerre. Per una migliore e più esaustiva trattazione del dialogo cristiano-ebraico, aperto grazie alla dichiarazione *Nostra Aetate* (Paolo VI 1965) e ai lavori del Concilio Vaticano II si rinvia a Caponigro (2017). Per una consultazione dei testi e documenti sui fondamenti teologici del dialogo interreligioso nel magistero della Chiesa Cattolica, si rinvia al testo di mons. Francesco Gioia (2013), che riunisce oltre 900 documenti del periodo tra il pontificato di Giovanni XXIII a quello Benedetto XVI su questo tema.

durante la quinta crociata (1217-1221), che vide protagonista, secondo le fonti latine, Francesco d'Assisi, frate Illuminato, e il Sultano ayyubide Muhammad ibn Muhammad b. al-Ādil b. Ayyūb (al-Malik al-Kāmil), resta quasi un unicum (Saccone 2011:2). Appena nato, infatti, l'Islam venne considerato dalla cristianità come una sua eresia. Ne dà testimonianza Giovanni Damasceno (670?-749), che cita l'Islam come religione degli ismaeliti, quindi discendenti di Ismaele, figlio di Abramo e Agar e progenitore delle tribù beduine della Penisola arabica (Rizzi 1997:33). Il Damasceno, teologo siriano del VII secolo, al servizio del primo califfo omayyade Mu‘āwiya ibn Abī Sufyān durante la prima parte della sua vita, nella sua opera *Fonte della Conoscenza* presenta una sintesi delle dottrine non cristiane, riunite sotto il termine di “eresie”, citando tra queste anche l'Islam, considerato ingannatore di popoli e nemico dell'ortodossia. Dopo averne descritto la discendenza abramitica della religione musulmana, il Damasceno ne presenta quello che definisce il falso profeta e il testo (Saccone 2011:3). Altro esempio in tal senso è quello di San Tommaso d'Aquino (1225-1274), teologo e filosofo della Scolastica che considera l'Islam come una fede rozza, di uomini lascivi che professavano un messaggio distorto e falso (Saccone 2011:4). Sulla stessa linea si pose poi Ricoldo da Montecroce (1243-1320), il quale, pur riconoscendone l'ospitalità, la tolleranza e l'apertura nella sua opera *Itinerarium fratribus Ricoldi*, successivamente dichiarò l'Islam come la terza persecuzione dei cristiani, dopo quelle di giudei e romani. Ricoldo dedicò addirittura un'intera opera, *Contra legem Sarracenorum*, a denigrare i capisaldi della religione musulmana, forse in un chiaro disegno politico propagandistico (Saccone 2011:5). Assieme a Francesco d'Assisi, l'unica voce fuori dal coro fu quella di Giovanni da Tripoli, che studiò la figura di Cristo all'interno del Corano e da quella provò a fare breccia nel muro d'odio che separava le due confessioni. Il resto del panorama, fino al Settecento, presenta i musulmani come miscredenti ed eretici e Muhammad come un falso profeta (Saccone 2011: 6). Se da parte cristiana in questa prima fase, l'approccio all'Islam assume caratteri dispregiativi, il testo coranico sembra porsi, almeno in parte, in una posizione diversa nei confronti della “Gente del Libro”, ovvero ebrei e cristiani, secondo la giurisprudenza islamica. Nella Sūra del Ragno, ad esempio, si legge:

Discutete con la gente del libro solo nel modo migliore – fuorché con i colpevoli – e dite: «Crediamo in quel che è stato rivelato a rivelato a noi ed è stato rivelato a voi, il nostro Dio e il vostro Dio sono un solo Dio, noi tutti siamo sottomessi a Lui»
(Corano 29:46).¹¹

Nei secoli e nella letteratura islamica che seguì, la condivisione degli spazi con

¹¹ Per il Corano, si è adottato il testo a cura di Alberto Ventura (2010), nella traduzione di Ida Zilio-Grandi.

tanti e diversi tipi di cristianità (si pensi a quella occidentale, siciliana e spagnola, a quella bizantina, fino ad arrivare alle innumerevoli varianti della cristianità orientale), produsse immagini diverse della cristianità. Ciò che, però, sembra accompagnare parte della discussione e critica islamica nei confronti della cristianità è la concezione di divinità dello stesso Cristo che sarebbe simile a Dio, e quindi andrebbe a contrastare l'assunto della sua unicità, dalla quale l'Islam non vuole prescindere (Zilio-Grandi 2005: 105).

Ritornando all'approccio cristiano verso l'Islam, fu il Novecento il secolo che riservò alcune interessanti riflessioni strutturate capaci di superare l'antico e ricorrente pregiudizio. In particolare, ai fini di questo studio è necessario ricordare l'esperienza del filosofo francese Louis Massignon, dal quale padre Dall'Oglio si lasciò ispirare (de Montjou 2014: 117-118).¹² Per Massignon, come per Dall'Oglio del resto, l'amore verso l'Islam nacque dai primi viaggi in terra mediorientale e precisamente nella Baghdad in subbuglio, che all'epoca chiedeva l'indipendenza all'impero ottomano. Proprio in una di queste occasioni, durante una detenzione, il filosofo francese si convertì ufficialmente al Cristianesimo, riconoscendo in quel Dio non un giudice, ma un padre amorevole (Borrmans 2008:15-18). L'ospitalità ricevuta nei vari paesi visitati portò Massignon a concentrarsi sul concetto di accoglienza: a partire dall'incontro tra Abramo e i tre forestieri inviati da Dio (Genesi 18:1-15), iniziò a tracciare la strada per l'incontro tra i tre monoteismi (Borrmans 2008: 16-46). Nel passo della Bibbia si narra che il patriarca, uscito dalla sua tenda dopo aver visto arrivare tre uomini, offrì loro riposo e ristoro come si conveniva e quelli, prima di lasciarlo, gli annunciarono l'imminente nascita di suo figlio Isacco dal ventre di Sara. Da Isacco, poi, avrà origine la stirpe di Israele, mentre da Ismaele, il primogenito figlio di Abramo e Agar, la

¹² Louis Massignon nacque nel luglio del 1883 a Nogent-sur-Marne da padre agnostico e madre cattolica. A seguito degli studi accademici, partì per alcuni viaggi nei paesi arabi, prima in Algeria, poi in Egitto, infine in Mesopotamia. La fascinazione per il mondo islamico lo portò a riprendere gli studi e a concentrarsi sulla conoscenza del mistico sufi iracheno del X secolo Ḥusayn ibn Mansūr al-Ḥallāq, di cui tratterà nella sua tesi di dottorato, discussa nel 1922 all'Università Sorbonne di Parigi. Alla fine degli anni Venti, diede vita a percorsi di studi nuovi nel settore arabo-musulmano, costituendo l'Istituto di Studi Islamici di Parigi e successivamente, con l'aiuto dell'intellettuale greco-melchita, Mary Kahil, la *Badaliyya* (in arabo “sostituzione”), un movimento di preghiera donatosi all'apertura verso il mondo musulmano, che non si prefiggeva di convertirne i fedeli, ma di prendere il loro posto al fine ultimo di glorificare Dio. In questa sostituzione, i due studiosi, quindi, vedevano il mettersi nei panni dell'altro, vivere e soffrire per l'altro, come fece lo stesso Cristo, secondo la tradizione cristiana, morendo sulla croce per l'umanità intera. La vita di Massignon si contraddistinse non solo per queste nuove strade tracciate, ma anche per gli incontri che fece, tra i più noti quello con Charles de Foucauld (1858-1916), con il Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948) e con papa Giovanni XXIII (1881-1963), al quale presentò e descrisse le funzioni del suo nuovo movimento. Solo verso la fine della sua vita, Massignon prese i voti, facendosi ordinare prete greco-melchita.

tradizione fa discendere le tribù beduine della Penisola arabica, le quali secoli più tardi diventeranno musulmane. L'ascendenza ismaelitica dei musulmani, sebbene per ragioni scientifiche e cronologiche non possa essere dimostrata a partire dalla Bibbia, sembra essere una tradizione acquisita da parte cristiana. Lo stesso Dall'Oglio, ripercorrendo parte del pensiero cristiano e citando prima Teodoreto di Cirro (393-458), poi Giovanni Damasceno, fino ad arrivare a papa Gregorio VII (1020-1085) e ai più recenti discorsi del biblista e cardinale Carlo Martini e del cardinale Walter Kasper, dimostra come la discendenza ismaelitica, e di conseguenza abramitica, dei musulmani sia una convinzione ormai radicata nella tradizione cristiana (Dall'Oglio 2011a:72-75).

La figura di Ismaele diventa importante in Massignon e Dall'Oglio, per segnare la strada del dialogo tra le religioni, come si evince anche dai loro scritti (Massignon 2002: 69-71; Dall'Oglio 2011b:17-18). Il testo biblico è fondamentale a tale scopo; nel libro della Genesi legge: «Anche riguardo a Ismaele io ti ho esaudito: ecco, io lo benedico e lo renderò fecondo e molto, molto numeroso: dodici principi egli genererà e di lui farò una grande nazione» (Genesi 17:21). Quando, poi, Ismaele e Agar vennero allontanati dalla casa di Abramo, per ordine di Sara, come viene narrato successivamente al capitolo 21, Dio non dimenticherà il primogenito di Abramo, già benedetto, ma concederà a lui e alla madre l'acqua nel deserto per la loro salvezza (Genesi 21:1-21). Riprendendo le vicende di Ismaele e provando a riportare i tre monoteismi alla radice comune caratterizzata da Abramo, Massignon invita Ismaele, qui visto come progenitore dei musulmani, a ritornare sotto la tenda del padre per riaprire i rapporti e ricominciare a dialogare. Massignon, però, si spinge oltre, considerando lo stesso Muḥammad una figura importante, grazie alla quale Ismaele e i suoi discendenti vengono richiamati a partecipare con cristiani ed ebrei al mistero divino (Massignon 2002:71-72). Muḥammad, infatti, come Ismaele diventa un esule, costretto a lasciare la sua città e la sua casa, eppure nel suo allontanamento, secondo Massignon, egli ritrova a contatto con ebrei, saebi e cristiani le sue origini abramitiche. Inoltre, secondo il filosofo francese «davanti a Dio, egli si dichiara discendente di Abramo e rivendica per gli Arabi soli tutta l'eredità spirituale e temporale» (Massignon 2002:72). Anche padre Dall'Oglio riprende la storia di Ismaele e di Agar nel deserto, del figlio che grida per la sete e della madre che piange. In questa scena, come in altre, Dall'Oglio rivive le immagini della passione di Cristo e della sofferenza sotto la croce di Maria, sua madre, e in quel grido di sete ode il grido degli esclusi, del tutto pertinente alla storia della salvezza (Dall'Oglio 2011b:18).

Questa apertura al dialogo e all'incontro con l'altro, come si è visto, caratterizzano parte del percorso di Massignon e della sua eredità, che non è solo presente nell'opera e nella missione di padre Dall'Oglio, ma ancor prima nella visione che assume la Chiesa moderna, con i lavori del Concilio Vaticano II. È ormai consuetudine credere che l'opera del filosofo francese abbia influenzato le gerarchie ecclesiastiche nella costituzione di questa nuova veste della Chiesa (Perrone 2010: 105) e un esempio significativo è dimos-

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trato dal testo stesso della Dichiarazione *Nostra Aetate*, in cui si legge:

La Chiesa cattolica nulla rigetta di quanto è vero e santo in queste religioni. Essa considera con sincero rispetto quei modi di agire e di vivere, quei precetti e quelle dottrine che, quantunque in molti punti differiscano da quanto essa stessa crede e propone, tuttavia non raramente riflettono un raggio di quella verità che illumina tutti gli uomini (Dichiarazione *Nostra Aetate*, sezione 2).

Più specificatamente riguardo alla religione musulmana, Paolo VI e i Padri del Sacro Concilio scrivono:

La Chiesa guarda anche con stima i musulmani che adorano l'unico Dio, vivente e sussistente, misericordioso e onnipotente, creatore del cielo e della terra, che ha parlato agli uomini. Essi cercano di sottomettersi con tutto il cuore ai decreti di Dio anche nascosti, come vi si è sottomesso anche Abramo, a cui la fede islamica volentieri si riferisce. Benché essi non riconoscano Gesù come Dio, lo venerano tuttavia come profeta; onorano la sua madre vergine, Maria, e talvolta pure la invocano con devozione. Inoltre, attendono il giorno del giudizio, quando Dio retribuirà tutti gli uomini risuscitati. Così pure hanno in stima la vita morale e rendono culto a Dio, soprattutto con la preghiera, le elemosine e il digiuno. Se, nel corso dei secoli, non pochi dissensi e inimicizie sono sorte tra cristiani e musulmani, il sacro Concilio esorta tutti a dimenticare il passato e a esercitare sinceramente la mutua comprensione, nonché a difendere e promuovere insieme per tutti gli uomini la giustizia sociale, i valori morali, la pace e la libertà (Dichiarazione *Nostra Aetate*, sezione 3).

Con questo documento, firmato il 28 ottobre 1965, il Concilio Vaticano II proiettava la Chiesa in una nuova fase della sua storia, sancendo il rispetto per le altre religioni e per i diritti umani, oltre alla condanna verso qualsiasi forma di discriminazione (Dichiarazione *Nostra Aetate*, sezione 5).

4 - Una Chiesa in cammino verso l'Islam: la visione di padre Dall'Oglio

Padre Dall'Oglio vive il suo essere cristiano amando ogni musulmano in quanto figlio di Dio. Ma per arrivare a fare di questo la bussola del proprio cammino di fede, il gesuita ha studiato e approfondito, accompagnato dalle parole e dall'esempio dei suoi maestri, Charles de Foucauld¹³ e Louis Massignon (O'Neill 2020:9-14). Dall'idea di os-

¹³ Charles de Foucauld (1858-1916) fu un eremita e sacerdote cattolico francese, oggi Beato per la Chiesa di Roma. Si convertì solo in età adulta al cristianesimo, diventando prima monaco trappista e trasferendosi successivamente in Africa dove visse in una oasi nel Sahara. Qui si dedicò alla preghiera e all'ospitalità e si avvicinò ai popoli nomadi del deserto, in particolar modo

pitalità di quest'ultimo, a cui prima si è accennato, padre Dall'Oglio non solo prenderà uno delle regole della comunità di al-Ḥalīl, ma anche l'idea di piantare la tenda di Abramo, sia fisicamente sul terrazzo di Mār Mūsā, sia metaforicamente nella sua missione. Portare i tre monoteismi a parlare nello stesso luogo significa partire da Dio, nella comune identificazione come unico essere divino esistente. Ma nonostante la sorgente sia la stessa, il modo e il tempo in cui si attinge a essa cambia, ed è proprio da qui che iniziano le contrapposizioni: il messaggio cristiano nasce in ambiente ebraico. Cristo porta una nuova versione della Rivelazione divina e si fa promotore di un nuovo rapporto tra Dio e l'umanità. Il suo farsi carne, l'umiliazione della croce e la Resurrezione con la vittoria sulla morte, portano a compimento la profezia e lo rendono il Messia, il Salvatore, secondo la tradizione cristiana. Dopo sei secoli, Muḥammad diventerà il mezzo attraverso il quale, seguendo la tradizione musulmana, Dio si ripresenterà agli uomini, con una versione perfezionata della Rivelazione. Si segue, dunque, una successione lineare, in cui ognuno dei monoteismi sembra essere prosecuzione di quello precedente e disvelatore di nuovi tasselli per l'avvicinamento al mistero divino da parte dell'umanità. Il problema, però, non è tanto nella rivelazione che segue, quanto in quella che precede, che viene depauperata e spogliata del suo rapporto esclusivistico con Dio. Per questo, l'ebraismo non riconoscerà in Cristo il suo Messia, e il Cristianesimo considererà l'Islam una sua eresia. Dal canto suo, l'Islam, almeno secondo Massignon, criticherà il popolo di Israele e il Cristianesimo per sentirsi privilegiati nel loro rapporto con il divino (Massignon 2002:137). Nella visione di Dall'Oglio, riconoscere a Muḥammad il ruolo di Profeta non inficerebbe in alcun modo il suo essere cristiano. Significherebbe solo ammettere che la profezia inizia e non finisce con Cristo, dando atto allo stesso Muḥammad di avere un rapporto privilegiato con Dio (Dall'Oglio 2011a:12). L'amore che il gesuita prova per l'Islam e per il Corano è mediato, come scrive, dallo stesso Spirito di Cristo (Dall'Oglio 2011a:24); per questo non si tratta mai di sincretismo, di cui la Chiesa ha profondamente paura. Secondo Dall'Oglio, andare verso la Rivelazione coranica è un atto che va compiuto in compagnia della Chiesa e del messaggio evangelico. Le due realtà, quindi, nonostante siano caratterizzate da dogmi e convinzioni diverse e abbiano una storia differente, hanno la possibilità di incontrarsi sul terreno comune dell'ammissione dell'unicità divina.¹⁴ Se questa viene presa come assunto insieme all'amore di Dio per

ai Tuareg, con i quali trascorse tredici anni della sua vita, immerso nella preghiera e negli studi della loro lingua. Venne ucciso nella sua abitazione, sempre aperta a tutti, nel 1916, a seguito di un attacco da parte di alcuni predoni.

¹⁴ Nella Sūra del Culto Puro si legge: «Egli, Dio, è uno, Dio l'eterno, non ha generato, non è generato, non c'è nessuno pari suo» (Corano 112 :1-4). In questi versi si ritrovano parti della specifica dottrina islamica, che indica l'unicità di Dio e sottolinea il suo essere eterno e ingenerato. D'altro canto, tali versetti non ammettono un'altra figura divina al pari di Dio e nemmeno una ipotetica filiazione, in chiara contrapposizione con il mistero trinitario della dottrina cristiana.

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tutte le creature, secondo la concezione cristiana, la duplice appartenenza alla comunità islamica e a quella cristiana di cui padre Paolo si fa promotore non è inconcepibile. Prima di adoperare questo passaggio, o meglio, questo incontro, sarebbe preferibile attribuire all'Islam una funzione nella rivelazione divina che, sostiene Dall'Oglio, con il messaggio coranico si può considerare conclusa (Dall'Oglio 2011a:31). Infatti, da quando l'arcangelo Gabriele ha parlato a Muḥammad, l'umanità non ha ricevuto nessun'altra Parola. Riprendendo una delle affermazioni più significative di Massignon, quando dice che: «Se Israele ha le sue radici nella speranza e la cristianità è votata alla carità, l'Islam è incentrato nella fede» (Massignon 2002:12), la portata dell'Islam potrebbe essere stata proprio quella di ricondurre l'umanità alla fede. Attraverso la preghiera, il fedele ritorna al divino e rinsalda l'alleanza, mettendosi di nuovo sulla strada percorsa dallo stesso Abramo. L'incontro tra Cristianesimo e Islam è possibile, secondo Dall'Oglio, proprio a partire dal presupposto cristiano che Gesù di Nazareth ha rivelato l'appartenenza filiale di tutte le creature al Padre. La sua appartenenza duplice:

corrisponde al filo rosso della mia vita. La Chiesa, appassionata di universalità e innamorata delle ricchezze spirituali dei popoli, mi ha invitato a colare la mia identità cristiana nello stampo dell'Islam. Ciò implica lo sforzo di comunicazione necessario a spiegare questa evoluzione identitaria tanto alla Chiesa come all'Islam. Quando cerco di riassumere il senso di questa duplice appartenenza, dico che essa risiede nella dinamica esistenziale e contestualizzata dell'approfondimento e del superamento di ogni cristallizzazione identitaria rigida. Noi osserviamo la nostra immagine nell'acqua della corrente. L'immagine della nostra identità è continuamente modificata dalla corsa dell'acqua a valle. Non è necessario arrivare a una definizione statica dell'autocoscienza identitaria. Ma è fondamentale aprirsi e partecipare in modo dialogale all'avvento dell'Unico nella molteplicità contingente delle mille sfaccettature della sua gloria (Dall'Oglio 2011a:41).

Viene da chiedersi se l'accettazione di appartenenza alle due comunità possa in qualche modo portare a una nuova forma di sincretismo, ma Dall'Oglio è abbastanza fermo nella convinzione che questo incontro, in realtà, vada solo a sciogliere quell'irrigidimento identitario che è stato capace nei secoli di creare malintesi, incomprensioni e scontri. Ecco come nel messaggio del gesuita entra di forza il termine “inculturazione”, che egli riprende da padre Ary Roest Crollius (1933). Secondo Dall'Oglio, con questa espressione si vuole sottolineare il movimento di “andare verso”, che non sottintende un mescolamento o una presa di superiorità di una parte sull'altra. È piuttosto l'idea di approcciarsi all'altro, disarmati, senza imporre la propria posizione (O'Neill 2020:72-74). Riprendendo l'espressione del patriarca melchita di Antiochia, Gregorios III Laham, che parla di una «Chiesa dell'Islam» (Gregorios III Laham 2006), Dall'Oglio apre la strada

a questo incontro possibile, in cui né la Chiesa e né l'Islam perdono la propria natura confessionale (Dall'Oglio 2011a:44-46). Se per Chiesa si intende una comunità di fedeli e se ne evidenzia il suo carattere universale, non dovrebbe essere difficile immaginare che essa si costituisca non come un monolite, ma come un panorama culturale plurale e diversificato. Un esempio di questa pluralità è espresso dalla Chiesa giudeo-cristiana in Israele, che ha quasi un carattere nazionale e che ritorna lì dove è nata la comunità protocristiana di Giacomo. Se in questi termini si vuole parlare di "Chiesa dell'Islam", allora si potrebbe dire che questa comunità cristiana, sebbene minoranza in un paese a maggioranza musulmano, è quella in cui possono rientrare tutti quei cristiani arabi che vogliono vivere la loro fede in Cristo nella terra di Muḥammad, che coabitano da oltre 1400 anni. Ma l'espressione "Chiesa dell'Islam" o "per l'Islam" potrebbe sottintendere anche un'apertura verso l'Islam che ne riconosca la vicinanza a Dio, mantenendo per la cristianità e per la fede islamica gli elementi che ne costituiscono l'autocoscienza identitaria (Dall'Oglio 2011a:44-48). Il patriarca melchita, che aveva parlato di una possibile "Chiesa dell'Islam", venne criticato per tale espressione, a causa dell'accostamento dei due termini con il rischio che l'uno fosse inglobato nell'altro (Dall'Oglio 2011a: 45), ma Dall'Oglio tiene a precisare che, se si vedesse in questo una incorporazione, non ci sarebbe nulla di negativo, perché, con l'avvento del Regno di Dio, Cristo incorporerà tutto l'universo. D'altro canto, però, se si pensa a questa "incorporazione" come assimilazione e annientamento dell'altro, Dall'Oglio non la ritiene possibile. Questa idea, infatti, più che portare all'annichilimento dell'altro, vuole condurre all'innamoramento, grazie all'interazione e allo scambio comune (Dall'Oglio 2011a:46-50). L'idea di una "Chiesa dell'Islam", che vive e dialoga con l'altro, esiste già da secoli e si sviluppa in quel Medioriente poliedrico, facendosi carico anche dei problemi relazionali che in questi ultimi decenni si sono acuiti tra le diverse comunità. "Chiesa dell'Islam" o "per l'Islam" è una comunità universale che abbraccia tutti gli uomini, tenendo ben presente la propria identità, ma rendendosi disponibile alla comprensione. L'avvicinamento iniziale è possibile tramite le figure della storia comune, che hanno, però, rappresentazioni diverse nelle confessioni. Ad esempio, l'Abramo biblico è certamente diverso dall'Abramo coranico, come lo è la stessa figura di Cristo, eppure entrambe le figure compaiono in entrambe le tradizioni, con un ruolo particolare di mediazione tra umanità e divinità. Sulla costruzione di un linguaggio nuovo, l'incontro islamo-cristiano non deve temere di cedere al sincretismo, ma deve nutrirsi di scambio, di interazioni teologiche e per questo, secondo Dall'Oglio, non dovrebbe essere un problema – con le dovute cautele e sempre con il discernimento della Chiesa – citare la Bibbia insieme al Corano (Dall'Oglio 2011a: 149-150). Accettare queste posizioni significherebbe aprire la cristianità a nuove esperienze, che potrebbero essere la chiave per disarmare le conflittualità e ricucire anche il tessuto sociale di alcuni territori, particolarmente fragili a causa di controversie e contrapposizioni religiose. L'apertura all'incontro e alla comprensione dell'altro è quello su cui si è

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fondato sia il movimento di Massignon, la *Badaliyya*, sia successivamente la comunità di al-Ḥalil, fondata da padre Paolo Dall’Oglio a Mār Mūsà. Dell’inculturazione di cui il monastero si è fatto promotore scrive lo stesso Dall’Oglio:

La nostra inculturazione vorrebbe superare il folklore degli indumenti, dei tappeti a terra, dei piedi scalzi in chiesa e dell’uso corrente dell’arabo riconosciuto anche come lingua liturgica musulmana (è infatti la lingua dell’universalismo musulmano e non solo concretamente quella della vita quotidiana dei cristiani di qui). Per noi si tratta di essere un seme gettato e un lievito che consenta a tutta la pasta di crescere per essere nutrimento per tante persone. Si tratta di dare testimonianza del mistero di Gesù di Nazaret a favore dei musulmani nell’oggi drammatico, doloroso e contraddittorio del mondo dell’Islam. Escatologicamente vale a dire ai fini del compimento finale del senso della storia umana, il mistero della Chiesa non può che fondersi in uno con quello dell’Islam: tutta l’armonia dell’opera di Dio, in ogni tradizione, verrà alla luce del Sole dell’ultimo giorno (Dall’Oglio 2011a:62).

La comunità di al-Ḥalil diventa lo strumento attraverso il quale questo dialogo religioso tra le due confessioni viene nutrita; i suoi messaggi e gesti non vengono rivolti esclusivamente alla comunità musulmana circostante, ma anche a quella cristiana. Il monastero diventa punto di riferimento per la Chiesa d’Oriente e si pone come obiettivo quello di ridurre l’emigrazione e l’abbandono. Di certo, la guerra civile in corso ha decimato la presenza cristiana nell’area,¹⁵ ma già dai tempi della sua costituzione la comunità di padre Dall’Oglio aveva ben presente che tra le urgenze a cui porre attenzione vi era anche quella dei cristiani arabi che si sentivano abbandonati dalla propria Chiesa e sempre più una minoranza senza voce. Il dialogo, come già riportato, è quindi multidirezionale: non si rivolge al solo fratello musulmano o a quello ebreo, ma anche al cristiano. Per questo motivo, nel 2006 la comunità ha ricevuto il premio della Fondazione euro-mediterranea Anna Lindh per il dialogo tra le culture. La vocazione della comunità è quella di servire il dialogo tra le religioni abramitiche e di promuovere questo avvicinamento al mondo islamico, per continuare a vivere pacificamente nello stesso territorio portando avanti ideali di solidarietà e collaborazione. Un lavoro sempre più complicato, ma vitale, in un momento storico in cui tra le religioni abramitiche sembra-

¹⁵ Secondo le stime di Open Doors, organizzazione che si occupa di monitorare le persecuzioni e i rischi delle comunità cristiane nel mondo, in Siria al momento la popolazione cristiana è del 3%, pari a circa 638000 fedeli (cfr. “Syria”. OpenDoors. <https://www.opendoorsuk.org/persecution/world-watch-list/syria/>. Ultimo accesso 12/07/2022). Prima della rivoluzione, la comunità cristiana, in tutte le sue ritualità, rappresentava circa il 10% della popolazione e Aleppo era considerata una delle città cristiane più importanti (cfr. “Syria’s beleaguered Christians”. BBC. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-22270455>. Ultimo accesso 12/07/2022).

no crearsi sempre più fratture, esacerbate dai conflitti regionali, come quello che ancora oggi si vive in Siria.

5 - Essere “Chiesa dell’Islam” o come praticare ogni giorno l’amicizia con i musulmani

Se la “Chiesa dell’Islam” viene considerata non solo una chiesa territoriale, ma una Chiesa che incontra il fratello musulmano e, senza perdere la propria identità, prega e parla congiuntamente di Dio e con Dio, allora ha bisogno di pratiche che possano manifestare concretamente questo suo mettersi in cammino verso l’altro. L’esperienza personale e spirituale di padre Dall’Oglio lo ha portato, nel corso del suo viaggio da Roma verso il Medioriente, a osservare diversi modi di pregare e di essere cristiano. Nel caleidoscopio di ritualità presenti nel Vicino Oriente il gesuita italiano ha scelto per la sua comunità la Chiesa siro-cattolica che si considera sui iuris, ovvero particolare. Anche se nel 1783 essa si riunisce a quella di Roma, conserva una propria forma di culto liturgico, la propria disciplina sacramentale e la propria legislazione ecclesiastica. Il rito è quello antiocheno, o siriaco occidentale. La lingua della liturgia a Mār Mūsà è quella araba ed è una scelta ben precisa della comunità. Se l’inculturazione passa dal linguaggio, allora l’arabo deve per forza essere il mezzo per eccellenza. Non si tratta di una scelta di convenienza, bensì la ripresa della tradizione passata. Per secoli la lingua religiosa araba è rimasta comune a cristiani e musulmani, poi con il colonialismo la spaccatura, già in atto dal periodo ottomano, è diventata sempre più profonda. A Mār Mūsà, però, la lingua ritorna ad avere un ruolo centrale, diventando uno degli strumenti attraverso i quali si realizzano il dialogo, la comprensione, il rispetto. *Allāh*, la parola araba per indicare Dio, avvicina le due fedi nella preghiera e nella contemplazione. Come scrive Dall’Oglio, “la formula di Mār Mūsà è adatta oggi al contesto delle chiese minoritarie nel mondo islamico e permette di vivere con maggiore speranza la missione cristiana” (Dall’Oglio 2011a: 20). In più aggiunge che, tralasciando qualsiasi valore teologico si voglia dare alla comunità e alla sua missione, ciò che conta è il quotidiano (Dall’Oglio 2011a: 20). Collaborando a stretto contatto e imparando a conoscere e riconoscere l’altro non come opposto, ma come simile e vicino, si creano i presupposti per una migliore e più efficace convivialità. Ma la ritualità orientale non si ferma alla lingua liturgica: occupa anche lo spazio e influenza la gestualità. La chiesa di Mār Mūsà non ha sedie, ma tappeti. Riprendendo tradizioni cristiane antiche e orientali, si prega per terra, spesso inginocchiati a contatto con il suolo, a volte in cerchio, per rendere ancora più evidente la condivisione della preghiera. Ogni giorno, in queste scelte di liturgia, preghiere e vicinanza alla “arabità”, Mār Mūsà accorcia la distanza con l’Islam. Nella Comunità, sembra esserci il superamento del messaggio paolino di incarnazione e di quello gesuitico di farsi parte della località per portare il messaggio evangelico. Qui non si cercano proseliti, qui si cercano amici, compagni, fratelli nella preghiera. Non si tenta di convincere

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nessuno che Cristo è “la via, la verità e la vita” (Giovanni 14:6), ma si vive il messaggio di armonia e amore per il prossimo di quest’ultimo pienamente e concretamente. Nella visione della comunità, se Dio ama tutti gli uomini, ama anche i musulmani e allora come figli di Dio e seguendo il modello di Cristo, bisogna che i cristiani facciano lo stesso. La “Chiesa dell'Islam” o “per l'Islam” non è quindi solo una Chiesa che si avvicina all'Islam nella lingua e nella ritualità, ma è una Chiesa che colma le distanze. Come spiega Suor Carol Cooke Eid, monaca della comunità e oggi responsabile del monastero di San Salvatore a Cori, sede della comunità di al-Ḥalīl in Italia, la Chiesa dell'Islam:

È una Chiesa per l'Islam e non contro. Nel movimento dell'incarnazione, San Paolo diceva che era ebreo con gli ebrei, greco con i greci... E padre Paolo e noi vogliamo essere musulmani con i musulmani nel senso che vogliamo incarnare l'amore di Cristo, di Dio per l'Islam. E concretamente, questo significa che la lingua araba, che la lingua liturgica dell'Islam diventa la nostra lingua comunitaria. La scelta di padre Paolo era la liturgia più vicina allo spirito della preghiera musulmana, nella sua semplicità... Poi i tappeti in chiesa e nelle nostre cappelle dappertutto... l'ospitalità. A Mār Mūṣà i musulmani del vicinato ci considerano il loro monastero e non dimentichiamo che è un monastero cristiano in mezzo al deserto e fa anche parte dell'orizzonte simbolico dell'Islam. Vengono i musulmani a visitarci, a chiedere delle preghiere, delle benedizioni e ci parlano delle loro difficoltà. Poi alcuni vengono a chiedere a Dio un miracolo, in genere per avere figli, alcuni ritornano a ringraziare perché l'hanno ottenuto. Quindi siamo lì anche per loro, non soltanto per i cristiani. E questo in modo concreto è quello che vogliamo essere Chiesa dell'Islam, quindi per l'Islam.¹⁶

Da questa testimonianza risulta chiaro come il monastero sia considerato dalla comunità cristiana e da quella musulmana come un proprio luogo di preghiera e nella sfida del dialogo è un dato fondamentale. Padre Dall’Oglio ne capì l’importanza già negli anni Ottanta e diventa ancora più chiaro oggi, a dieci anni dall’inizio della guerra civile, durante la quale Mār Mūṣà ha continuato a essere un punto di riferimento per i fedeli, rinsaldando la missione. È doveroso menzionare, seppur in poche righe, il grande lavoro fatto da padre Dall’Oglio nel sostegno alle istanze democratiche del popolo siriano nel

¹⁶ Intervista a suor Carol Cooke Eid, monaca di origine libanese-tedesca della Comunità di al-Ḥalīl. Di famiglia cristiano-maronita, suor Carol è entrata nella Comunità nel 2010 e oggi è responsabile del monastero di San Salvatore a Cori, Latina, sede italiana della comunità. L’intervista, tenutasi il 13 dicembre 2021 in lingua italiana, ha toccato diversi argomenti che in parte erano stati stabiliti con la testimone tramite scambio di e-mail. L’intervista semi-strutturata, tramite software di videochiamate online, ha avuto una durata di circa 45 minuti di cui è disponibile sia una trascrizione, sia un file audio.

lontano 2011 e nella sua missione di megafono in Occidente. Si ricordi, tra le tante, la sua richiesta a Kofi Annan, allora inviato speciale dell'Onu, di una maggiore attenzione sulla condizione della Siria per garantire la protezione della popolazione civile (Dall'Oglio 2011b:153-155). L'impegno per i siriani di padre Dall'Oglio e in particolar modo della comunità di al-Ḥalil è continuato in questi difficili anni anche dopo la scomparsa del gesuita e, nonostante alcune incursioni jihadiste, il monastero di Mār Mūsà non ha subito danni o particolari aggressioni.¹⁷ Altra sorte è invece toccata al monastero di San Giuliano d'Emesa (in arabo dayr Mār Elyan), il secondo monastero della comunità, risalente al V secolo, che sorgeva nella città di al-Qaryatayn. Diventato la casa di padre Mourad dal 2000, qui i monaci e le monache della comunità si ritrovavano, lontano dai pellegrini e visitatori di Mār Mūsà, per svolgere parte dei propri esercizi spirituali. Durante i primi anni della guerra civile siriana, il monastero di Mār Elyan divenne rifugio per alcune famiglie di profughi, cristiani e musulmani, ma l'avanzata di Daesh dettò la fine delle attività della comunità e dello stesso monastero. Nel maggio del 2015, padre Mourad e il priore Butros Hanna vennero fatti prigionieri con altri 250 cristiani della città. Per tre mesi il co-fondatore della comunità rimase prigioniero per poi essere trasferito nella città di Palmira e venne rilasciato successivamente insieme ad altri ostaggi cristiani.¹⁸ Le sorti del monastero furono diverse: nell'agosto del 2015, infatti, venne raso al suolo dagli uomini di Daesh che, oltre a distruggere le pareti, dispersero le ossa del Santo, conservate per secoli nella tomba lì presente.¹⁹ Anche se un anno più tardi la città venne liberata da Daesh, il monastero non venne più ricostruito. La comunità, così, perdeva una delle sue sedi più importanti e punto di riferimento nel territorio mediorientale. Gli altri due monasteri oggi esistenti oltre a Mār Mūsà sono quelli di San Salvatore a Cori (Latina), in cui i monaci e le monache trovano ospitalità nel corso dei loro soggiorni in

¹⁷ Il 29 luglio 2013 Padre Dall'Oglio, ritornato in Siria dopo essere stato espulso nel 2012 dal regime per le sue posizioni politiche e l'appoggio alle istanze democratiche della Rivoluzione, scomparve nella città di Raqqa, da poco diventata capitale di Daesh. I suoi accompagnatori raccontano che quella mattina il gesuita si sia recato al quartier generale di Daesh, al centro della città, probabilmente per incontrare alcuni capi dello Stato Islamico e non ne sia più uscito. Di lui si sono perse le tracce e ancora oggi amici e familiari cercano la verità e chiedono che si tenga alta l'attenzione sulla sua scomparsa. Per maggiori informazioni sulle posizioni politiche espresse da Padre Dall'Oglio, sul suo impegno per la Rivoluzione e sulla sua espulsione dalla Siria nel 2012 si rinvia a Dall'Oglio (2013), mentre per una più esaustiva narrazione della vicenda e scomparsa di Dall'Oglio vanno citati i due libri del vaticanista e amico del gesuita, Riccardo Cristiano, oggi presidente dell'Associazione Giornalisti Amici di Padre Paolo Dall'Oglio: Cristiano (2017, 2020).

¹⁸ Sull'esperienza del rapimento, padre Mourad ha scritto un libro, che è anche l'occasione per ripercorrere la storia della sua vita, della sua vocazione e la vita nella comunità di cui è stato co-fondatore (Mourad 2019).

¹⁹ Cfr. "Islamic State in Syria Demolishes Ancient Mar Elian Monastery". BBC. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-34016809>. Ultimo accesso 06/10/2022.

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Italia, per lo più durante i periodi di studio nella vicina Roma, e il monastero di Maryam al-‘Adrā’, nel Kurdistan iracheno, diventato riferimento per le monache e i monaci e per le famiglie cristiane e musulmane che, sfollate a seguito dell’invasione di Daesh, hanno trovato riparo soprattutto negli anni dal 2014 al 2017 (O’Neill 2020:129-131).

Più di qualsiasi altro luogo, però, oggi più che prima, Mār Mūsà è lo spazio in cui si annodano i fili, tra Chiesa contemporanea, tradizione monastica orientale e mondo islamico, e dove si cerca di creare un ambiente fertile per una nuova dimensione religiosa, che rispetti e rispecchi anche un nuovo modo di essere umanità. Mār Mūsà con le sue pratiche, la sua liturgia e le sue preghiere vuole essere esempio di una Chiesa che cammina verso l’altro e che non per questo perde la propria identità, ma rafforza la propria fede. Come racconta Suor Carol Cooke Eid:

padre Paolo ci diceva “Non pensare che soltanto voi avete qualcosa da dare all’Islam. Ma anche l’Islam ha qualcosa da dare a voi. Dio ha dato un regalo all’Islam, ai musulmani per voi e quindi c’è un’apertura a questa dimensione di Dio che si rifà e si rivela ancora più grande attraverso l’altro.” [...] Io cerco di rimanere aperta a quello che Dio ha dato all’altro, in questo caso il musulmano – ma può essere anche un’altra religione – come regalo per tutti gli altri; quindi, ognuno di noi ha qualcosa da dare agli altri, qualcosa di molto particolare.²⁰

Dando dignità alla religione dell’altro, si può avere qualcosa indietro di valore; il dono di cui parla suor Carol non solo fortifica la fede di ciascuno, qualunque essa sia, ma rinsalta l’amicizia e l’armonia. Fa bene al singolo e fa bene alle comunità. In questa visione, così aperta all’altro e pronta a ricevere da chiunque nuovi strumenti per conoscere il divino, la “Chiesa dell’Islam” si rende cattolica, ovvero universale, e non solo nel suo senso propriamente etimologico; l’esperienza spirituale di padre Dall’Oglio e della comunità di al-Ḥalīl diventano un esempio extra-ordinario di come vivere e praticare pienamente il Vangelo.

6 - Conclusioni

Nelle pagine precedenti si è visto come parte della teologia riguardante l’incontro tra Islam e Cristianesimo muova dalla figura di Abramo, padre, patriarca e “amico di Dio”. Nella sua discendenza, che la storia vuole divergente, si ritrova ugualmente la salvezza: tanto il popolo degli eletti quanto il popolo degli esclusi, tanto i figli di Isacco quanto quelli di Ismaele vengono ugualmente benedetti da Dio e per loro c’è possibilità di salvezza. Questa meravigliosa speranza, su cui si basa anche una parte del pensiero

²⁰ Intervista a suor Carol Cooke Eid, 13/12/2021.

di Dall’Oglio, permette di vedere nel fratello ebreo e in quello musulmano un simile e non più un diverso. Tutti, ugualmente figli di Dio e salvati grazie a Dio, possono aspirare all’elezione pur percorrendo strade diverse. La congiunzione di questi cammini in uno comune diventa possibile grazie alla pratica dell’armonia e del dialogo costruttivo, non ridotto al semplicistico ritrovamento di analogie, ma nelle comuni percezioni e aspirazioni, nell’andare oltre alla ricerca del dono che Dio ha consegnato nell’esperienza spirituale di ciascuno. È, quindi, un dinamismo che non si ferma ad elencare i principi e i riferimenti comuni, ma scava nella religiosità dell’altro per comprenderlo e magari comprendersi meglio. Padre Paolo Dall’Oglio, nella semplicità e profondità del suo parlare e del suo operare, prova a rendere effettiva questa amicizia con il fratello ebreo e quello musulmano e crea una tenda sotto la quale confrontarsi e ritrovarsi. Il monastero di Mār Mūsā e la comunità che ne nasce diventano l’emblema della possibilità di questo incontro, con il rito siro-cattolico così vicino alla “arabità” e ai primordi del Cristianesimo. Padre Paolo decide di partire per il Medio Oriente, di farsi arabo tra gli arabi e di amare l’Islam come cristiano, perché questa operazione, per alcuni paradossale, diventa possibile solo applicando al proprio sguardo quello di Cristo che, nella tradizione cristiana, tutto ama e tutto rispetta. Ecco che la “Chiesa dell’Islam” diventa reale, una chiesa che, come ripete suor Carol Cooke Eid, è una Chiesa per e non una Chiesa contro.

Ma il dialogo pacifico e costruttivo tra Islam e Cristianesimo non è solo possibile, è già una realtà, come testimonia il documento di Abu Dhabi sulla Fratellanza Umana per la pace mondiale e la convivenza comune, firmato nel 2019 da Papa Francesco e dal Grande Imam di al-Azhar, Ahmad al-Tayyib (Papa Francesco & al-Tayyib 2019). Tuttavia, quello che conta più degli incontri tra i rappresentanti religiosi è il sentire popolare, e se Mār Mūsā per cristiani e musulmani è un luogo di comune preghiera e ritrovo, allora questo basta a continuare su questa strada.

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WORKING PAPER

Transplanter, coexister... normaliser ? La transplantation d'organes entre Israélien·ne·s et Palestinien·ne·s dans la presse locale

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ABSTRACT

This working paper is part of ongoing doctoral research in anthropology which focuses on posthumous organ transplantation in the Israeli-Palestinian space. It constitutes a comparative study of Palestinian and Israeli newspaper articles dealing with recent cases of posthumous organ transplants between Palestinians and Israelis. Through the thematic and discursive analysis of fifteen online articles, the study aims to explore the type of discourse mobilized by the local press on this subject. Our study highlights how the media coverage of these cases reveals and reproduces certain ideologies and social representations. The Israeli journalistic discourse sees in these cases an example of peaceful coexistence and, implicitly, an instrument of normalization of relations between the two societies. This idea of coexistence, which does not take into account the discriminations and the colonial power relations between the two societies, is problematized in the discourses of Palestinians. If Palestinians share values of mutual respect and humanity, they also claim recognition and dignity.

KEYWORDS

Israël-Palestine / transplantation d'organes / analyse de presse / normalisation

1 - Introduction

Le présent *working paper* s'inscrit dans le cadre d'une recherche doctorale en cours sur la transplantation posthume d'organes dans l'espace israélo-palestinien. La recherche examine les relations entre les dimensions affectives, éthiques, sociales et politiques de cette pratique. Adoptant une perspective anthropologique, j'accorderai une attention toute particulière aux transplantations entre Palestinien·ne·s et Israélien·ne·s¹

¹ Dans nos recherches, nous nommons “Palestinien·ne·s” tou·te·s les habitant·e·s et personnes issu·e·s des territoires autrefois inclus dans Palestine mandataire ; “Israélien·ne·s” les Israélien·ne·s juif·ve·s ; “Palestinien·ne·s-Israélien·ne·s” les Palestinien·ne·s titulaires de la citoyenneté israélienne, c'est-à-dire ceux·celles qui sont resté·e·s dans les territoires devenus Israël en 1948, ainsi que leurs descendant·e·s.

à la lumière du contexte colonial (Séguin 2016) et des tensions politiques entre les deux communautés.

J'ai intégré le programme doctoral de l'Université d'Aix-Marseille en France en novembre 2020, en pleine pandémie de Covid-19. En raison des restrictions sanitaires en vigueur dans le monde entier, pendant un an et demi il m'a été impossible de commencer mes recherches de terrain en Israël et en Cisjordanie. Cela m'a poussée, sur la suggestion de ma directrice de thèse, à considérer les espaces en ligne comme un terrain d'investigation. Le traitement de la transplantation d'organes dans les journaux en ligne sera donc au cœur de cet article.

2 - Contexte

Dans l'espace israélo-palestinien, la pratique des transplantations d'organes varie en fonction de la zone considérée. En Cisjordanie, bien que les transplantations d'organes soient prévues et réglementées depuis 2017, aucun programme de donations posthumes n'a été mis en place et les donations de vivants sont encore peu pratiquées. L'implémentation manquée de ces programmes est en partie due à l'occupation israélienne. Cette dernière fragmente le territoire et rend difficile l'approvisionnement en personnel et en équipement médicaux.

En Israël, le système des transplantations posthumes est géré au niveau public et national et il est réservé aux seul·e·s citoyen·ne·s israélienn·ne·s (les Palestinien·ne·s de Cisjordanie en sont donc exclu·e·s). Les Palestinien·ne·s de nationalité israélienne forment plus de 20% de la population concernée,² ce qui permet des transplantations mutuelles entre les deux communautés. La loi qui encadre ces opérations date de 2008 et est née d'une volonté de lutter contre le trafic d'organes, à une époque où Israël était un centre névralgique de ce marché noir : les Israélien·ne·s, remboursé·e·s par leur assurance maladie, pouvaient se déplacer à l'étranger, souvent dans des pays pauvres, pour acheter et se faire transplanter des organes (Scheper-Hughes 2011). Le débat sur la réglementation des transplantations s'est intensifié suite à des révélations concernant l'hôpital médico-légal d'Abou Kabir, qui de la seconde moitié des années 1980 à 2012 prélevait et revendait illégalement des organes des patient·e·s décédé·e·s. Nombre de ceux·celles-ci étaient des Palestinien·ne·s de Cisjordanie tué·e·s dans des affrontements avec l'armée israélienne (Scheper-Hughes 2011).³

3 - Méthodologie

² "Monthly Bulletin of Statistics". Central Bureau of Statistics. <https://www.cbs.gov.il/en/publications/Pages/2022/Monthly-Bulletin-of%20Statistics-June-2022.aspx>. Consulté le 05/10/2022.

³ Sur la pratique de la détention des corps palestiniens par l'armée israélienne, voir Latte Abdallah 2017.

Ce *working paper* examine les types de discours mobilisés par la presse en ligne autour des cas les plus récents de transplantations entre Palestinien·ne·s et Israélien·ne·s. À partir d'articles extraits de journaux palestiniens et israéliens, il s'agit plus particulièrement d'identifier la représentation de ces récents cas dans une perspective comparative.

Dans le cadre de cette étude, nous avons pris en considération les cas survenus entre novembre 2020 et novembre 2021.

Notre étude se propose d'identifier l'emploi de certaines stratégies linguistiques et discursives dans la presse locale et d'analyser leur signification sociale et politique. Conçu pour pointer des liens entre langue, discours, société et politique, ce type d'analyse s'inspire, d'une part, de l'anthropologie linguistique (French 2017), d'autre part, de l'approche critique de l'analyse du discours (la *Critical Discourses Analysis*, CDA).

Transversale à plusieurs disciplines (Van Dijk 2015:467), la CDA s'intéresse aux interpénétrations entre langue et politique. Elle « examine comment les textes représentent et construisent la réalité au sein d'un système idéologique spécifique (un système de valeurs) à travers des messages implicites basés sur ce qui est dit et ce qui est laissé non-dit » (Heros 2009:173). Le discours peut en effet révéler, « mettre en œuvre, confirmer, légitimer, reproduire ou contester » (Van Dijk 2015:467) les relations de pouvoir, les idéologies et les épistémologies dominantes partagées et incorporées dans une société. Cette approche critique a déjà été appliquée au discours journalistique (Van Dijk 2015 ; Sivandi Nasab & Dowlatabadi 2016 ; Ulum 2016). Il en ressort que la manière d'aborder les événements n'est pas neutre, mais témoigne au contraire de biais diversement conscients. Les journaux décrivent les événements en fonction de « perspectives politiques et sociales » spécifiques : « les médias de masse sont imprégnés d'idéologies cachées et de structures de discours manipulées » (Sivandi Nasab & Dowlatabadi 2016:94).

Notre étude emprunte également des outils à l'analyse thématique (Braun & Clarke 2006:80), notamment le codage, technique servant à identifier et étiqueter des thèmes dans un ensemble de données.

L'analyse proposée portera sur les leitmotsifs thématiques des articles analysés. Elle s'intéressera également à certaines des stratégies linguistiques et discursives de ces articles (choix lexicaux, stylistiques ou syntaxiques).

4 - Collecte des données

Avant d'analyser les motifs thématiques des articles, nous avons cherché à comprendre le degré de traitement des donations mutuelles d'organes dans la presse locale. Le choix des sujets d'actualité peut en effet révéler les intérêts et les idéologies partagés d'une société. Nous avons donc effectué des recherches par mots-clés sur le moteur de recherche Google, notamment : “transplantation d’organes entre Israélien·ne·s et Pa-

lestiniens·ne·s” ou “donations d’organes entre Arabes et Juif·ve·s”, mots que nous avons traduits à la fois en anglais, en hébreu et en arabe. Il en ressort que ces transplantations ont été traitées par la presse, mais seulement dans les cas où les personnes donneuses avaient été tuées dans des violences intercommunautaires.

Nous avons ainsi pu trouver deux cas médiatisés, respectivement celui d’un donneur israélien, Yigal Yehoshua, vers une femme palestinienne, Randa Aweis, et celui d’un donneur palestinien, Mohammad Kiwan, à cinq familles israéliennes juives.

Les deux cas sont très rapprochés dans le temps : Yigal Yehoshua est mort le 17 mai 2021 et Mohammad Kiwan deux jours après, le 19 mai 2021. Leurs décès surviennent en mai 2021, période de crise politique et militaire entre Palestiniens·ne·s et Israéliens·ne·s.

Cette crise s'est déclenchée le 6 mai 2021, avec des protestations du côté palestinien à Jérusalem Est en réaction à la décision de la Cour suprême d'Israël d'expulser six familles palestiniennes du quartier de Sheikh Jarrah – territoire palestinien sous occupation militaire israélienne. Les manifestations ont été violemment réprimées par l'armée israélienne. Les affrontements, impliquant également des nationalistes juif·ve·s, ont provoqué plusieurs centaines de blessé·e·s. Après l'expiration de l'ultimatum du Hamas exigeant le retrait des forces de sécurité israéliennes du complexe du mont du Temple et de Sheikh Jarrah, des roquettes ont été lancées par les forces armées palestiniennes en direction d'Israël. Ce dernier a alors initié une campagne de onze jours de frappes contre Gaza, détruisant des dizaines d'écoles, d'hôpitaux, de logements et de centres commerciaux. Simultanément, le Hamas et le Jihad Islamique ont lancé des centaines de roquettes vers les territoires israéliens à proximité. Au moins 256 Palestiniens·ne·s et 12 Israéliens·ne·s ont été tué·e·s dans ces bombardements.

Des protestations se sont déclenchées parallèlement en Cisjordanie, où une trentaine de Palestiniens·ne·s ont été tué·e·s par l'armée israélienne. Des émeutes et des manifestations ont également eu lieu en Israël, en particulier dans les villes dites “mixtes”.⁴ Des manifestant·e·s Palestiniens·ne·s et Israéliens·ne·s ont jeté des pierres et incendié des immeubles et des voitures. Ces affrontements ont causé la mort de deux Israéliens et de deux Palestiniens, parmi lesquels Yigal Yehoshua et Mohammad Kiwan.

Yigal Yehoshua, 56 ans, résident israélien de la “ville mixte” de Lod/al-Lydd,⁵ est décédé des suites d'une blessure à la tête causée par un jet de brique. Selon l'enquête,

⁴ Le terme de “villes mixtes” est souvent utilisé pour indiquer les villes historiques palestiniennes qui précèdent la création d'Israël et y furent intégrées après la guerre de 1948. « En Israël, une ville est considérée comme “mixte” si, selon la définition du Bureau central de la statistique (CBS), au moins 10 % de ses habitants sont enregistrés en tant qu’“Arabes”. Ces localités résultent de la situation prévalant à la suite de la guerre de 1948 » (Morvan & Montereescu 2020:23), qui a vu le massacre et l'expulsion de milliers de Palestiniens·ne·s par les forces israéliennes, ainsi que l'immigration massive et la colonisation juive (Morvan & Montereescu 2020:23).

⁵ Selon la dénomination en hébreu ou en arabe.

celle-ci a été lancée par des manifestants Palestiniens visant son véhicule à coups de pierres. Avec le consentement de sa famille, les organes de Yehoshua ont été donnés à cinq patient·e·s dont quatre Israélien·ne·s Juif·ve·s. L'un de ses reins a été transplanté à Randa Aweis, Palestinienne chrétienne âgée de 58 ans.

Mohammad Kiwan, âgé de 17 ans, habitait Umm al-Fahm, une ville en territoire israélien habitée presque exclusivement par des Palestinien·ne·s-Israélien·ne·s. Il est décédé d'une blessure par balle à la tête. Selon la famille, la police israélienne aurait tiré sur l'adolescent alors qu'il se trouvait dans une voiture, près des manifestations aux alentours d'Umm al-Fahm. Les organes de Kiwan ont été donnés avec le consentement de la famille à six patient·e·s, dont cinq Israélien·ne·s juif·ve·s.

5 - Analyse des données

Les articles de la presse palestinienne et israélienne en ligne traitant de ces cas sont au nombre de 62,⁶ dont 16 extraits de la presse palestinienne⁷ et 46 de la presse israélienne.⁸ La plupart des articles sur Mohammad Kiwan et Yigal Yehoshua évoquent seulement leur mort. Ceux consacrés à leurs donations d'organes sont nettement moins nombreux (15 articles).

Dans les principaux journaux palestiniens consultés, nous n'avons pas trouvé d'articles sur le cas d'Yigal Yehoshua. Le don d'organes de Mohammad Kiwan est également passé sous silence, sauf dans un journal à faible écho,⁹ *Madar News*, et dans le journal Palestinien-Israélien *Kul al-Arab*.

Dans l'ensemble des journaux israéliens, l'assassinat de Yigal Yehoshua occupe une place importante (36 articles). Les articles qui détaillent le don d'organes de Yehoshua sont moins nombreux (8 articles) que ceux qui traitent seulement de sa mort (26

⁶ Il est possible que certains articles aient échappé à notre recherche. Certains articles, comme ceux de l'agence de presse *Wafa*, qui ont été repris par d'autres journaux, ont été comptabilisés une seule fois. Les versions traduites des articles originaux n'ont pas non plus été prises en compte dans cette étude.

⁷ Les journaux cisjordaniens dans lesquels nous avons trouvé des articles pertinents sont *al-Quds*, *al-Hayat al-Jadida*, *Palestine News & Info Agency (WAFA)*, *Donia Al-Watan*, *Arab48* et *Madar News*. *Kul al-Arab*, le principal périodique palestinien en langue arabe publié en Israël, compte également des articles sur les cas de Kiwan et de Yehoshua.

⁸ Dans la presse israélienne, les journaux traitant de ces cas sont *Israel Hayom*, *Ynet* (la version en ligne du journal *Yedioth Ahronoth*), *Maariv*, *Haaretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, *Times of Israel*, *Mako* et *Walla*.

⁹ Le lectorat de chaque journal a été évalué en croisant les données des sites de statistique *4 International Media and Newspapers* (<https://www.4imn.com/il/>). Consulté le 21/11/2021) et *Hyperstat* (<https://hypestat.com>). Consulté le 21/11/2021) et les résultats du sondage *Kantara Media - TGI Survey* ("TGI Survey Asserts Israel Hayom's Lead as Country's Most Popular Daily". *IsraelHayom*. <https://www.israelhayom.com/2020/01/30/tgi-survey-asserts-israel-hayoms-leads-countrys-most-popular-daily/>). Consulté le 21/11/2021).

articles). Beaucoup moins d'articles traitent du cas de Mohammad Kiwan (11 articles, dont deux où il est cité avec Yigal Yehoshua). Enfin, presque tous les journaux israéliens traitant de la mort de Mohammad Kiwan ont également évoqué la donation de ses organes à des familles israéliennes (6 articles au total sur ce sujet).

L'analyse thématique a été conduite sur les 15 articles qui mentionnent les dons d'organes de Yigal Yehoshua et Mohammad Kiwan. N'en ayant trouvé que deux dans la presse palestinienne, et un seul publié en Cisjordanie, nous avons également analysé trois articles extraits de trois journaux cisjordaniens sur la mort de Mohammad Kiwan, bien qu'ils ne mentionnent pas le don de ses organes.

5.1 - Choix lexicaux, stylistiques et syntaxiques

Du point de vue des choix lexicaux, la plupart des journaux israéliens emploient les dénominations Juif·ve·s/Arabes (*Yahoudim/’Aravim*)¹⁰ pour désigner respectivement les Israélien·ne·s Juif·ve·s et les Palestinien·ne·s de nationalité israélienne. Les termes “Arabes” ou “Arabes-Israélien·ne·s” ne sont pas neutres politiquement : ils nient l'appartenance des personnes à l'identité nationale palestinienne et leurs liens historiques avec cette région, en les rattachant à une identité arabe plus générale et hors-sol (Pinson 2008).¹¹ Pour définir ces deux groupes, les journaux palestiniens utilisent aussi bien les termes de “Juif·ve·s/Arabes” (*‘Arab/Yahūd*) que le terme de “Palestinien·ne·s”, absent des journaux israéliens.

Les choix de la presse palestinienne pour désigner Israël en tant que territoire sont également précis : “la Palestine de l'intérieur” (*al-dāhil al-filastīnī*) ;¹² “les zones occupées¹³ de 1948” (*al-manātiq al-muhtalla ‘ām tamāniya wa-arba‘īn*).¹⁴ Ces dénominations

¹⁰ Pour la transcription de l'hébreu en alphabet latin, nous avons suivi les indications de la *Society of Biblical Literature* – transcription pour “usage général” (Society of Biblical Literature 2014:26-28).

¹¹ Voir aussi “In the Firing Line. The Arabs – or the Palestinians – of Israel”. Rusi. <https://rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/firing-line-arabs-or-palestinians-israel>. Consulté le 04/04/2022.

¹² “A’ilat al-ṣahīd Muḥammad Kīwān min Umm ḥal-Faḥm tatabar‘a bi-ā‘dā’ihī li-6 ašḥās ‘arab wa-yahūd”. [La famille du martyr Mohammad Kiwan d’Umm al-Fahm fait don de ses membres à 6 arabes et juifs]. Kul al-Arab. https://www.alarab.com/Article/994350?fbclid=IwAR_0ljMoZ5GnGl7QWsZKgETI80BoHO0R8V1GWGaqYU9EOTOKcTpm4c9vC6Po. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

¹³ 1948 est l'année de la création d'Israël, connue par les Palestinien·ne·s comme la *Nakba* (“Nakba”). Treccani. [https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/nakba_\(Dizionario-di-Storia\)/](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/nakba_(Dizionario-di-Storia)/). Consulté le 07/03/2022).

¹⁴ “Min ‘Ayn al-Hilwa ilà Umm al-Faḥm: tadāmun šabābī ma‘a ‘a’ilat al-ṣahīd Kīwān”. [D’Ain al-Hilweh à Umm al-Fahm : solidarité des jeunes avec la famille du martyr Kiwan]. Arab48. <https://cutt.ly/T0DZt0h>. Consulté le 10/01/2022. Nous avons traduit les titres et les extraits des articles en arabe, en hébreu et en anglais.

indiquent la non-reconnaissance de la légitimité de l'Etat d'Israël sur ces territoires ainsi que sa nature de force occupante aux yeux des Palestinien·ne·s.

Ces choix lexicaux caractérisent exemplairement deux narrations, israélienne et palestinienne, qui s'opposent en contexte colonial. Cette opposition linguistique et narrative est révélatrice des enjeux de légitimité, de souveraineté et de construction de l'identité nationale. Celles-ci se jouent en effet ici dans la production des représentations des faits.

Du point de vue des choix stylistiques, les journaux palestiniens et israéliens relaient souvent des extraits de déclarations et d'entretiens conduits avec des personnes impliquées dans les évènements. Ces extraits peuvent véhiculer indirectement la ligne politique des journaux, en faisant “parler les autres à leur place”. Les citations servent aussi à « affirmer obliquement des “faits” qui peuvent ne pas être vrais » (Van Dijk 2018:473). Quand, par exemple, le journal israélien *Ynet* rapporte les mots du maire de Lod/al-Lydd « Pourquoi t'ont-ils tué, Yigal ? Seulement parce que tu étais Juif »,¹⁵ il affirme implicitement que les manifestants palestiniens auraient attaqué la voiture de la victime par pur racisme ou antisémitisme,¹⁶ alors que les raisons des émeutes sont plus complexes.

L'affirmation de faits potentiellement fallacieux se fait aussi par implications et présuppositions (Van Dijk 2018:473) : c'est le cas du journal israélien *Israel Hayom* qui qualifie Yigal Yehoshua de « première victime juive » des émeutes,¹⁷ suggérant qu'il y en aurait eu d'autres – affirmation nullement avérée au moment de la publication de l'article.¹⁸

Du point de vue de l'analyse syntaxique du discours, les journaux israéliens qui traitent de la mort de Mohammad Kiwan omettent de dire *qui* l'a tué, et ce à travers des

¹⁵ “Akhiv shel Yigal Yehoshua shenertsah ba-lints’ be-Lod safad ba-halvayah: « Heemantha be-do-qyom ». [Le frère de Yigal Yehoshua, assassiné lors d'un lynchage à Lod, a fait l'éloge funèbre : « Tu croyais en la coexistence »]. *Ynet*. <https://www.ynet.co.il/news/article/HktfTUZFd>. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

¹⁶ Dans cette recherche, nous utilisons le concept d’“antisémitisme” dans le sens courant de préjugé, de peur ou de haine envers les Juif·ve·s, bien que l'utilisation des termes “sémite” ou “sémitique” comme synonymes de “juif·ve” soit impropre (“L'equivoco del semitismo e dell'antisemitismo”. *Eurasia*. <https://www.eurasia-rivista.com/lequivoco-del-semitismo-e-dellantisemitismo/>. Consulté le 04/04/2022).

¹⁷ “Yigal Yehoshua, shenertsah be-Lod, huva limnoukhhot”. [Yigal Yehoshua, assassiné à Lod, a été inhumé]. *Israel Hayom*. <https://www.israelhayom.co.il/news/local/article/1120442>. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

¹⁸ Une vingtaine de jours après la mort de Yigal Yehoshua, les émeutes en Israël feront une autre victime juive (“Israeli Space Scientist Hurt in Riot Dies of Injuries”. AP News. <https://apnews.com/article/middle-east-israel-health-injuries-7e4ccec26efcd6a026844ceab30d896b>. Consulté le 11/04/2022).

tournures de phrases passives et de nominalisations :¹⁹ « Un garçon *abattu* dans une voiture à Umm al-Fahm »,²⁰ « Muhammad Mahameed, 17 ans, *a reçu une balle* dans la tête »,²¹ « un étudiant de premier plan *abattu* lors de la manifestation ».²² Comme Van Dijk (2018:474) le précise d'ailleurs, « les structures de phrases passives et les nominalisations peuvent être utilisées pour cacher ou minimiser les actions violentes ou autres actions négatives des agents de l'État (comme l'armée ou la police) ». A cet égard, les journaux palestiniens sont plus explicites : ils affirment comme avéré le fait que le jeune Kiwan a été tué par la police israélienne (ex. « Jeune d'Umm al-Fahm tué par des tirs *de la police israélienne* »).²³

5.2 - Analyse thématique

À travers l'analyse thématique, des motifs récurrents ont pu être repérés dans la presse palestinienne, d'un côté, et israélienne, de l'autre.

En ce qui concerne la presse palestinienne, un des motifs récurrents est celui du « martyr » (*šahīd*), employé pour définir Mohammad Kiwan. Cette appellation est plus largement utilisée par les Palestinien·ne·s pour identifier tou·te·s les mort·e·s dans le conflit israélo-palestinien. À travers la voix des proches du jeune, la mort de Kiwan est décrite comme un « acte criminel ».²⁴ Elle s'inscrit dans l'ensemble des « crimes de guerre » (*garā'im al-harb*) perpétrés par Israël contre les Palestinien·ne·s. Ainsi, plusieurs journaux rapportent un extrait du communiqué de la famille de Kiwan et de la municipalité d'Umm al-Fahm. Ces derniers condamnent « l'assassinat de notre fils et la police israélienne » et ils considèrent ce meurtre « comme faisant partie des *crimes de guerre* commis par les tyrans d'Israël à Gaza, à Sheikh Jarrah, dans la mosquée Al-Aqsa

¹⁹ La nominalisation est la transformation d'une phrase verbale en phrase nominale.

²⁰ “Mishpakhtho shel han’ar shenourah lamaveth be-rekhvo be-Omm al-Fahem thermah eth averav: « Ts’ad mithbaqesh ». [La famille d'un garçon abattu dans une voiture à Umm al-Fahm a fait don de ses organes : « Une étape nécessaire »]. Mako. https://www.mako.co.il/news-israel/2021_q2/Article-5d02548cea88971027.htm?Partner=searchResults. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

²¹ “Aivarav shel Mohammad ben ha-17 shenorah be-Omm al-Fahem houshthelou bi-6 Yisra’lim”. [Les organes de Mohammad, 17 ans, qui a été abattu à Umm al-Fahm ont été plantés chez 6 israéliens], Ynet. <https://www.ynet.co.il/health/article/BkCy0Pvtd>. Consulté le 17/01/2022. Nous soulignons.

²² Nous soulignons. La structure syntaxique de ces phrases est également passive en hébreu. “Hatalmid hamitstayen shenourah be-afghanoth be-Omm al-Fahem hitsil 5 Yehoudim leahar motho”. [Un étudiant de premier plan abattu lors des manifestations d'Umm al-Fahm a sauvé 5 juifs après sa mort]. Walla. <https://news.walla.co.il/item/3437130>. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

²³ “Istišhād fatā min Umm al-Fahm muta’atiran bi-iṣābatihī bi-raṣāṣ al-ṣurṭa al-isrā’iliyya”. [Jeune d'Umm al-Fahm tué par des tirs de la police israélienne]. Wafa. <https://wafa.ps/Pages/Details/24554>. Consulté le 10/01/2022. Nous soulignons.

²⁴ “A’īlat āl-ṣahīd Kīwān: « al-Mu’assasa al-isrā’iliyya lā turīdunā an nahtaḡga... Muḥammad u’dima midāniyyan ». Arab48. <https://cutt.ly/M0DKc9I>. Consulté le 10/01/2022.

et dans l’Intérieur palestinien. [...] L’assassinat de notre fils Mohammad, fils d’Umm al-Fahm, et de Mousa Hassouna, fils de Lod,²⁵ n’est qu’un exemple des *politiques meurtrières* pratiquées par l’occupation israélienne au quotidien envers les Palestiniens·ne·s ».²⁶ Les journaux palestiniens ne décrivent donc pas l’assassinat de Kiwan dans sa singularité, mais comme un épisode de violence systémique des institutions israéliennes envers les Palestiniens·ne·s. Le cas de Kiwan est ainsi relié à l’actualité du mois de mai 2021 et à l’histoire d’oppression et de lutte du peuple palestinien. L’« unité » (*wahda*) du peuple palestinien²⁷ est un autre *leitmotiv* des journaux palestiniens : les soulèvements de mai 2021 se sont répandus au sein de toutes les communautés de Palestiniens·ne·s – y compris en Israël. Ces soulèvements ont renforcé le sentiment d’unité nationale, au point que certains journaux internationaux et activistes les ont qualifiés de « Unity Intifada » ou « Unity Uprising » (Tatour 2021). Certains journaux palestiniens mettent l’accent sur cette unité et explicitent les raisons des manifestations des Palestiniens·ne·s et leur interconnexion sur tout le territoire israélo-palestinien. Les manifestations à Umm al-Fahm, où Mohammad Kiwan a été tué, sont ici décrites comme des « affrontements [...] en soutien à Jérusalem, à Al-Aqsa et au quartier de Sheikh Jarrah ».²⁸

Par contraste, dans l’ensemble des journaux israéliens analysés, les émeutes sont décrites comme des « violences communautaires »²⁹ ou des « violences ethniques »³⁰ tandis que les raisons et le contexte politique et historique des manifestations ne sont pas expliqués.

Les affrontements et les violences des Arabes ont aussi été définis comme des actes de « terrorisme » (*teror*).³¹ L’image négative des manifestant·e·s palestinien·ne·s est par-

²⁵ La première victime palestinienne tuée dans les émeutes en Israël (“Israeli Arab Shot Dead as Jerusalem Riots Spillover; Two Jewish Suspects Arrested”. Haaretz. <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2021-05-11/ty-article/.premium/israeli-arab-shot-dead-as-riots-spread-to-major-cities-amid-jerusalem-unrest/0000017f-db3f-d3a5-af7f-fbbfd3960000>. Consulté le 04/04/2022).

²⁶ “A’īlat āl-śahid Kīwān: « al-Mu’assasa al-isrā’iliyya lā turīdunā an nahtaḡga... Muhammad u’dima mīdāniyyan ». Arab48. <https://cutt.ly/M0DKc9I>. Consulté le 10/01/2022. Nous soulignons.

²⁷ “Min ‘Ayn al-Hilwa ilà Umm al-Fahm: taḍāmun šabābī ma‘a ‘a’īlat al-śahid Kīwān”. Arab48. <https://cutt.ly/T0DZt0h>. Consulté le 10/01/2022.

²⁸ “Istiḥād fatā min Umm al-Fahm muta’atiran bi-iṣābatihī bi-raṣāṣ al-ṣurṭa al-isrā’iliyya”. Wafa. <https://wafa.ps/Pages/Details/24554>. Consulté le 10/01/2022.

²⁹ “Organ Donations Bring Hope After Jewish-Arab Clashes”. Ynet. <https://www.ynetnews.com/magazine/article/BJuIWbTKu>. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

³⁰ “Organs of Arab Teen Allegedly Shot by Police Save Arab and Jewish lives”. Times of Israel. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/organs-of-arab-teen-allegedly-shot-by-police-save-arab-and-jewish-lives/>. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

³¹ “Akhiv shel Yigal Yehoshua shenertsah ba-lints’ be-Lod safad ba-halvayah: « Heemantha be-do-qyom ». Ynet. <https://www.ynet.co.il/news/article/HktfTUZFd>. Consulté le 17/01/2022. “Yigal Yehoshua, shenertsah be-Lod, huva limnoukhot”. [Yigal Yehoshua, assassiné à Lod, a été

fois transmise implicitement, comme lorsque le journal *Haaretz* rapporte les propos de certains manifestant·e·s palestinien·ne·s, qui auraient ainsi commenté l'assassinat de Yehoshua : « C'est le sang de la vengeance [...] en échange de la mort de Hassouna ».³² Cette citation suggère l'idée que les manifestant·e·s palestinien·ne·s seraient animé·e·s par une “soif de vengeance”, associée à un imaginaire dépréciatif d'une mentalité supposément tribale.

Comme on l'a vu, certains articles véhiculent l'idée d'une matrice antisémite derrière les violences des manifestant·e·s Palestiniens·ne·s. Une thématique présente dans certains journaux israéliens est en effet celle de la menace sécuritaire antisémite. Plusieurs articles relaient les propos du Président israélien de l'époque, Reuven Rivlin, comparant les affrontements à des « pogroms ».³³ Le journal *Ynet* relaie ainsi les paroles éloquentes du maire de Lod/al-Lydd au sujet de l'assassinat de Yehoshua. La voiture de ce dernier aurait été signalée par des manifestant·e·s comme appartenant à un Israélien juif puis attaquée à coups de pierres : « Quelqu'un t'a signalé, tout comme dans *nos terribles moments d'exil* auxquels nous avons juré de ne jamais revenir ».³⁴ Les violences actuelles sont lues au prisme du traumatisme réactualisé des persécutions et des exils des Juif·ve·s et, en particulier, de l'Holocauste. Le slogan *Never Again*, largement diffusé au point qu'on le retrouve dans les paroles rapportées du maire de Lod/al-Lydd, exprime cette détermination à ne jamais plus permettre d'être pris pour cible de violences. Hilik Klar et ses co-auteurs (2013) ont bien expliqué comment le traumatisme de l'Holocauste, devenu à la fois un mythe fondateur d'Israël, un dispositif de construction nationale et une source de sa légitimité, s'est ajouté aux mémoires des persécutions et des exils historiques pour y prendre une place centrale. Renforcé à travers le temps, ce dispositif en est venu à nourrir le « sens d'une menace constante, liant le passé et le présent. Les ennemis contemporains sont vécus comme une réincarnation des anciens adversaires » (Klar & Schoru-Eyal & Klar:138).

L'idée de la menace permanente et la préoccupation sécuritaire sont présentes dans les mots du frère de Yigal Yehoshua, rapportés dans plusieurs articles de la presse israélienne : « Tu [Yigal Yehoshua] croyais en la coexistence, tu avais dit “Ça ne va

inhumé]. Israel Hayom. <https://www.israelhayom.co.il/news/local/article/1120442>. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

³² “Arab Woman Receives Kidney Donated by Jewish Man Killed by a Mob in Lod”. Haaretz. <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-arab-woman-receives-kidney-donated-by-jewish-man-killed-by-a-mob-in-lod-1.9835261>. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

³³ “Arab Woman Receives Kidney Donated by Jewish Man Killed by a Mob in Lod”. Haaretz. <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-arab-woman-receives-kidney-donated-by-jewish-man-killed-by-a-mob-in-lod-1.9835261>. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

³⁴ “Akhiv shel Yigal Yehoshua shenertsah ba-lints’ be-Lod safad ba-halvayah: « Heemantha be-do-qyom ». Ynet. <https://www.ynet.co.il/news/article/HktfTUZFd>. Consulté le 17/01/2022. Nous soulignons.

pas m’arriver” ».³⁵ Indirectement, cette phrase transmet l’idée qu’en dépit des bonnes intentions de paix et de coexistence du côté israélien, la population palestinienne peut toujours constituer un danger pour les Juif·ve·s.

Aux violences des Arabes, perçues comme des tentatives d’annihilation de la population juive, certains journaux opposent, à travers les mots du maire de Lod/al-Lydd, un sentiment de fierté et de détermination à se maintenir : « Nous sommes ici pour dire que le peuple d’Israël est vivant. Nous n’abandonnerons pas, nous ne baisserons pas la tête. Nous commémorerons ton nom dans la ville de Lod, en tant que fier Juif ».³⁶

La thématique de la “coexistence” (*do-qiyum*) est peut-être la plus récurrente et la plus souvent invoquée dans la presse israélienne. Le terme renvoie au vivre-ensemble pacifique entre Israélien·ne·s et Palestinien·ne·s et est donc évoqué avec le terme de “paix” (*shalom*). La coexistence est présentée à la fois comme une description des relations actuelles entre les deux communautés et, contradictoirement, comme un objectif idéal à atteindre. En ce qui concerne la première connotation, les journaux israéliens rapportent différents témoignages qui confirment cette coexistence *de facto*, comme ceux prêtés à Randa Aweis : « Nous avons grandi avec des Juifs. Nos enfants ont grandi avec des Juifs. [...]. Il n’y a pas de racisme. Ni de la part des Juifs, ni de la part des Arabes » ;³⁷ ou encore : « Ma fille a grandi avec des Juifs et elle parle hébreu comme eux. Nous sommes tous des êtres humains » ;³⁸ ou ceux de la femme de Yigal Yehoshua : « C’est notre vie, nous vivons ici entre Arabes et Juifs, et je ne distingue même pas les Juifs des Arabes ».³⁹

En même temps, la coexistence pacifique est présentée comme un « appel », un « espoir » de relations, telles qu’elles devraient se développer entre les deux communautés. Dans les titres de deux de leurs articles, les journaux *Mako* et *Ynet* évoquent un

³⁵ “Akhiv shel Yigal Yehoshua shenertsah ba-lints’ be-Lod safad ba-halvayah: « Heemantha be-do-qyom ». Ynet. <https://www.ynet.co.il/news/article/HktfTUZFd>. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

³⁶ “Akhiv shel Yigal Yehoshua shenertsah ba-lints’ be-Lod safad ba-halvayah: « Heemantha be-do-qyom ». Ynet. <https://www.ynet.co.il/news/article/HktfTUZFd>. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

³⁷ “Arab Woman Receives Kidney Donated by Jewish Man Killed by a Mob in Lod”. Haaretz. <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-arab-woman-receives-kidney-donated-by-jewish-man-killed-by-a-mob-in-lod-1.9835261>. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

³⁸ “Khliatho shel Yighal Yehoshua shenertsah be-lints’ be-Lod houshthelah be-’araviah: « Hyi hafkhah leheleq mimeni, khoulano bne Adam ». [Le rein de Yigal Yehoshua, assassiné lors d’un lynchage à Lod, a été transplanté à une arabe : « Il est devenu une partie de moi, nous sommes tous des êtres humains »]. Mako. https://www.mako.co.il/news-israel/2021_q2/Article-bc-07c4a88948971027.htm?Partner=searchResults. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

³⁹ “Almanatho shel Yighal Yehoshua : « Yighal lo khashav shemashetu yiqreh lo ». [La veuve de Yigal Yehoshua : « Yigal ne pensait pas que quelque chose lui arriverait »]. Maariv. <https://www.maariv.co.il/news/israel/Article-841638>. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

« appel à la coexistence »⁴⁰ et à l’« espoir ».⁴¹ D’autres journaux rapportent également les appels à la paix d’interviewé·e·s, tel celui de Randa Aweis : « J’espère qu’il y aura la paix » ;⁴² ou celui de sa fille : « Mon rêve est qu’il y ait la paix entre les deux peuples ».⁴³

Au fondement de l’idée de coexistence pacifique, on note le recours à un principe d’humanité, à entendre ici au sens d’égalité fondamentale entre êtres humains, qui se reconnaissent mutuellement et qui adoptent une attitude morale les uns envers les autres – au-delà de leurs différences de religion, d’origine et de genre. Cette idée est présente à la fois dans les journaux israéliens et dans les journaux palestiniens.

L’idée d’humanité est également associée au don d’organes, geste décrit comme « noble »,⁴⁴ « honorable »⁴⁵ et, précisément, « humain ».⁴⁶ La citation du chirurgien, Dr. Halaila, qui a transplanté le rein de Yigal Yehoshua chez Randa Aweis, exprime au mieux cette idée : « Le monde des greffes en médecine symbolise l’humanité ».⁴⁷ Au-delà des cas ici analysés, le don d’organes est un geste généralement valorisé et apprécié pour ses bénéfices en termes d’amélioration de la qualité de vie des receveur·se·s et, en cas de risque de mort, de prolongation de la vie. Il est ainsi souvent et largement décrit par ses partisans institutionnels comme un « don de vie » (*gift of life*) (Sque *et al.* 2008:135). Dans les articles analysés, le motif des “vies sauvées” est très présent et mis en avant, autant par les journalistes que ceux et celles qu’ils interviewent. On trouve ainsi des citations comme celle de l’oncle de Kiwan : « Nous voulions *sauver des vies*, indépendamment de la religion, de la race et du sexe » ;⁴⁸ ou celles du frère de Yehoshua :

⁴⁰ “Khliatho shel Yighal Yehoshua shenertsah be-lints’ be-Lod houshthelah be-’araviah: « Hyi hafkhah leheleq mimeni, khoulano bne Adam ». Mako. https://www.mako.co.il/news-israel/2021_q2/Article-bc07c4a88948971027.htm?Partner=searchResults. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

⁴¹ “Aivarav shel Mohammad ben ha-17 shenorah be-Omm al-Fahem houshthelou bi-6 Yisraeilim”. Ynet. <https://www.ynet.co.il/health/article/BkCy0PvtD>. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

⁴² “Aivarav shel Mohammad ben ha-17 shenorah be-Omm al-Fahem houshthelou bi-6 Yisraeilim”. Ynet. <https://www.ynet.co.il/health/article/BkCy0PvtD>. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

⁴³ “Almanatho shel Yighal Yehoshua : « Yighal lo khashav shemashehu yiqreh lo ». Maariv. <https://www.maariv.co.il/news/israel/Article-841638>. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

⁴⁴ “Arab Woman Receives Life-Saving Kidney from Jewish Israeli Killed in Lod Riots”. Jerusalem Post. <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/jewish-israeli-murdered-in-lod-riot-gives-life-through-organ-donation-668533>. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

⁴⁵ “Arab Woman Receives Life-Saving Kidney from Jewish Israeli Killed in Lod Riots”. Jerusalem Post. <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/jewish-israeli-murdered-in-lod-riot-gives-life-through-organ-donation-668533>. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

⁴⁶ “Mishpakhtho shel han’ar shenourah lamaveth be-rekhvo be-Omm al-Fahem tharmah eth averav: « Ts’ad mithbaqesh ». Mako. https://www.mako.co.il/news-israel/2021_q2/Article-5d02548cea88971027.htm?Partner=searchResults. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

⁴⁷ “Khliatho shel Yighal Yehoshua shenertsah be-lints’ be-Lod houshthelah be-’araviah: « Hyi hafkhah leheleq mimeni, khoulano bne Adam ». Mako. https://www.mako.co.il/news-israel/2021_q2/Article-bc07c4a88948971027.htm?Partner=searchResults. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

⁴⁸ “Umm al-Fahm: al-ṣahid Muḥammad Kīwān anqada ḥayāt sittat mardā min al-‘arab wa-l-

« Ils [les donneur·e·s] vivront grâce à lui [Yehosua] » et « [il faut] sauver des vies, peu importe lesquelles ».⁴⁹

Au-delà de l'identité du·de la receveur·se et de toute préoccupation politique, le fait de sauver des vies est donc présenté comme un objectif moral d'importance majeure, partagé par les interviewés. Le contexte du conflit, en outre, ajoute de la valeur au don et le charge symboliquement.

Dans les journaux israéliens et palestiniens, le don d'organes est présenté comme un acte cohérent avec les principes et les attitudes des donneurs et de leur famille, qui croient en la coexistence des communautés et dans les valeurs d'humanité. Sont ainsi rapportés les propos de la femme de Yigal Yehoshua au sujet du défunt : « Tout au long de sa vie, Yigal a aidé les gens, alors nous avons décidé que faire don de ses organes serait la bonne chose à faire, et c'est ce qu'il aurait voulu » ;⁵⁰ et du père de Mohammad Kiwan : « Il était naturel pour moi de donner ses organes pour sauver d'autres personnes [...]. Si nous pouvons aider, alors nous aidons ».⁵¹

Dans la presse israélienne, les deux dons deviennent eux-mêmes des symboles et des modèles de coexistence pacifique et d'humanité à imiter. La position d'exemplarité est parfois affirmée par les interviewé·e·s. C'est le cas du frère de Yehoshua (« Je pense que nous pouvons être un symbole de coexistence »)⁵² ou du Dr Halaila qui aurait décrit la donation de Yigal Yehoshua à Randa Aweis comme « un symbole d'espoir ».⁵³

Dans certains articles, les deux cas sont traités conjointement, comme deux exemples analogues de coexistence. L'article de *Ynet* exprime déjà cette idée par son titre : « Des dons d'organes apportent de l'espoir, après les affrontements entre Juifs et Arabes ».⁵⁴ Les deux dons sont ici opposés au climat général de violence, de mort et de conflit intercommunautaire. La construction par opposition (conflit/paix ; mort/vie) est d'ailleurs présente dans plusieurs autres articles israéliens que nous avons analysés :

yahūd". [Umm al-Fahm: le martyr Mohammed Kiwan a sauvé la vie de six patients arabes et juif]. Madar News. <http://shorturl.at/dlxN6>. Consulté le 10/01/2022.

49 "Organ Donations Bring Hope After Jewish-Arab Clashes". *Ynet*. <https://www.ynetnews.com/magazine/article/BJuIWbTKu>. Consulté le 17/01/2022. Nous soulignons.

50 "Almanatho shel Yighal Yehoshua : « Yighal lo khashav shemashehu yiqreh lo ». *Maariv*. <https://www.maariv.co.il/news/israel/Article-841638>. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

51 "Hatalmid hamitstayen shenourah be-afghanoth be-Omm al-Fahem hitsil 5 Yehoudim leahar moth". *Walla*. <https://news.walla.co.il/item/3437130>. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

52 "Organ Donations Bring Hope After Jewish-Arab Clashes". *Ynet*. <https://www.ynetnews.com/magazine/article/BJuIWbTKu>. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

53 "Jewish Riot Victim's Kidney Gives New Lease on Life to Arab Woman". *Times of Israel*. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/jewish-riot-victims-kidney-gives-new-lease-of-life-to-arab-woman/>. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

54 "Organ Donations Bring Hope After Jewish-Arab Clashes". *Ynet*. <https://www.ynetnews.com/magazine/article/BJuIWbTKu>. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

« Au lieu de répondre au meurtre de Yehoshua avec *colère*, sa famille a choisi de donner *amour et vie* »,⁵⁵ ou encore « Un engagement commun envers *la vie*, après *la mort* d'un homme juif et d'un adolescent arabe dans la *violence* communautaire en Israël a apporté une rare lueur d'*espoir* : celui que les *divisions* peuvent être *neutralisées* ».⁵⁶

Ce dernier titre est significatif. Il résume une autre thématique présente dans la presse israélienne, celle du “rapprochement” par le don d’organes. Ce sentiment de rapprochement concerne tout d’abord les familles intéressées, en particulier la famille de la récipiendaire Randa Aweis, comme cela ressort des propos rapportés de sa fille : « En ce qui nous concerne, Yigal fait partie de notre famille »⁵⁷ ou de ceux de la receveuse même : « Ce rein juif est maintenant devenu une partie de moi ».⁵⁸ L’incorporation, au sens littéral, de l’organe de Yehoshua dans le corps de Aweis aurait créé un lien affectif entre les deux familles. Cette fonction performative de rapprochement dépasserait toutefois les seules familles impliquées dans les cas de Mohammad Kiwan et Yigal Yehoshua, pour inclure l’ensemble des communautés palestinienne et israélienne. Véhiculée par les journaux israéliens, cette idée est explicitée par la métaphore du « pont » (*bridge*)⁵⁹ utilisée par le journal *Ynet* – un pont qui passerait au-dessus des « lignes de conflit » (*across conflict lines*).⁶⁰ La force de cet échange serait en outre renforcée par sa dimension de réciprocité, c’est-à-dire par le fait qu’il est réalisé de la partie israélienne vers la partie palestinienne, et *vice versa*.

Si le principe d’humanité, le désir de coexistence pacifique et celui de sauver des vies sont partagés par tou·te·s les interviewé·e·s, israélien·ne·s et palestinien·ne·s, une observation plus détaillée de la presse palestinienne et des discours de la famille Kiwan nuance et problématise le concept de “coexistence”. Comme on l’a vu, les journaux palestiniens rapportent les appels aux principes d’humanité formulés par les parents de Mohammad Kiwan, d’une part, et leur condamnation des violences et des discrimi-

⁵⁵ “Arab Woman Receives Life-Saving Kidney from Jewish Israeli Killed in Lod Riots”. Jerusalem Post. <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/jewish-israeli-murdered-in-lod-riot-gives-life-through-organ-donation-668533>. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

⁵⁶ “Organ Donations Bring Hope After Jewish-Arab Clashes”. Ynet. <https://www.ynetnews.com/magazine/article/BJuIWbTKu>. Consulté le 17/01/2022. Nous soulignons.

⁵⁷ “Khliath hanertsekah be-Lod Houchtela be-thosheveth Beyth Tsafafa: « Eyn Yehoudim ve-’Aravim, raq bne Adam ». [Le rein de la victime à Lod a été transplanté dans une habitante de Beit Safafa : « Il n’y a pas de Juifs et d’Arabes, seulement des êtres humains»]. Walla. <https://news.walla.co.il/item/3436311>. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

⁵⁸ “Jewish Riot Victim’s Kidney Gives New Lease on Life to Arab Woman”. Times of Israel. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/jewish-riot-victims-kidney-gives-new-lease-of-life-to-arab-woman/>. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

⁵⁹ “Organ Donations Bring Hope After Jewish-Arab Clashes”. Ynet. <https://www.ynetnews.com/magazine/article/BJuIWbTKu>. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

⁶⁰ “Organ Donations Bring Hope After Jewish-Arab Clashes”. Ynet. <https://www.ynetnews.com/magazine/article/BJuIWbTKu>. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

nations systémiques de la part des autorités israéliennes envers la population palestinienne d'autre part. Par contraste, les journaux israéliens rapportent les déclarations de la famille Kiwan exprimant leur engagement à la coexistence, mais ignorent leurs revendications et préoccupations politiques. Si plusieurs journaux israéliens rapportent cette déclaration du père de Mohammad Kiwan : « Chaque homme a sa dignité. Nous respectons tout le monde. Arabes et Juifs »,⁶¹ ils ignorent, par ailleurs, d'autres déclarations plus critiques du même père, comme celle que cite le journal cisjordanien *Arab48* : « Nous sommes vraiment désolés [...] pour ce traitement barbare de la population arabe, uniquement parce que nous sommes Arabes. L'utilisation des armes est facile quand il s'agit d'un citoyen arabe ».⁶²

Les discours sur la coexistence et sur l'humanité sont donc partagés au niveau des affects et des subjectivités, mais ils se complexifient au prisme des rapports de pouvoir inégaux entre les deux sociétés. Loin d'être niées, l'humanité et la coexistence sont revendiquées par les Palestinien·ne·s en réponse aux politiques d'oppression qu'ils·elles subissent : « [Le don] C'est notre fierté. C'est l'éducation que nous avons reçue. [...] Nous n'abandonnerons pas. Nous sommes forts, nous sommes éduqués, nous comprenons et nous croyons ».⁶³ L'insistance des journaux à vouloir souligner l'exceptionnalité de l'étudiant Mohammad Kiwan et les valeurs de sa famille sert à affirmer l'humanité et la fierté de ces derniers, malgré les discriminations subies. Le don d'organes, en tant que geste humain, témoignerait et affirmerait cette humanité, comme le souligne ce proche de Mohammad Kiwan : « [Le don], c'est le pas *humain* que nous pouvons faire à ce stade. [...] *Cela prouve simplement que nous sommes tous des êtres humains* ».⁶⁴

D'après les discours des parents de Kiwan, la coexistence devrait être liée à la « dignité » et au « respect » réciproque, pourtant déniés aux Palestinien·ne·s : « Nous voulons la coexistence, mais nous voulons aussi être respectés et que ce soit une coexistence mutuelle ».⁶⁵ La dignité n'est pas entendue dans un sens individuel : elle est liée à l'autodétermination et à la libération collective de l'occupation, comme cela est exprimé par le slogan chanté par la foule pendant les funérailles de Kiwan et rapporté par le

61 “Arab Woman Receives Kidney Donated by Jewish Man Killed by a Mob in Lod”. Haaretz. <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-arab-woman-receives-kidney-donated-by-jewish-man-killed-by-a-mob-in-lod-1.9835261>. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

62 “A’īlat āl-ṣahid Kīwān: « al-Mu’assasa al-isrā’iliyya lā turīdunā an nahtaḡga... Muḥammad u‘dima mīdāniyyan ». Arab48. <https://cutt.ly/M0DKc9I>. Consulté le 10/01/2022.

63 “Hatalmid hamitstayen shenourah be-afghanoth be-Omm al-Fahem hitsil 5 Yehoudim leahar motho”. Walla. <https://news.walla.co.il/item/3437130>. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

64 “Mishpakhtho shel han’ar shenourah lamaveth be-rekhvo be-Omm al-Fahem tharmah eth averav: « Ts’ad mithbaqesh ». Mako. https://www.mako.co.il/news-israel/2021_q2/Article-5d02548cea88971027.htm?Partner=searchResults. Consulté le 17/01/2022. Nous soulignons.

65 “Hatalmid hamitstayen shenourah be-afghanoth be-Omm al-Fahem hitsil 5 Yehoudim leahar motho”. Walla. <https://news.walla.co.il/item/3437130>. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

Times of Israel : « Nous ne sommes pas nés pour vivre dans la soumission, nous sommes nés pour vivre libres ».⁶⁶

Le discours journalistique israélien sur la paix ignore en revanche les revendications de la société palestinienne. Ce discours sur la coexistence, en taisant les inégalités de pouvoir entre Israélien·ne·s et Palestinien·ne·s, fait ainsi écho aux projets de normalisation.⁶⁷ Nous entendons ici par normalisation tout processus visant à instaurer des relations amicales et de coopération entre les institutions et la société israélienne et le monde, renforçant la légitimité d'Israël malgré son caractère de force occupante.

Dans cette vision non-problématisée de la coexistence, les dons mutuels d'organes incarnent et produisent de la normalisation, et ce à travers les corps et l'incorporation réciproque entre les deux communautés.

Un autre exemple nous permet d'observer la manière dont les transplantations d'organes participent aux projets politiques de normalisation et sont instrumentalisées en leur faveur. Il s'agit du premier (et pour l'instant unique) cas d'échange d'organes entre des familles israéliennes et une famille d'un État arabe, les Émirats Arabes Unis, survenu en juillet 2021.⁶⁸ Célébrée par la presse israélienne comme le premier cas d'une prometteuse coopération sanitaire, l'opération a été réalisée à la suite des accords de normalisation entre Israël et les Emirats Arabes Unis signés un an auparavant.

L'instrumentalisation politique de ces cas par les médias israéliens façonne l'attitude et les émotions de certain·e·s Palestinien·ne·s envers les dons. Comme on l'a vu, les Palestinien·ne·s reconnaissent au niveau individuel que les Israélien·ne·s sont des êtres humains dont les vies méritent d'être sauvées et les souffrances soulagées. Cependant, ils·elles sont empêché·e·s d'être publiquement solidaires avec les Israélien·ne·s car cela comporte le risque implicite de légitimer leur présence coloniale. Frantz Fanon (1959), dans sa *Sociologie d'une révolution*, avait expliqué la difficulté voire l'impossibilité pour l'occupé de reconnaître ce qui, « en toute objectivité et en toute humanité » (Fanon 1959:96), sont les bons côtés de l'occupant :

Dans certaines périodes de détente [...] l'individu colonisé reconnaît franchement

⁶⁶ “Organs of Arab Teen Allegedly Shot by Police Save Arab and Jewish lives”. Times of Israel. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/organs-of-arab-teen-allegedly-shot-by-police-save-arab-and-jewish-lives/>. Consulté le 17/01/2022.

⁶⁷ Selon le dictionnaire Macmillan « si deux pays normalisent leurs relations, ils ont de nouveau une relation amicale après une guerre ou un désaccord » (“Normalize Relations ”. Macmillan Dictionary. <https://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/normalize-relations>. Consulté le 21/04/2021). Dans le monde arabe, le terme “normalisation” a pris de l'importance au moment du traité de paix entre l'Égypte et Israël en 1978 (Podeh 2022).

⁶⁸ “3 Women Receive Kidneys in Israel-UAE Organ Exchange, 1st with Arab State”. The Times of Israel. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/3-women-receive-kidneys-in-israel-uae-organ-exchange-1st-with-arab-state/>. Consulté le 11/04/2022.

ce qu'il y a de positif dans l'action du dominateur. Mais cette bonne foi est immédiatement reprise par l'occupant et transformée, en justification de l'occupation. [...] Au niveau de la société colonisée, découvre-t-on toujours cette impression de fuite devant l'attitude nuancée, car précisément toute nuance est perçue par l'occupant en invitation à perpétuer l'oppression. [...] C'est que la colonisation, après s'être appuyée sur la conquête militaire et le système policier, va trouver la justification de son existence et la légitimation de sa persistance dans ses œuvres. [...] Alors, comme il ne peut pas faire la part du feu, car il est du peuple, et que son peuple veut avoir une existence nationale sur son sol, il ne lui reste plus que des choix rétrécis. Tout à la fois, il rejette les médecins, les instituteurs, les ingénieurs, les parachutistes. (Fanon 1959 : 97-98)

Cette condition tragique détermine l'attitude des Palestinien·ne·s envers toute coopération avec les institutions ou les individus israéliens, y compris la coopération humanitaire et les dons d'organes. L'opposition à la normalisation (*taṭbi‘* en arabe) est une préoccupation vive et puissante pour les Palestinien·ne·s, qui structure leurs discours et leurs pratiques. Tout acte de coopération avec Israël est généralement perçu comme très ambigu, voire ouvertement condamné. L'opposition “rejet/collaboration” participe à leur économie morale (Fassin 2009) : en tant que groupe occupé, leurs identité, valeurs, normes et obligations incorporées se fondent sur la lutte anticoloniale contre l'occupation israélienne. Les Palestinien·ne·s s'empêchent donc de collaborer avec Israël par refus de consentir à des compromis avec l'opresseur, mais aussi pour éviter la stigmatisation sociale.

L'urgence politique et existentielle des Palestinien·ne·s de se libérer de l'occupation israélienne et d'en souligner les injustices prévaut sur toute considération de type humanitaire envers les oppresseurs. La recherche sur internet en arabe des mots-clés « transplantation d'organes entre Israélien·ne·s et Palestinien·ne·s » au-delà de la période ciblée par cette étude (novembre 2020 à novembre 2021) est instructive à ce titre. En effet, les premiers titres des journaux palestiniens qui apparaissent renvoient aux vols d'organes par l'hôpital Abou Kabir et non pas aux dons consensuels.⁶⁹ C'est ce type de violences, symboliques et physiques, qui façonne l'imaginaire et l'expérience vécue des Palestinien·ne·s et que leurs médias dénoncent prioritairement.

6 - Conclusion

L'analyse thématique et discursive des articles traitant des cas de Mohammad Kiwan et de Yigal Yehoshua offre des éléments de compréhension des narrations na-

⁶⁹ “Sariqat Isrā’il a‘dā’ al-ṣuhadā’ al-Filastīniyyin ta‘ūd li-l-ihtimām”. al-Quds. <http://shorturl.at/ejuMT>. Consulté le 06/10/2022.

tionales israélienne et palestinienne à propos des évènements de mai 2021 et du conflit israélo-palestinien. L'importance politique accordée à ces narrations doit être comprise dans le contexte colonial qui oppose les deux communautés ainsi qu'à travers leurs efforts respectifs pour se construire et se légitimer comme nations.

Les dons d'organes de Yehoshua et Kiwan sont représentés par la presse israélienne comme des exemples de coexistence pacifique entre Israélien·ne·s et Palestinien·ne·s. Tous·tes les interviewé·e·s, palestinien·ne·s comme israélien·ne·s, partagent, au niveau des affects et des subjectivités, l'idée d'une humanité commune, l'objectif existentiel majeur de sauver des vies indépendamment de l'appartenance religieuse ou ethnique et l'idée de la coexistence pacifique comme chemin souhaitable. Cette coexistence revêt néanmoins des significations différentes. Dans le discours des Palestinien·ne·s., la coexistence pacifique devrait se construire sur le respect réciproque et sur la fin des discriminations envers leur communauté. Par contraste, le concept de coexistence mobilisé par la presse israélienne ne prend pas en compte les revendications politiques du peuple palestinien et charrie implicitement l'idée d'une normalisation des relations entre Palestinien·ne·s et Israélien·ne·s.

L'occultation quasi-totale de la thématique des transplantations mutuelles d'organes par la presse cisjordanienne suggère l'idée que le discours politique dominant refuse ici toute forme de normalisation avec Israël – y compris celle que ces opérations symbolisent. Ce refus, inscrit dans l'économie morale des Palestinien·ne·s, doit être compris à la lumière des expériences d'oppression vécues par ces dernier·e·s au quotidien et l'urgence de se libérer de l'occupation israélienne.

Le peu d'articles consacrés aux transplantations mutuelles dans la presse israélienne pourrait indiquer que la thématique est également clivante dans la société israélienne et que les discours sur la coexistence ne sont pas unanimement partagés. Cette étude sur les discours journalistiques autour des transplantations mutuelles d'organes nous donne un aperçu de la complexité des affects qui entourent ces opérations, qu'il s'agisse des familles impliquées ou du lectorat. Comment ces affects et les relations politiques israélo-palestiniennes s'éclairent-ils réciproquement ? Une approche plus attentive aux économies morales, dont nous avons ici fait l'esquisse, pourrait nous aider à mieux le comprendre.

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Arabizi: A Linguistic Manifestation of Glocalization in the Arabic Language Area?

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ABSTRACT

As the density and pace of the world's interlinguistic connections accelerate through globalization, the reciprocal exchange of global and local language resources impacts the development of both. This paper investigates the linguistic characteristics of the sociological concept "glocalization" and analyzes the Latin-based orthographic Arabizi variety from this perspective. The Arabizi variety displays mainly colloquial forms of Arabic in different applications of Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) (Sullivan 2017:13-19). Based on sociological and linguistic research on glob/calization and digitization, this paper defines four linguistic features of glocalization: digitization, linguistic mobility/translingual practices, the hegemony of the English language/Latin alphabet, and bottom-up construction of local identities through digital resources (Crystal 2001; Danet & Herring 2007b; Blommaert 2010; Coupland 2010). Drawing on more than 30 studies about Arabizi from each of the five Arabic language areas and empirical examples, the results of this analysis imply that the Arabizi variety is characterized by said linguistic features of glocalization and hence, constitutes a linguistic manifestation of glocalization in the Arabic language area.

KEYWORDS

Arabizi / chat alphabet / glocalization / digitization / linguistic heterogenization

1 - Introduction

The interconnectedness of the world and the digitization of human communication continues to advance due to globalization. In this work, "globalization" refers to the «enhancement of worldwide social processes interconnecting even the most distant places on our planet» due to the «accelerated compression of time and space» (Rizman 2015:2). In recent years, this enhancement of social processes occurred largely via networked communication technologies such as the Internet. These technologies alter our ways of exchanging information and thereby called a new area of communication into being: Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC). This form of communication «involves sending messages through computer networks such as the internet» (Liang &

Walther 2015:504). In the context of CMC applications, new styles and varieties of language have arisen,¹ among them an orthographic variety that is analyzed in this paper: Arabizi.

With the advent of the Internet in the 1960s and of the World Wide Web in the 1990s, their textual input systems were solely based on the Latin alphabet (Couldry 2012:2; Crystal 2012:115). For people equipped with non-Latin-based linguistic resources (such as Arabic), this resulted in the need to develop a Latin orthography for expressing their respective varieties in various CMC applications. A new way of writing Arabic emerged in a decentralized manner during the 1990s in the context of CMC – the Arabizi variety. This orthographic variety uses Latin letters and the Arabic numerals adopted by the Western world to write local varieties² of the Arabic language continuum.³ In this paper, the term “variety” is defined as a «form of a language seen as systematically distinct from others» (Matthews 2014b).

Several researchers have investigated the Arabizi variety, its (socio-)linguistic features, impact on communication styles, relation to digitization, and significance in global as well as local contexts.⁴ In some Arabic areas, the use of Arabizi is controversial as it is frequently seen as a threat to the Arabic language (al-Shaer 2016). On one end of the spectrum of opinions are the voices of Arabic language purists who oppose any «hybrid language varieties» (Alswailim 2017:1) and condemn them as direct threats to one of the pillars of Arabic identity: the Arabic language. On the other end of the spectrum is the sentiment that Arabizi does not constitute any threat to the Arabic language, despite its use of the Latin alphabet. This position, instead, regards Arabizi as a resource for constructing the Arabic identity of future generations (Abu-Liel & Eviatar & Nir 2020). This controversy is an expression of the concern that local identities are increasingly destroyed by the homogenization processes triggered by globalization. However, although Arabizi is characterized by traits of global interconnectedness, it also exhibits features of local rootedness. These features relate to the expression and spread of local Arabic varieties in the global digital space. Recent research on globalization has considered the concept in new ways, adding the term “glocalization” to the critical vocabulary (Kraidy 1999; Lee & Barton 2011; Robertson 2012; Rubdy & Alsagoff 2013; Roudo-

¹ For further information, see Crystal’s (2001:7) concept of «netspeak».

² Due to the colonialist implications of the nomenclatural division into language and dialect as well as the insufficient applicability of this division in global contexts, the latter term “dialect” is deliberately avoided in this work. Instead, this paper examines linguistic resources in form of “varieties”, including spoken and written, standardized and locally differentiated linguistic resources (Phillipson 1992:38-39; Crystal 2001:6; Blommaert 2010:1-27).

³ This continuum is structured according to geographical distribution on the horizontal level and according to differing prestige layers (from Qur’anic Arabic to local varieties) on the vertical level (Blommaert & Dong 2010:368; Albirini & Chakrani 2017).

⁴ For a detailed overview, see section 3.

metof 2016; Roudometof 2019). The concept of glocalization rethinks globalization from a more holistic perspective, claiming that globalized networks enable local identities and languages to develop and spread globally in the digital space. In the context of (linguistic) glob/calization and digitization (Robertson 1995; Crystal 2001; Blommaert 2010; Robertson 2012; Roudometof 2016; Roudometof 2019), the question arises if the Arabizi variety really is a manifestation of globalization, or rather of glocalization.

This paper attempts to establish a linguistic framework for glocalization and analyze the Arabizi variety from this new perspective. Therefore, the second section offers an extensive review of sociological literature on glocalization and its constituent parts: globalization and localization. Four defining features of glocalization become apparent: digital networking, the global dominance of local phenomena, increased human mobility, and a bottom-up construction of local identities via digital resources. The third section presents the empirical subject of this paper, the orthographic Arabizi variety. The fourth section connects the priorly defined features of glocalization with corresponding research results in linguistics to determine that glocal linguistic resources can be defined by the following four features: usage in the context of CMC while carrying features of written and spoken language as well as traces of digitization, the dominance of the English language and/or Latin alphabet, mobile transfer of linguistic phenomena, expressed in translingual practices and the despatialization of language, as well as identity construction through non-standardized varieties in the digital space. Based on the findings of researchers in Arabic studies, this section presents an evaluation of the Arabizi variety considering and explaining four expressions of linguistic glocalization: arithmographemization in the context of CMC, digraphia with the Latin alphabet, code-switching with English and/or French, and digital display of colloquial Arabic varieties that operate in the identity construction of the global Arabic youth. Concluding, the sociological features of glocalization, their placement on the spectrum of homogenization versus heterogenization, the corresponding linguistic framework for glocalization, and its expressions in the orthographic Arabizi variety are utilized to answer the initial research question: does the Arabizi variety constitute a manifestation of glocalization in the Arabic language area?

1.1 Examples of Arabizi

Below you find two examples of Arabizi which exhibit the four features of linguistic glocalization that constitute the main research results of this paper. The analysis in section 4 will refer to the examples below in addition to the examples provided in the existing literature on Arabizi.

Example 1:

Arabizi: «*Ne7na mech open minded ne7na bala akhle2*».⁵

Translation: “We are not open-minded, we don’t have manners”.

Example 2:

Arabizi: «*Ma fi wa2et lal enhiyar chteghil w enta 3am t3ayyit*».⁶

Translation: “There is no time for confusion [,] you work as you are crying”.

2 - Glocalization – globally networked and locally anchored

2.1 Globalization

In the fields of economics and the social sciences, Levitt⁷ and Robertson (1983) coined the term «globalization» in their respective 1983 publications. They use this term to describe a compression of global interconnectedness. A generally accepted definition of globalization was provided by Robertson in 1992 when he defined globalization as the «compression of the world» (Robertson 1992:8) into the proverbial village. Compression refers here to the «accelerated pace of contact among cultures, peoples, and civilizations or the sense that the world is ‘shrinking’» (Robertson 1992:8). According to Victor Roudometof (2016:10), this compression is triggered by the reduction of spatial and temporal distances. This reduction is accredited to the means of digital (communication) technologies, especially the Internet, whose potential is evident in the realities of transnational cosmopolitanism (Roudometof 2019:803-804; Marvin 2020:1-4). The latter concept refers to the increased mobility of individuals and groups, expressed for example in mass migration or digital nomadism, which ultimately leads to a world where national borders are permeable, inhabited by a global community of «world citizens».⁸

In their research on globalization, Martin Albrow (1996:88) and Roudometof (2019) have provided another widely accepted definition: «globalization refers to the general notion of the spread of any specific topic, process, condition, artefact, blueprint, idea or cultural item to an inter-regional, planetary or transnational level» (Roudometof 2019:802). Linguist Jan Blommaert refers to this definition in his work and defines the

⁵ “Sarcasmbeirut”. Instagram. <https://www.instagram.com/p/CXGJvOIs9HC/>. Last accessed 28/01/2022.

⁶ “Sarcasmbeirut”. Instagram. <https://www.instagram.com/p/CcavxrpmI4B/>. Last accessed 01/08/2022.

⁷ See “The Globalization of Markets”. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/1983/05/the-globalization-of-markets>. Last accessed 29/11/2022.

⁸ See “Cosmopolitanism”. Oxford Reference. <https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780198794790.001.0001/acref-9780198794790-e-149?rskey=8Y1GYk&result=158>. Last accessed 09/11/2022.

term “globalization” accordingly as the process of rapidly advancing interconnectedness of academic, economic, political, cultural, and social ideas throughout the world (Blommaert 2010:1). This is accompanied by the exchange of capital, commodities, people, symbols, narratives, and discourses. As financial services, bureaucratic registration, and interpersonal communication have all moved to the Internet, this constitutes a significant intensification of electronic globalization via digitization and technologization.

The different processes of globalization were first specified by anthropologist Arjun Appadurai (1990; 1996). He defines globalization as a constituent feature of modernity that implies global «cultural flows» (Castells 2009) which result from the interplay of five transnational «scapes» (Appadurai 1990:296-299):

- «Ethnoscape»: global migration and mobility of people;
- «Technoscape»: technological global networks such as the Internet;
- «Financescape»: the interconnectedness of global financial markets;
- «Mediascape»: global dissemination of narratives by increasingly locally independent media actors, including social media;
- «Ideoscape»: common global ideologies based on the prescriptive relationship of reading, representation, and publicness defined by European Enlightenment and its iterations.

These scapes emerge from the constituent drivers of globalization, namely mass migration, deterritorialization, electronic data processing, and transmission. According to Appadurai (1990:296-303), they can be understood as spaces without locality. Their interplay adds a dimension of juxtaposition to the concept of globalization: cultural homogenization versus cultural heterogenization (Appadurai 1990:295-296; Appadurai 1996:32).

2.2 Localization

The *Oxford Dictionary of Media & Communication* defines “localization” as (1) the adaptation of global products and services to local needs but also (2) a reactionary resistance to the homogenizing effects of globalization.⁹ Therefore, localization promotes diversity and the preservation of cultural forms which can be directed against the homogenizing tendencies of globalization.

According to Robertson (1992) and Roudometof (2019), the social sciences attach

⁹ See “Localization”. Oxford Reference. <https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780198841838.001.0001/acref-9780198841838-e-1555?rskey=V7kmaf&result=1802>. Last accessed 01/11/2022.

less importance to the local than to the global as they tend to consider the former only in combination with the latter. Presenting this as a conceptual inaccuracy, Robertson and later Roudometof promote a complementary view of the relationship between local and global, which provides the semantic ground for Robertson's neologism, «glocalization» (Robertson 1992:172). Glocalization emphasizes the relevance of local places for the construction of global spaces. This idea was prefigured by Hall (1991), whose works emphasize the reciprocity of the local and the global, although he failed to coin his own term for the concept (Hall 2019; Hall & Morley 2019).

According to Hall, the abstract space of global flows reinforces the construction of local identities, often in the form of heterogeneous minorities. The identity-construcing narrations of these minorities are often developed rather bottom-up than top-down (McAdams & McLean 2013; Hall 2019). Bottom-up identity construction is coined by decentralized and heterogenous narratives that stitch together a group's or individual's identity like a patchwork rug, in contrast to streamlined and mass-communicated homogenous identity narratives. According to Horan (2000), this bottom-up form of identity construction is buttressed by the information technology revolution as it creates further opportunities to creatively construct local identities using globally available digital resources. From these findings, it can be concluded that localization is the process of a local, bottom-up identity construction, which utilizes digital tools (Roudometof 2019:806-810).

According to sociologist Ruediger Korff (2003), localization also includes a dimension of power, since the decision about which local forms are allowed to prevail globally depends on their capacity to proliferate local concepts. Under the circumstance of local control over a resource in global demand, local knowledge becomes a global condition for its usage. Thus, Korff not only offers a convincing argument that the global can be of local origin, but he also underlines the relevance of local forms to the global level.

2.3 Glocalization

In 1992, Roland Robertson (1992:172) introduced the term «glocalization» to the social sciences in the discourse on globalization. With this, he reconciled the relationship between the local and the global which has often been misrepresented as dichotomous. In Robertson's view, the concept of glocalization specifies the larger concept of globalization, dissolving the dichotomy between local anchoring and global networking, or, as Roudometof (2016:10) puts it: «Local spaces are shaped, and local identities are created by globalized contacts as well as by local circumstances». The synthesis of the discussed concepts of globalization and localization as well as Robertson's (1983; 1992; 1995; 2012) and Roudometof's (2016; 2019) works reveals that glocalization is characterized by the following four features:

- Reduction of temporal and/or spatial distances through digital networking (Castells 2009; Roudometof 2016:10);
- Dominance of distinct local phenomena on a global scale through local resource control, leading to their adaptation in other local places (Korff 2003);
- Reduction of temporal and/or spatial distances through increased (human) mobility (Appadurai 1990:297);
- Local bottom-up identity construction through digital resources (Hall 1991; Horan 2000; Roudometof 2019).

In his work on «The sociolinguistics of globalization», Blommaert (2010:1-27) discusses the metaphor of the world as a village. Blommaert argues that this metaphor implies a cultural homogenization, although he disagrees with the assumption that this implies a linguistic homogenization. Instead of the often-anticipated homogenization as a result of globalization and digitization, Blommaert notices an increase in linguistic complexity due to the growing interconnectedness of trans-local and local varieties, i.e., linguistic heterogenization.

3. The orthographic Arabizi variety

Writing Arabic with Latin letters is not a new phenomenon. As early as 1880, the Arabist Wilhelm Spitta-Bey (1880) had the Eurocentric idea of replacing Arabic with Latin letters but was unsuccessful in his attempt to westernize the Arabic language due to conservative resistance (Abu-Liel & Eviatar & Nir 2020:127). In the context of the Arab and Ottoman Europeanization movements of the 19th and 20th centuries (Halm 2004:96-103), an increasing number of linguists followed Spitta-Bey's idea. For example, reformer Abdul Aziz Fahmi put forward the radical idea of replacing Arabic with Latin letters during a contest to modernize and simplify the Arabic language that was hosted by the *Academy of the Arabic Language* in Cairo 1943 (Yaghan 2008:41). This and similar reformist ideas were seen as direct attacks on one of the culture-constituting pillars of the pan-Arab identity – the Arabic script – and were therefore not implemented due to the efforts of language purists (Halm 2004:18).

The Arabic language enjoys a high status and solid language political support to conserve it. This is due to its role as the liturgical language of Islam and its long, prestigious history which is closely tied to the origin of the Arabic people (Lian 2020:17-47). With the advent of the Internet as a glocal medium for communication in the Arabic-speaking world in the 1990's (Whitaker 2018), this conservative language ideology changed, especially among the younger segments of the population (Sullivan 2017:3-8).

Beginning in the US, digital communication was initially based on the *American Standard Code for Information Interchange* (ASCII) character set. As a text transmission protocol, the ASCII offered 95 usable 7-bit code blocks which were all occupied by Latin

letters and diacritical signs (Warschauer & El Said & Zohry 2002; Danet & Herring 2003; Danet & Herring 2007a). As a result, digital communication media based on the ASCII character set displayed no other scripts than Latin. Because of this limitation, a Latin orthography of locally spoken Arabic varieties, Arabizi, evolved in a decentralized bottom-up process (Gorter 2006:3-4) in different CMC applications, such as social media, chat rooms, blogs, and forums (Abu-Liel & Eviatar & Nir 2019:226; 2020:126).¹⁰ Despite a mass recoding of large parts of the Internet to *Unicode Standard* (UTF) in 1991, which enabled the encoding of Arabic script (Danet & Herring 2003),¹¹ Arabizi continues to be used. Today, Arabizi is even displayed in offline contexts, such as in the teaching of Arabic as a foreign language (Obeid 2019-2019), in street art (Yaghan 2008:46), and on advertising posters (Alomoush 2019:38-39).¹²

The name Arabizi is a neologism containing the words “Arabic” and [‘inglīzī] (“English”). Thus, it describes the central point of this non-standardized orthography: the display of spoken Arabic varieties with the Latin letters of the colonial languages English and French (Sullivan 2017:31-32). Using a technique that Bianchi (2011:41-42) calls «arithmographemization», modern European numerals are used in Arabizi to display Arabic phonemes that have no equivalent in the Latin alphabet. The process of arithmographemization is primarily based on graphic features as it attempts to substitute Arabic letters with similar looking numerals (see Table 1).

| Arithmographems in Arabizi | Arabic Letters |
|----------------------------|----------------|
| 2 | ق / ئ |
| 3 | ع |
| 3' | غ |
| 4 | ذ |
| 5 | خ |
| 6 | ط |
| 6' | ظ |

¹⁰ See also “Sarcasmbeirut”. Instagram. <https://www.instagram.com/p/CXGJvOIs9HC/>. Last accessed 28/01/2022.

¹¹ See also “UnicodeData-1.0.0.txt”. Unicode. <https://www.unicode.org/Public/reconstructed/1.0.0/UnicodeData.txt>. Last accessed 30/01/2022.

¹² See also “Arabizi: Lost in Arabic”. Qantara.de. <https://de.qantara.de/inhalt/arabisch-in-lateinischer-schrift-arabizi-lost-in-arabic>. Last accessed 18/01/2022.

| | |
|----|-------|
| 7 | ح |
| 7' | خ |
| 8 | غ / ق |
| 9 | ق / ص |
| 9' | ض |

Table 1 - Arithmographems in Arabizi according to the works of Palfreyman and al-Khalil (2003), Sullivan (2017:40-41), and Akbar (2019:307-310)

Not only the orthographic level is affected by multilingual practices but also the lexical level. When people transition between different linguistic codes in the same linguistic unit, this process is referred to as «code-switching» (McArthur & Lam-McArthur & Fontaine 2018a). According to Sullivan (2017:39) and Bianchi (2011:256), the lexicon of Arabizi is characterized by code-switching which is related to distinct emotional and thematic contexts. In Bianchi's (2011:310-315) large-scale study on Arabic, English, and Arabizi usage on Jordanian web forums, Arabizi was often related to phatic¹³ expressions and references to Arab culture. English, on the other hand, was used for information exchange in a professional context and sensitive topics, such as homosexuality or politically oppositional opinions. Arabic script was mainly used by Arabic speakers for poetry and/or humor (Bianchi 2011:191-255).

Since Arabizi was never subject to top-down standardization, its orthography remains diverse. Still, the realizations of Arabic phonemes in Arabizi are largely coherent across the Arabic-speaking world. There are some marginal variations, which, according to Akbar (2019:309-310), Kenali, Yusoff, Kenali, and Kamarudin (2016), are determined by social factors of Arabizi users, such as age and level of education. However, there are distinct and consistent differences along the isoglosses¹⁴ of Arabic dialectology, which divide the Arabic-speaking world into five areas according to phonological, morphological, and grammatical differences (Versteegh 2014:192-220). To provide a general overview of Arabizi despite these regional differences, this paper refers to more than 30 studies from all different sub-areas of the Arabic language area (Behnstedt & Fischer & Jastrow 1980; al-Wer 2006:342):

- Arabian Peninsula (Palfreyman & al-Khalil 2003; Allehaiby 2013; Kenali *et al.*

¹³ “Phatic” describes a communication act that mainly performs a social function rather than transferring information (McArthur & Lam-McArthur & Fontaine 2018b).

¹⁴ “Isoglosses” are geo-linguistic boundaries that mark different variations of local varieties, e.g. the isogloss that separates Palestinian from the South Lebanese variety (Versteegh 2014:199).

- 2016; Alghamdi & Petraki 2018; Alsulami 2019);
- Levant (Yaghan 2008; Gordon 2011; Bianchi 2011; Alomoush 2015; Hamdan 2016; Bianchi 2016; Shaer Al 2016; Sullivan 2017; Abu-Liel & Eviatar & Nir 2019; Abu-Liel & Eviatar & Nir 2020; Abu-Liel & Ibrahim & Eviatar 2021; Naboulsi 2021; Bardaweel & Rababah 2022);
 - Mesopotamia (Akbar 2019);
 - Egypt (Warschauer & El Said & Zohry 2002; Bjørnsson 2010; Darwish 2017);
 - Maghreb (Benítez Fernández 2003; Moscoso García 2009; Daoudi 2011; Hoogland 2014; Caubet 2017; Gugliotta 2018; Masmoudi *et al.* 2020; Younes *et al.* 2020; Younes *et al.* 2022);
 - Arab world, not focusing on a specific region (Abu Elhija 2014).

In the following analysis, the definition of glocalization developed in section 2 is used to derive four linguistic features of glocalization: digitization, linguistic mobility/translingual practices, the hegemony of the English language/Latin alphabet, and bottom-up construction of local identities through digital resources. Based on the studies and examples mentioned above, these linguistic features are then applied to the Arabizi variety to analyze whether and to what extent Arabizi is a linguistic manifestation of glocalization in the Arabic language area.

4. The linguistic features of glocalization in Arabizi

4.1 Linguistic digitization in CMC

According to Castells (2009:355-406) and Roudometof (2016:10), the creation of digital archives through digitization is relevant to linguistic glocalization because it reproduces and preserves written and spoken language modalities independent of time and space. Therefore, digitization makes different language modalities available to an infinite number of humans through Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC). This form of communication is a major aspect of the global «technoscapes» (Appadurai 1990) and largely takes place in virtual networks, e.g., in email traffic, forums, or social media (Castells 2009:356). A central topic in CMC research is the relationship between language and writing, together with how digital varieties are to be classified (Herring & Stein & Virtanen 2013). According to linguist David Crystal (2001:28-48), linguistic resources on the Internet are characterized by simultaneous features of spoken and written language. Therefore, he assumes that CMC linguistic resources, or «netspeak» as Crystal (2001:7) calls them, constitute a third modality of language which is coined by mixing features of spoken and written language. To define this linguistic modality, Crystal (2001:7-9) presents seven levels to differentiate and classify linguistic varieties. Only five of these levels concern written varieties, which are graphic, orthographic,

grammatical, lexical, and discoursal.

The features of CMC varieties described by Crystal (2001), Herring, Stein, and Virtanen (2013) correspond to the first characteristic of glocalization – reduction of temporal and/or spatial distances through digital networking – as they are produced by the compression of linguistic resources through digital media. Thus, to be considered a manifestation of linguistic glocalization, the concerned variety should be used in the context of CMC and carry signs of written and spoken language. In doing so, the concerned variety should show traces of digital technology on at least one of Crystal's five levels for classifying written varieties in the digital space.

4.1.1 Linguistic digitization in Arabizi

The Arabizi variety emerged and is still predominantly used in the digital context of CMC. As Arabizi displays locally spoken varieties of the Arabic language continuum in written format, it can be considered a combination of written and spoken language, which suits Crystal's (2001:28) definition of digital varieties. The combination of written and spoken language is evident on the lexical level, as can be seen from the inclusion of colloquial expressions such as *mech* (“none”, see Example 1) or *ma fi* (“there is no”, see Example 2). The mixture of written with spoken language is also evident on the grammatical level, as Arabizi utilizes colloquial verb conjugations in a written format (Sullivan 2017:9; 21). Hence, the blend of written and spoken linguistic features characterizes the Arabizi variety.

Given the fact that Arabizi emerged because of the way applications of CMC are set up, it would be surprising if no signs of digitization were inherent to this variety. And indeed, Arabizi shows features of digitization at the orthographic level, which is characterized by the extension of non-alphabetic signs (such as diacritic signs or numbers). Werry (1996) defined the extension of an orthography with non-alphabetic signs as a feature of written Internet varieties. In Examples 1 and 2, the arithmographems “2”, “3”, and “7” are used to display the letters “ؑ”, “ؒ”, and “ؓ”. In Arabizi, this process of arithmographemization (Bianchi 2011:117-118) serves the realization of the Arabic phonology in a script that is not designed for it. Hence, the Arabizi variety is coined by signs of digitization, expressed in arithmographemization.

To conclude, the Arabizi variety was developed and is predominantly used in the context of CMC as a written variety that displays features of otherwise predominantly spoken language. Arabizi also bears signs of digitization because its characters include arithmographems to express Arabic phonemes. Accordingly, Arabizi is characterized by indicators for linguistic digitization.

4.2 Linguistic hegemony of English and the Latin alphabet

«If you want to take full advantage of the Internet there is only one way to do it:

learn English, which has more than ever become America's greatest and most effective export».¹⁵ What *New York Times* journalist Michael Specter points to with these words matches the research results of, for example, Phillipson (1992), Kirkpatrick (2007), East (2008:163-164), and Roudometof (2016:115-17). It is a fact that linguistic glocalization is particularly apparent in the global omnipresence of the English language and its written counterpart, the Latin alphabet.

Contrary to initial fears, this hegemony did not lead to linguistic homogenization, i.e., the linguistic death of minority languages, but the heterogenization of glocal varieties of English (Omoniyi & Saxena 2010). Despite these localized forms of English, the English language remains dominant in international communication, especially in the digital space (Crystal 2012:86-122). Referring to Korff's (2003) argument of local resource control as an indicator of global dominance, this leads to the conclusion that English (and further, the Latin script) has global influence on other local varieties due to its hegemony in digital space.

The Latin alphabet of the former colonial languages (i.e., English, French, Spanish, German, and Portuguese) still controls access to large parts of the most important resource of the information age: knowledge (Crystal 2012:110; 117). Partially, the reasons for this lie in the colonial past itself and the consequential influence of these languages on the current governmental and educational systems of former colonies and protectorates (Phillipson 1992:109-135). Simultaneously, global knowledge distribution increasingly takes place on the Internet. The Internet emerged in the US and French industries, whose languages utilize the Latin alphabet. While the French experiment in digital communication in form of the videotex system *Minitel* did not work well (Castells 2009:372-375), the American ARPANET of the 1960s became as much a prototype for today's Internet as its English working language became the global standard for communication on the World Wide Web (Crystal 2012:115).

At the beginning of the Internet in the 1960s, the English language and the corresponding Latin alphabet were displayed by the ASCII text transmission protocol. Even after its expansion to an 8-bit code, allowing for indexing 256 characters, it did not provide enough space to include all existing characters. Due to the tight limitations of the ASCII and standardization problems, UTF was introduced in 1991. In its first version, it offered space for about 7000 characters¹⁶ and contains in the current version (as of September 2021) more than 144 000 characters.¹⁷ However, even this capacity is insuf-

¹⁵ See "Computer Speak;World, Wide, Web: 3 English Words". The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/1996/04/14/weekinreview/computer-speak-world-wide-web-3-english-words.html>. Last accessed 29/01/2022.

¹⁶ See "UnicodeData-1.0.0.txt". Unicode. <https://www.unicode.org/Public/reconstructed/1.0.0/UnicodeData.txt>. Last accessed 30/01/2022.

¹⁷ See "Unicode 14.0.0". Unicode. <https://www.unicode.org/history/publicationdates.html#Footnote14.0.0>

ficient to display all existing characters, a number which is estimated at about 170 000. In summary, the reasons for the lasting dominance of the Latin script on the Internet, according to Crystal (2012:115-116), are as follows:

- Delayed facilitation of enough space in the commonly used text transmission protocols to include characters of all scripts;
- Considerable problems in the implementation and user-friendly application of non-Latin-based fonts;
- An excess of English-speaking Internet hosts;
- The colonial past of the Latin script.

Thus, the mastery of originally local linguistic resources, the English language, and the Latin alphabet, became a global prerequisite for using the Internet (Ricento 2010:138).

The Latin-based architecture of the Internet has noticeably affected varieties that do not utilize the Latin alphabet. To access most resources on the Internet, users of these varieties had to either use English (or other Latin-scripted) language(s) or find ways to display their native tongues with the Latin alphabet. This limitation has given rise to «digraphia» – writing a language in multiple scripts (Grivelet 2001; Rivlina 2016). Due to the hegemony of the Latin alphabet in digital space, digraphia of non-Latin-based languages using the Latin alphabet has become a prevalent vehicle for (socio-)linguistic glocalization (Sebba 2012:4-5; Rivlina 2016:208).

According to Bhatt (2010:520), the global influence of English (and the Latin alphabet) on local varieties constitute a major factor of the «linguascape»¹⁸ because it marks the historical incision of colonialism. As this incision is apparent on the structural as well as on the individual level and expressed by linguistic markers, the choice of linguistic resources is closely related to postcolonial identity construction. In former colonies, such as the Arabic states, the hybridization of English and/or French with diverse local varieties characterizes postcolonial linguistic identity (Bhatt 2010:534). Thus, the hybridization of English (and its written equivalent, the Latin alphabet) with local varieties, e.g., in form of digraphia, is a linguistic feature of glocalization that is present in the Latinate orthographic variety Arabizi.

4.2.1 Linguistic hegemony of the Latin alphabet in Arabizi

Before the development of the Internet, an Arabic keyboard layout had already

reword. Last accessed 30/01/2022.

¹⁸ “Linguascape” is Bhatt’s addition to Appadurai’s concept of global cultural flows and describes a globally networked linguistic dimension.

existed for Arabic typewriters, patented in Egypt in 1899 by Selim Shibli Haddad and Philippe Waked, and mass-produced since 1917.¹⁹ Nonetheless, after introducing the first English-language computer keyboard based on Latin letters in 1964, it took another 27 years until the *Unicode Standard Block Arabic* provided a globally available option to use the Arabic script digitally.²⁰ Even with this possibility, the Latinate orthographic variety Arabizi enjoys high popularity. The reasons for this include the colonial past of the Arab states, which were dominated in the 19th century by European colonial powers (primarily France and Great Britain) and the European-influenced Ottoman Empire. When the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in World War I was foreseeable, the colonial powers Great Britain and France redistributed the remaining dominions, which consisted largely of today's Arab states, among themselves in 1916 (Krämer 2016:249-273).

From this much-abbreviated version of Arab colonial history, one can deduce that the English and French languages, with their common script, the Latin alphabet, had a major influence on the administrative and educational systems of today's Arab states. In the context of the modernization efforts of the 19th century and Western colonialization during the 20th century, many prestigious educational Arab institutions changed their language of instruction to English and/or French (Lian 2020:2). Partially during but mainly after the fall of colonial rule, language political measurements such as the Arabi(c)i)cation of private and public sectors were implemented to reverse the influence of (former) colonial languages (Lian 2020:105-43). Although these measurements were partially successful, the linguistic colonialism of the West is still apparent in many Arabic societies and created one of the requirements for the emergence of Arabizi: mastery of the Latin alphabet (al-Mahrooqi & Denman 2015). Based on this premise, and in the context of the ubiquity of English and the Latin alphabet in a glocal context, Arabizi is overtly influenced by the hegemony of Latin letters.

4.3 Linguistic mobility phenomena and translingual practices

As the interconnectedness of digital technologies shapes the global technoscapes, the increased human mobility of the post-industrialized world creates a concurrent “ethnoscape”, which significantly supports the reduction of spatial and temporal distances. Increased human mobility is a constitutive feature of glocalization, as it contributes to the interconnectedness of global processes on the local level. According to Blommaert (2010:1-17), the increased interconnectedness and mobility that constitute Appadurai's

¹⁹ See “The Invention of the Arabic Typewriter”. Medium. <https://medium.com/@kerning-cultures/the-invention-of-the-arabic-typewriter-a6d26e0554a>. Last accessed 31/01/2022.

²⁰ See “The History of the Computer Keyboard”. ThoughtCo. <https://www.thoughtco.com/history-of-the-computer-keyboard-1991402>. Last accessed 15/11/2021.

“ethnoscape” have fundamentally changed people’s communication behavior, and thus, their use of linguistic resources. These linguistic resources are distributed across vertically and horizontally stratified continua, which are to be studied and classified using three theoretical concepts: sociolinguistic scales, orders of indexicality, and polycentricity.

Blommaert (2010:32-37) employs the concept of scales following its use in Wallerstein’s (1999; 2004) world-systems theory. There, the concept of scale denotes the various spatial orders of magnitude from local to global. In Blommaert’s work, scales connote different dimensions of language use and their sociolinguistic implications. Higher scales have the claim of generality, while lower scales only have contextual relevance. Scales thus represent the vertical stratification of linguistic mobility phenomena, as they serve to classify sociolinguistic power issues. The interactions of these different scales are relevant to linguistic mobility phenomena because they can be used to explain the reciprocal effects of global diffusion and local realization of different linguistic patterns and standardizations.

The dimensions of sociolinguistic scales describe different linguistic standardizations, which are realized in the form of different indexicality orders. Their interaction seems chaotic at first sight. However, they are structured according to (often unconscious) sociolinguistic categories, which in turn build on systemic and individual expressions of power and prestige (Blommaert 2010:37-39). Blommaert calls the authorities that determine the prestige and power of certain expressions «centers». Accordingly, his concept of polycentricity describes the circumstance that there are always multiple authorities and norms (i.e., multiple centers) that prescribe the value of linguistic expressions (Blommaert 2010:39-41).

These three theoretical concepts – sociolinguistic scales, indexicality orders, and polycentricity – are more salient in the context of glocalization and constitute a helpful framework for examining glocalized varieties from the perspective of mobility. They describe increasing heterogenization of linguistic forms as well as translingual practices triggered by increasing mobility. Therefore, a feature of linguistic glocalization is the mobility and de-spatialization of language, i.e., the mobile transfer of linguistic phenomena and the translingual practices caused by it.

4.3.1 Translingual practices in Arabizi

Similar to other Latinized orthographies such as Pinyin or Greeklish, Arabizi emerged because of the initial absence of ways to digitally display orthographies that are not based on the Latin alphabet (Androutsopoulos 2012; Baines & Nahar 2020:3584). To write Arabic varieties in digital space, speakers of Arabic oriented themselves towards common Latin transcriptions for displaying Arabic web pages when the first Inter-

net connections appeared in Arabic regions in the early 1990's (Bjørnsson 2010:29-31). These writing systems evolved in a decentralized bottom-up process (Abu-Liel & Evitar & Nir 2019:227) that, according to Gorter's (2006:3) definition, excludes the involvement of political institutions and is instead implemented by private actors. Accordingly, the authorities that guide the conventions of this orthography and the local realizations of Arabizi are inherently polycentric. It follows, that the indexicality orders of Arabizi depend on the users and may therefore vary from each other. These variations may take the form of different realizations in writing certain phonemes in line with the isoglosses of Arabic (Behnstedt & Woidich 2005). Examples of this are the different phonological realizations and correspondingly different written realizations of the letter *qāf* <ڧ> [q], which will be discussed in more detail in section 4.4.1.

One of the characterizing features of Arabizi is the translingual effect of code-switching, in which different codes occur within the same linguistic unit, (McArthur & Lam-McArthur & Fontaine 2018a) as can be seen in Example 1. In Arabizi, this phenomenon is a mixture of respective local Arabic codes and the global code English (Warschauer & El Said & Zohry 2002:39-40; Bianchi 2011). As discussed in the previous point, the exclusive status of English is partially related to its global prestige and dominance in the digital space. Accordingly, in Blommaert's theory of sociolinguistic scales, English expressions in the Arabizi variety are the manifestation of a higher, global scale. The main corpus of the Arabizi variety, however, comes from respective local varieties of Arabic that represent a lower, local scale. The emerging picture is one of a heterogeneous glocal variety: on the one hand, using English, testifying to global mobility, and on the other hand, using local varieties, indicating local roots.

4.4 Local linguistic identity construction through digital resources

Sociolinguistic research in the 21st century assumes that linguistic resources influence the identity construction of individuals and groups and vice versa (Coupland 2007; Androutsopoulos 2010). This influence permeates all scales but is particularly noticeable at national and local levels. National languages and their differentiation from local varieties are indispensable for the construction of national identity since mastery of the so-called national language is a limiting factor for determining membership in a nation. During state formation in 19th century Europe, a common language and an associated language ideology were crucial factors in the construction of a common national identity. Although in the postmodern age this identity is shaped by other social factors as well (some of them being supranational), standard languages remain one of the most important factors in the construction of national and state identities (Romaine 2007; Joseph 2011). On the local scale, linguistic identity construction works similar to the national scale. Again, a sense of identity is conveyed through linguistic conventions, in distinction to linguistic conventions of others. Since local varieties often deviate from

standard languages, their linguistic conventions express membership in a local «community of practice» (Paltridge 2015) and its respective group identity (Jaffe 2012:207).

How do glocalization and related digitization affect the linguistic construction of collective identities? Johnstone (2010) found in her study of Pittsburgh's local variety that some local forms align with higher scale language use in a process of linguistic leveling.²¹ Other local forms are preserved and even perceived as reinforced by their juxtaposition with higher scales. This preservation and reinforcement of local identity-constructing varieties also occur in virtual space via emails, blogs, and forums (Johnstone, & Baumgardt 2004). Androutsopoulos (2012) claims in his research on the Latin digraphia “Greeklish” that this orthography used for writing Greek in CMC is mainly utilized for identity maintenance by the local community's diaspora in digital space. In the context of national language ideology, Androutsopoulos established that the use of Latin script, similar to the Arabic case, is seen as a departure from national identity.

From this research on linguistic identity construction, it is evident that local linguistic forms can be leveled by higher scales but are also preserved and perceived more consciously by contrasting them with higher scales. This preservation and, in some cases, reinforcement of local linguistic identities occur increasingly via digital resources, thus contributing to local identity construction in digital global spaces and local places.

4.4.1 Local linguistic identity construction in Arabizi

Since Arabizi is a writing system for predominantly colloquial Arabic varieties, its locally differing realizations reflect the phonological differences inherent to the iso-glosses of the Arabic world (Gordon 2011:27-28; Sullivan 2017:19-20). For example, the consonant *qāf* <ڧ> [q] is pronounced similar to the glottal plosive *hamza* <ء> [?] in the Lebanese variety (Behnstedt & Woidich 2005:55-66). Similarly, in Lebanese Arabizi, the former consonant is transliterated with the same arithmographem <2> as the glottal plosive instead of the <q> commonly used for transcribing *qāf* in Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) (Sullivan 2017:46). Yaghan (2008:40-45) observed in a qualitative study that students at the University of Petra transliterate the letter *qāf* with either the arithmographem <8> or <2>, depending on their phonological realization as [q] or [?]. In the Arabizi variety of Kuwait, the same consonant *qāf* <ڧ> [q] is transliterated as <g> complying with the local phonological realization (Akbar 2019:309). From these examples, it is evident that Arabizi provides a form of expression for local identities, as it is used to display spoken varieties, i.e., local varieties that differ from each other, in the horizontal stratification of the Arabic continuum (Sullivan 2017:39).

²¹ For a definition, see Matthews (2014a).

As the proliferation of local linguistic Arabic identities is realized in digital space by using Arabizi, it is reasonable to assume that this variety contributes to spreading pluralistic Arabic identities. This assumption is supported by the findings of several sociolinguistic studies on Arabizi (see for example Warschauer & El Said & Zohry 2002; Bianchi 2011; Daoudi 2011; Allehaiby 2013; Darwish 2017; Sullivan 2017; Alghamdi & Petraki 2018; Alsulami 2019; Akbar 2019; Naboulsi 2021). Bianchi (2011:62; 313) writes in his sociolinguistic corpus analysis that Arabizi has a clear connection to local Arabic varieties and culture as well as to members of the global Arabic diaspora. Moreover, Bianchi (2011:270) shows that the use of Arabizi (at least in the online forum *mahjoob.com*, which Bianchi used as data pool for his research)²² strongly correlates with non-conformist expressions towards the traditions and governments of Arab countries. The bottom-up emergence of Arabizi and its resulting non-standard conventions reflect its birthplace, the digital space. It also reflects the attitude of the people who primarily use it: the global, digitized Arab youth that rebels against the conventions of pan-Arab ideology Warschauer & El Said & Zohry 2002:319-20; Allehaiby 2013:60; Sullivan 2017:18). These people display their respective local varieties by encoding them with Arabizi in global digital space and thereby construct a glocal linguistic identity for themselves. By displaying the local varieties of the horizontal Arabic continuum, Arabizi represents a (presumably unintended) attempt to promote local varieties and provide them with the support that, so far, only the standard variety MSA of the imagined pan-Arabic entity has enjoyed in the Arabic region: an orthography (Suleiman 2004:59-95).

5 - Conclusion

The definition of glocalization developed in section 2 shows that glocalization is characterized by the reduction of temporal and/or spatial distances through (1) digital networking and (2) increased (human) mobility, the dominance of distinct local phenomena on a global scale through local resource control, and local bottom-up identity construction through digital resources. Based on this concept of glocalization, the present analysis demonstrates that a glocalized variety is characterized by the following linguistic features:

- Usage of the concerned variety in CMC while displaying features of written and spoken language as well as traces of digitization;
- Dominance of the English language and/or the Latin alphabet;
- Mobile transfer of linguistic phenomena, resulting in linguistic despatializa-

²² As Bianchi's detailed sociolinguistic analysis of the Arabizi variety in online contexts connects the vital points of online identity construction and the usage of Arabizi, his research remains highly relevant for this paper.

- tion, and translingual practices;
- Identity construction through non-standardized varieties using digital resources.
-

The analysis in sections 3 and 4 shows that these criteria are constituent factors of the Arabizi variety, as can be seen from the following features of Arabizi:

- Use of arithmographems to display Arabic phonemes and the inclusion of colloquial expressions;
- Digraphia with the Latin alphabet for scripting local Arabic varieties;
- Code-switching with English;
- Digital display of locally rooted varieties along the isoglosses of the Arabic language area to construct the identity of the global Arabic youth.

Each of these points supports the conclusion that the orthographic Arabizi variety combines linguistic features of global and local scales. Consequentially, this paper concludes that the Arabizi variety is a manifestation of linguistic glocalization in the Arabic language area. To explore this linguistic framework of glocalization more thoroughly, further research needs to be done. It would be highly informative to apply this framework to other glocal varieties, such as Androutsopoulos' Greeklish or the Indian variety of English, to investigate if the features of linguistic glocalization defined above are generally applicable, and if there are more to discover.

The arguments that led to the linguistic framework of glocalization are presented in Table 2. This table displays the features of glocalization identified in section 2, their effects on the composition of the geocultural system, the corresponding linguistic features of glocalization, and their expressions in the Arabizi variety as analyzed in section 4. From the analysis of each criterion, it is apparent that all but one (the global dominance of English and/or the Latin alphabet) have the effect of heterogenization on the geocultural system. Hence, the present analysis of the Arabizi variety from the perspective of linguistic glocalization does not only show that this orthographic variety is a manifestation of linguistic glocalization. It also supports the results of other researchers in translingual and glob/cal linguistics (Bhatt 2010; Blommaert 2010; Baines & Nahar 2020) in revealing that glocalization supports the diversification and heterogenization of linguistic resources.

| Feature of glocalization | Effect on the geocultural system | Linguistic manifestation | Corresponding feature of Arabizi |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| Digital networking | Heterogenization Hybridization | Traces of digitization Usage in the context of CMC while carrying features of written and spoken language | Usage of arithmographems to display Arabic phonemes Inclusion of colloquial Arabic expressions in an orthographic variety |
| Global dominance of local phenomena | Hybridization | Dominance of English language and/or Latin alphabet | Digraphia with the Latin alphabet to write local Arabic varieties |
| Increased human mobility | Heterogenization Hybridization | Despatialization of language Mobile transfer of linguistic phenomena Translingual practices | Code-switching with English |
| Bottom-up construction of local identities via digital resources | Heterogenization | Identity construction through non-standardized varieties in the digital space | Digital display of colloquial Arabic varieties along the isoglosses of the Arabic language area Utilization for identity construction of global Arabic youth |

Table 2 - Linguistic framework for glocalization and exemplification

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RECENSIONI

Lorenzo Trombetta. *Negoziazione e potere in Medio Oriente. Alle radici dei conflitti in Siria e dintorni*. Milano: Mondadori Università. 2022. 416 pp. ISBN 978-88-6184-819-1. € 29,00.

La pubblicazione di questo volume si inserisce in un percorso di crescita personale e di continuo apprendimento, come l'autore sottolinea più volte nel corso delle pagine. Comprendere il contesto da cui proviene il lavoro, dunque contestualizzare la figura dell'autore, è il primo passo necessario per poter affermare ciò che ha spinto l'autore a scrivere e il modo in cui l'ha fatto. Lorenzo Trombetta, giornalista e studioso della Siria contemporanea, comincia a collaborare con la rivista *LiMes* subito dopo l'11 settembre 2001 e dal 2006 lavora come corrispondente dal Medio Oriente per ANSA. Vive a Beirut e si concentra sul contesto libanese da quando, a causa del suo lavoro di giornalista e ricercatore, non può più entrare in Siria. Nel 2011, con lo scoppio delle proteste, Trombetta torna a occuparsi della questione siriana con la pubblicazione di un testo da cui, secondo lo stesso autore, «traspare più volte l'urgenza di proporre una contro-narrativa rispetto al discorso "complottista" sulla Siria, allora – come oggi – molto diffuso in diversi ambienti culturali italiani e, in generale, occidentali» (pp. XXVI-XXVII). Quello che Trombetta considera il punto di svolta della sua vita professionale è l'attività, svolta tra la fine del 2012 e l'inizio del 2013, di consulente per un'organizzazione internazionale che gestisce progetti di medio e lungo periodo in Siria, grazie alla quale l'autore sente di aver colmato la distanza con il contesto siriano (p. XXVII). Dal 2014, Trombetta fornisce consulenze a uffici e ad agenzie dell'ONU impegnate in Siria in progetti umanitari.

L'introduzione del saggio pone particolare enfasi sul concetto di «complessità del contesto» (p. XIX): se da un lato, almeno in una fase iniziale, è normale operare un lavoro di semplificazione dei fenomeni al fine di comprenderli, dall'altro bisogna essere consapevoli di questa operazione e riconoscere la complessità della realtà, e quindi guardarla prendendo in considerazione diverse prospettive. La semplificazione è dunque da considerarsi uno strumento che non dovrebbe ridurre o esaurire la complessità del reale.

Proprio in merito al multi-prospettivismo cui si accennava, nella prima delle tre parti principali di cui si compone il volume ("Strumenti") vengono analizzate le due dimensioni di spazio e tempo, «strumenti guida profondamente utili per orientarsi nella complessità» (p. 3). Per quanto riguarda la prima dimensione, Trombetta mette in luce la tendenza di alcuni interlocutori, funzionari, analisti, giornalisti e attivisti, a considerare soltanto il presente oppure un periodo di tempo limitato, o ancora, a evitare di considerare il lungo periodo per una ragione ideologica o politica (p. 19). Comprendere un fenomeno nella sua interezza si-

gnifica considerare gli eventi «disseminati nella cronologia e diffusi sulla mappa geografica» (p. 28). Infatti, lo studio degli elementi geografici e del loro impatto sulle società umane è indispensabile ai fini dell'analisi del contesto. All'interno di questo paragrafo incentrato sullo spazio, viene anche problematizzato il ricorrente modo di distinguere negli eventi la dimensione interna allo Stato, che pone l'enfasi sulla presunta indole dei siriani a dividersi e a farsi guerra gli uni contro gli altri, e la dimensione esterna che li vede come attori passivi, vittime delle violenze commesse dagli attori non siriani (p. 45). Occorre tenere presente che i conflitti sono il risultato dell'interazione tra dimensioni locali, nazionali, regionali e internazionali, senza tralasciare, come spiegato nel terzo paragrafo di questa prima parte, che sono tanti i fattori (gli “strumenti”) che in generale bisogna tenere presenti: ambientali, economici, sociali, culturali (p. 81).

La seconda parte del volume è dedicata al potere che, in Siria come in altri contesti mediorientali, è identificato con il regime, e nello specifico sempre più con il presidente Bashar al-Assad [Baššār al-Asad]. Non vengono così prese in considerazione le reti di individui e interessi che spesso agiscono in maniera quasi autonoma l'una dall'altra. Trombetta è consapevole delle «trappole terminologiche» (p. XVII) che riguardano le definizioni di “regime”, “popolo” e “comunità locali”, che portano a chiedersi se chi fa parte del regime faccia parte del popolo, se questo coincide con tutti coloro che sono oppressi dal regime, se l'espressione comunità locali sia troppo generica e vaga rispetto all'espressione popolo (p. 102). Dopo averle analizzate, l'autore illustra l'articolazione del potere e le sue componenti principali (egemonia, contrazione egemonica, politica di negoziazione e di contestazione, cooptazione), facendo ampiamente riferimento a John Chalcraft, studioso di movimenti di contestazione politica tra il Nordafrica e il Medio Oriente. Si entra a questo punto nel vivo della questione, ovvero l'analisi del sistema di potere siriano compiuta attraverso la descrizione di elementi ricorrenti in tutta la regione: l'ambiente, che modella il processo di “governance”; l'organizzazione della società; il ruolo di intermediazione tra i contesti locali e i poteri sovralocali assunto dalle *élite* locali; le città, luogo privilegiato della negoziazione; i conflitti (pp. 115-159).

La terza e ultima parte si concentra su uno in particolare di questi elementi: gli intermediari, figure centrali nel processo di prelievo delle risorse del territorio e distribuzione non equa dei servizi e delle rendite (pp. 163-164). La sezione descrive le caratteristiche dell'intermediazione e le ripercussioni di questa pratica clientelare sulla popolazione che, impoverendosi irrimediabilmente, è costretta a trovare delle modalità alternative di vita e di sopravvivenza (p. 171). Un aspetto interessante messo in luce dall'autore è l'interdipendenza e la coesistenza di strutture “formali”, vale a dire le istituzioni dello Stato-nazione, e le strutture

“informali” (p. 173). Tale interdipendenza è resa possibile dalla presenza delle *élite* locali che erogano servizi in maniera informale sostituendosi di fatto agli apparati istituzionali ritenuti corrotti. Ricevere diritti e servizi diventa in questo modo un privilegio e un favore offerto dalle *élite* e non più un diritto (p. 181), il che ha causato una profonda avversione per la burocrazia e la formalità. Trombetta propone poi una lettura storica del ruolo degli intermediari dal Seicento a oggi mettendo in luce gli elementi di continuità e di cambiamento.

A questo punto, con la chiusura della parte centrale del libro, l'autore inserisce alcune «riflessioni non conclusive» (p. 273) in cui espone l'intento del suo lavoro. Il volume, spiega Trombetta, non si propone di fornire delle indicazioni per la fine del conflitto in Siria, o della crisi in Libano, ma cerca piuttosto di evidenziare la necessità di «riconoscere noi stessi e gli altri come entità complesse, caratterizzati da rappresentazioni e autorappresentazioni identitarie frutto di una continua negoziazione tra noi e il contesto, con le sue continuità e trasformazioni» (p. 312).

Il testo, dunque, oltre ad affrontare storicamente e politicamente la questione siriana, si fa pretesto per proporre una nuova metodologia che prenda in considerazione tutta la complessità e le contaminazioni che avvengono tra i vari ordini storici, politici, identitari. Tale tematica viene ripresa anche nell'appendice, in cui sono analizzate tre storie di identità diverse «alimentate per scopi egemonici» (p. XIX).

La svolta metodologica che viene compiuta e su cui più volte l'autore ragiona in maniera esplicita sembra essere uno dei principali apporti del testo. Trombetta mette in discussione la modalità tradizionali – spesso semplicistiche e poco disposte a fare i conti con la complessità della storia – di analisi sul conflitto siriano e, in generale, degli avvenimenti della regione. Attraverso il suo lavoro, l'autore invita a uscire dalla «galleria degli specchi deformanti» (p. 306), ovvero a liberarsi dalle rappresentazioni parziali e fuorvianti che non permettono di analizzare criticamente, di ascoltare per porre attenzione alle diversità e di provare a mettere in discussione le nostre certezze (p. 306). Nel fare questo, tuttavia, Trombetta non si pone in maniera paternalistica. Egli riporta, anzi, degli esempi di esperienze vissute in prima persona che lo hanno aiutato a rendersi conto di quanto spesso gli sia capitato di operare delle semplificazioni nella schematizzazione di dati, ad esempio per ricostruire le cause della frammentazione territoriale della Siria: «il modello aveva finito per modellare, appunto, la realtà, tanto che quest'ultima diventava comprensibile soltanto se si presentava adatta a essere inserita nello schema elaborato a priori» (p. 51). Un altro esempio proposto nel libro riguarda la distanza che traspare tra la visione esterna e la visione interna di un fenomeno: in questo caso l'autore racconta i suoi tentativi di es-

trapolare, durante l'intervista a diverse fonti locali, ciò che riteneva funzionale a una certa rappresentazione del conflitto in Siria. Grazie a una conoscenza più approfondita del fenomeno e anche dell'interlocutore, l'autore ha potuto ridurre la distanza tra le rappresentazioni (p. 55).

Il lavoro di Trombetta affronta il tema delle rappresentazioni con modalità che ricordano quelle di Edward Said in *Covering Islam* (Said 1981). Come Said, Trombetta mette in luce l'antagonismo, costruito dai media, tra l'Occidente "laico" da un lato, e il Medio Oriente e l'Islam descritti come entità monolitiche dall'altro. Tuttavia, mentre Said opera una critica mirata ad alcuni giornalisti e accademici incapaci di vedere oltre gli «specchi deformanti» (p. 306) della propria *Weltanschauung*, l'analogia critica posta da Trombetta presenta anche una valenza affermativa, laddove tenta di colmare questa distanza e di elaborare un metodo che rompa con la prospettiva monolitica della propria cultura. Come quella di Said, la posizione di Trombetta potrebbe essere considerata una premessa metodologica per un'analisi della storia e dei conflitti del Medio Oriente, più attenta e più consapevole dei propri limiti.

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Zaid Al-Ali. *Arab Constitutionalism. The Coming Revolution*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2021. 334 pp. ISBN (e-book) 9781108570824. € 57,00.

Arab Constitutionalism. The Coming Revolution s'inscrit dans la littérature prolifique consacrée aux soulèvements ayant traversé la région *Middle East North Africa* (MENA) à partir de 2011 (Grote & Röder 2016). Plus qu'une énième contribution à un sujet semblant avoir été analysé sous toutes les coutures, l'ouvrage, paru en 2021, est riche de l'expertise de son auteur : Zaid Al-Ali, juriste spécialisé en matière de *constitution-building*, a assisté pendant quinze ans une dizaine de pays arabes dans leurs transitions constitutionnelles. Nulle intention, de sa part, de dresser un tableau exhaustif des causes profondes de ces soulèvements, ni de leur déroulé. Son ambition, qu'il expose explicitement dès les premières pages, est tout autre : « that the lessons of the post-2011 transitions be learned and be translated into a clear set of objectives that all progressive forces should strive to achieve » (p. 4). Al-Ali se concentre dès lors sur une analyse minutieuse des transitions constitutionnelles à l'œuvre au Maghreb et au Moyen-Orient à partir de 2011 : en soulignant les points de comparaison et de divergence entre les différentes expériences nationales, et en faisant appel à des exemples extérieurs à la région, il met en lumière les obstacles, les limites et les échecs, afin de proposer des pistes à suivre pour une mise en place de projets de réforme efficaces et réalisables.

L'ouvrage est composé de deux parties, dont la première est consacrée à huit expériences nationales de transition constitutionnelle. Quatre chapitres sont dédiés aux États dont la constitution a été le fruit de négociations entre différents acteurs (la Tunisie, l'Égypte, le Yémen et la Libye), à l'exception de l'expérience transitionnelle du Soudan, qui se trouvait encore au début de ce processus au moment de la rédaction de l'ouvrage ; elle a donc été regroupée dans un cinquième chapitre avec les trois États au sein desquels la réforme constitutionnelle a été dirigée par le pouvoir politique en place, à travers la désignation des comités chargés de la transition constitutionnelle (la Jordanie, le Maroc et l'Algérie). Al-Ali fait également référence aux expériences syrienne, libanaise et irakienne, sans leur consacrer de chapitre. La seconde partie de l'ouvrage regroupe quant à elle cinq chapitres thématiques, dans lesquels sont successivement abordées la question de la raison d'être des constitutions ; de la relation entre le pouvoir politique et les individus, avec un intérêt particulier pour la façon dont les revendications en matière de droits humains et socio-économiques ont été retranscrites (ou non) dans les constitutions et dans la pratique politique ; du poids des expériences, des pratiques et des structures coloniales sur les régimes politiques arabes de-

puis l'ère des indépendances jusqu'à nos jours ; de points techniques relatifs à la transition constitutionnelle, période cruciale pour l'avenir du pays ; et enfin, de l'implication plurielle des puissances étrangères dans ces processus, et de ses conséquences. Al-Ali s'appuie sur un corpus de sources dense et varié, mêlant l'étude des différentes constitutions (sous leurs formes préliminaire et finale) à des entretiens formels et informels avec des membres des classes politiques et sociétés civiles.

Nul essentialisme de la part de l'auteur lorsque celui-ci parle d'un « constitutionnalisme arabe », choix terminologique qu'il justifie rigoureusement. Liés, ces États le sont bien par une histoire ottomane et coloniale partagée (sous des formes certes différentes), et par une langue juridique commune, l'arabe. Ils le sont également par la temporalité du déroulé des soulèvements, les répercussions de ces derniers par-delà les frontières nationales, et par des indicateurs socio-économiques et des régimes aux caractéristiques similaires. Al-Ali fait notamment référence aux taux de pauvreté et de chômage (particulièrement parmi les plus jeunes), aux importantes inégalités de revenus et d'accès à l'éducation et aux soins, et à l'autoritarisme du pouvoir politique (ainsi qu'à ses conséquences en termes de dégradation des droits humains). Le mot d'ordre des soulèvements est lui aussi scandé à l'unisson : justice sociale et *isqāt al-nizām* ("chute du régime"), selon le célèbre slogan. Par ailleurs, comment expliquer le choix partagé de tourner une page de l'histoire constitutionnelle nationale, *a minima* par un amendement des textes en vigueur, voire par la promulgation de nouvelles constitutions ? À la fois fondement et identité du régime politique, la constitution est pensée par les différentes parties comme l'occasion de transcrire à l'écrit et dans les faits leurs aspirations politiques et sociales, ainsi que leur place et leur rôle dans le régime à bâtir. Ainsi, notamment, des négociations entre les Forces de la liberté et du changement et le Conseil militaire de transition soudanais, soucieux de déterminer la nature (civile ou militaire) du régime suite au renversement d'Omar al-Bachir le 11 avril 2019. Les orientations principales à adopter sont discutées au sein des comités constituants (dont les membres sont élus ou nommés) : le nouveau régime sera-t-il parlementaire ou présidentiel ? Est-il préférable d'opter pour un État unitaire ou fédéral ? Quelle place accorder à la religion au sein de la constitution ? Les transitions constitutionnelles et les discussions qui s'y déroulent représenteraient dès lors un moment clé où se jouerait l'avenir politique, socio-économique et diplomatique d'un État.

L'espoir des lendemains qui chantent semble finalement avoir laissé place à l'immobilisme politique. Pour les États ayant fait le pari de la « stabilité et de la continuité » (p. 250), peu de choses ont changé, malgré les amendements constitutionnels qui se sont parfois succédés (la Jordanie ayant par exemple connu trois

vagues d'amendements, en 2011, en 2014 et en 2016, sans effet substantiel). Al-Ali remarque que ces régimes sont pour la plupart toujours caractérisés par un hyper-présidentialisme et un assujettissement du pouvoir judiciaire à l'exécutif, et la situation des droits humains n'a pas connu d'amélioration, notamment concernant la liberté d'expression et la répression de l'opposition politique. Pis encore, pour d'autres États, les soulèvements ont laissé place à des conflits et des guerres qui se sont par la suite régionalisées voire internationalisées : on pense bien sûr au Yémen, à la Libye ou encore à la Syrie, bien que la situation de cette dernière soit différente des deux autres étant donné que le soulèvement n'a pas signé le renversement du régime en place. Seule la transition constitutionnelle de la Tunisie aurait porté ses fruits, Al-Ali érigeant le pragmatisme et l'inclusivité des négociations au rang de modèle et d'inspiration pour les autres États. L'actualité politique tunisienne, marquée par une suspension du Parlement par le président Kaïs Saïed en juillet 2021, d'abord prolongée puis conclue par sa dissolution le 30 mars 2022, semble toutefois assombrir le tableau.

Est-ce à dire que le bilan de ces transitions constitutionnelles doive être perçu comme marque et preuve d'un fatalisme pesant sur la région ? Loin s'en faut : Al-Ali présente de manière rationnelle et méthodique les raisons derrière l'échec de ces processus, sans avoir recours à des explications essentialistes. Outre l'autoritarisme de transitions imposées par le haut et n'ayant pas été mues par une quelconque volonté conciliatrice, ce sont deux grands manquements que l'auteur souligne : le flou des textes, et le gouffre entre ces derniers et la pratique politique et juridique. Une constitution, qu'elle soit transitionnelle ou permanente, lorsqu'elle se caractérise par une importante ambiguïté de sens, résulte en une latitude interprétative telle qu'elle peut mener à des lectures différentes voire contradictoires, menant à des appréciations et prises de décisions arbitraires. C'est le cas de l'article 80 de la Constitution tunisienne de 2014, relatif à la mise en place de l'état d'urgence « en cas de péril imminent », et justifiant que le président prenne « les mesures requises par ces circonstances exceptionnelles » sans indiquer la durée maximale de cet état d'exception (il est question de « garantir le retour *dans les plus brefs délais* à un fonctionnement régulier des pouvoirs publics »),¹ et en gardant également le silence quant à la nature des dérogations, ce qui représente une menace potentielle pour les droits humains. Quant à l'écart parfois considérable entre le texte et son application, celui-ci s'explique par l'absence d'une mise en place systématique de mécanismes et d'institutions chargées de veiller à la concrétisation et au respect des dispositions constitutionnelles.

¹ Article 80. "Tunisie. Constitution du 27 janvier 2014". Digithèque MJP. <https://mjp.univ-perp.fr/constit/tn2014.htm>. Dernière visite 24/05/2022. Nous soulignons.

Consacrer constitutionnellement la garantie et la protection des droits socio-économiques (comme le font la plupart des constitutions arabes après 2011) sans en assurer la justiciabilité ne peut mener à aucune amélioration notable en la matière, ces dispositions demeurant des vœux pieux.

C'est ici qu'apparaît la richesse inestimable de cet ouvrage : non content de s'en tenir à un constat de l'échec, Zaid Al-Ali propose un plan d'action détaillé et des pistes précises à suivre pour penser une réforme effective et réalisable. Il insiste sur la nécessité de prêter une attention particulière à la période transitionnelle, en veillant à ce que l'ensemble des acteurs et groupes les plus influents soient mêlés aux négociations et au processus, et que les compromis soient jugés satisfaisants aux yeux de toutes et tous. Dans le même ordre d'idées, il met l'accent sur l'indispensable participation de la société civile aux discussions autour de l'avenir politique et de l'orientation constitutionnelle de l'État. Concernant les constitutions adoptées, Al-Ali explique que la priorité absolue doit être l'encaissement et la limitation constitutionnelle des pouvoirs, en mettant définitivement un terme à l'hyper-présidentialisme, en assurant l'indépendance de fait du pouvoir judiciaire, et en permettant l'applicabilité et le respect de l'ensemble des dispositions constitutionnelles, par l'instauration d'organes et de mécanismes de contrôle et de sanction. Enfin, l'auteur explique que le recours à des experts internationaux n'est pas à proscrire, la priorité étant d'instaurer la responsabilité de ces États étrangers dans le cas où leur implication aurait des conséquences préjudiciables (le cas de la transition constitutionnelle irakienne de 2005 en est bien tristement emblématique).

Parce qu'elle est minutieuse et détaillée, la première partie de l'ouvrage, consacrée à l'analyse des ébauches constitutionnelles, des textes promulgués et de la pluralité des comités et acteurs impliqués dans chacune de ces transitions, peut décourager un lectorat étranger à ces questions ; mais l'on ne saurait trop recommander à quiconque souhaitant un éclairage sur les processus constitutionnels et les transitions politiques des États arabes après 2011 de surmonter ces embûches par la lecture de la deuxième partie de l'ouvrage, thématique et moins dense. Le huitième chapitre, "Government (or the Weight of History)", est particulièrement passionnant : l'auteur y met en lumière les reliquats du colonialisme au sein des régimes politiques arabes contemporains, donnant à voir le poids de la *path dependence* sans pour autant dédouaner les classes politiques actuelles de leurs responsabilités. Sans doute n'aurait-il pas été intéressant de traiter plus en profondeur la réception des constitutions post-2011 par les sociétés civiles. L'article 6 de la Constitution tunisienne de 2014 en est le parfait exemple. Il a été perçu comme le fruit de compromis l'ayant finalement vidé de toute signification substantielle, consacrant l'État comme « le gardien de la religion », chargé de

« protéger le sacré et [d']interdire d'y porter atteinte », tout en « garantir[ssan] la liberté de croyance et de conscience » :² on comprend bien les possibilités d'interprétations et d'instrumentalisations infinies représentées par un tel article (Ben Achour 2014). L'on ne peut toutefois que saluer l'approche de l'auteur qui, loin de reprendre à son compte la représentation éculée d'un droit absolument désincarné et intemporel, donne au contraire à voir les choix politiques qui le font naître et l'animent, et les subjectivités qui le façonnent et le négocient ; le droit comme production humaine, en somme. L'auteur appelle de ses vœux la préparation d'un second volume, consacré à des transitions constitutionnelles non abordées dans ce premier ouvrage (ainsi, notamment, de la Mauritanie) et de l'issue de processus toujours en cours au moment de sa rédaction (ce qui était le cas du Soudan). L'on ne peut que s'en réjouir.

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² Article 6. “Tunisie. Constitution du 27 janvier 2014”. Digithèque MJP. <https://mjp.univ-perp.fr/constit/tn2014.htm>. Dernière visite 24/05/2022.

Leonardo Davoudi. *Persian Petroleum. Oil, Empire and Revolution in Late Qajar Iran*. London/New York: I.B. Tauris. 2021. 240 pp. ISBN 978-1-8386-0684-8. \$ 85,00.

The vast number of concessions granted by Qajar Iran to foreigners has been a crucial topic in Iranian historiography. Several authors have investigated in detail the concessions, their impact on the Qajar economy, and how they were related to Russian and British imperialism.¹ Among them, Leonardo Davoudi, a researcher with the Global History of Capitalism Project at the Oxford Centre for Global History, has added a new dimension to this field of research thanks to recently uncovered primary sources: the Kitabgi Family Papers. After the publication of an article on the negotiations leading to the Reuter concession (Davoudi 2014), Davoudi relied on these sources to investigate the emergence of the oil industry in his book *Persian Petroleum. Oil, Empire and Revolution in Late Qajar Iran*, published in 2021.

Despite some brief mentions of previous and later times, the book is set in a time frame that stretches from 1901 to 1914. It is composed of eleven chapters and two appendixes (the text of the D'Arcy concession and biographical details) that, starting from the genesis of the D'Arcy concession, explore the early development of the oil industry in Iran.

Persian Petroleum begins with an introduction to the imperial system and gives some preliminary information about the British and the Iranian empires. Here, the author provides us with a brief literature review of the Iranian oil venture. He stresses that the early publications on this topic were commissioned by the corporate heirs of the D'Arcy concession (p. 7)² and that also Ferrier's seminal work *The History of the British Petroleum* (1982) « [...] ambiguously circumnavigates sensitive matters, frames delicate issues in favour of the company and omits crucial details regarding the company's political and diplomatic activities» (p. 9). As a result, the book tries to overcome these limits and aims at examining the implications on British oil interests caused by the evolution and the differences between the Persian context and the British one (p. 9).

¹ There is an extensive scholarship on the evolution of the Qajar economy and the granting of concessions to foreigners. Among others, the works of Bharier (1971), Issawi (1971), Foran (1991), and Floor (1991) provide a very clear outlook of the transformation of the Qajar economy in the 19th and 20th centuries and offer different perspectives on the growing economic connections with Europe. Concerning economic concessions and how they were related to the relations with Russia and Britain, see Kazemzadeh (2013). Concessions were not granted exclusively to Britain and Russia. For an account of the ones to Belgium, see Dumoulin (1977).

² Here he mentions the works of Longhurst (1936) and Lockhart (1938).

Throughout the following chapters, Davoudi offers a very detailed account of the initial period of the oil industry. He shows how the concession granted by the Qajar government to the British businessman William Knox D'Arcy with the intermediation of General Antoine Kitabgi Khan was not a linear process from the signature of the concession to the discovery of oil and the emergence of one of the largest British companies. Conversely, the chapters of *Persian Petroleum* trace a development characterized by several distinct phases. In doing so, Davoudi particularly stresses the fluctuating relationship with the British government – depending on broader British imperial interests – and with the members of the Kitabgi family. Additionally, a leitmotiv throughout the book is the connection between the company's activities and the Persian situation, such as the necessity to find an agreement with the Bakhtiyari tribe and the impact of political events on the company.

As a result, a merit of the book is its in-depth description of the relations and discussions involving not only the actors that played a crucial role in the oil venture – such as D'Arcy and the Kitabgi family – but also those members of the British imperial élite that at one moment or another were more or less loosely connected to the project. This is linked to Davoudi's decision to focus on a rather brief time frame that marks a difference compared to other articles and books dealing with this topic.³

The book's detailed account of the events is also the result of its extensive bibliography. The secondary sources are mainly in English and include a vast number of books and articles relating to British imperial history, oil, and Iranian history.⁴ However, while Ferrier's *The History of the British Petroleum* (1982) is often mentioned, Shaffiee's *Machineries of Oil. An Infrastructural History of BP in Iran* (2018) is not present in the bibliography.

Concerning primary sources, Davoudi's book is based on several official documents and private papers consulted in the United Kingdom, the United States, and France. Most documents were found in British archives, including the Churchill Archives Centre in Cambridge, the BP Archive at the University of Warwick, the National Archives, and the Middle East Centre Archive of St Antony's College, Oxford. The author also referred to documents relating to Morgan Shuster at the Library of Congress in Washington. Eventually, and most importantly, Davoudi made extensive use of the Kitabgi Family Papers, privately held

³ See for example Longrigg (1961), Ferrier, (1982), Cronin (2004), and Shaffiee (2018).

⁴ Relating to Iranian history, some relevant works of prominent historians such as Janet Afary, Stephanie Cronin, Charles Issawi, Homa Katouzian, Firuz Kezempzadeh, and Nikki Keddie are listed.

in Paris. They include letters, papers, and diaries of the members of the Kitabgi family involved in the oil concession and provide a new valuable source for the study of Qajar Iran, and which the author had already used in his article “Divine Spark. The Prelude to the Tobacco Régie of 1890” (Davoudi 2014).

Conversely, a shortcoming of *Persian Petroleum* is the lack of attention to the Iranian side of the story. While the author stresses several times throughout the book that the Iranian point of view was often neglected by the British and even claims that the new documents reveal the Persian government’s decision-making process (p. 7), Iran sometimes remains in the background. Except for some crucial moments, such as the negotiations with the Bakhtiyari tribe (p. 55-64) and the Constitutional Revolution (p. 65-80), local developments – including crucial ones such as Amin al-Sultan’s assassination (p. 83) – are not sufficiently investigated despite their strong impact on the workings of the oil company. As a result, it would have been of interest to rely also on Iranian documents to shed some more light on the governmental position and the reaction of the local population.

Nevertheless, Davoudi’s book represents an important contribution to the historiography of the Iranian oil industry and, more widely, to the one investigating the Qajar concessions to foreign investors. Furthermore, it may stimulate further research that joins together the Kitabgi papers and Iranian primary sources.

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Mehmet Hakan Yavuz. *Nostalgia for Empire. The Politics of Neo-Ottomanism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2020. 337 pp. ISBN 978-01-9751-228-9. € 33,05.

Among reductionist, culturalist, and orientalist biases characterizing branches of the social and political sciences, one clear specimen is the debate over Turkey's multifaceted features, from its history to sociology as well as from the humanities to foreign policy. In particular, the unparalleled behavior deployed by Turkey's Justice and Development Party (AKP, Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi) in the last two decades has led to a "renaissance" of Turkish Studies, where abundant space has been dedicated to the evolution of the concept of "Ottomanism". As a matter of fact, while academics have generally recognized that the instrumental use of the past is now a political project, incorporating made-up traditions and considerable fantasy, there is no unanimous agreement over its deeper meaning, origin, and practical implementation (Fisher Onar 2009:229-241).

Here, what comes to shed light is the latest book by M. Hakan Yavuz, one of the most established scholars working on Turkish Islamism in its broadest possible sense. Indeed, both exploring and embodying the everlasting contradictions over this theme, the book is an attempt to explain the sociocultural causes, actors, and currents that have played a critical role in the construction of Neo-Ottomanism as «[...] a conservative ideology, a form of identity, a worldview, an orientation in foreign policy, and a melancholic reaction that Turkey experienced after the empire fell» (p.6). Without any doubt, absolute relevance stems from its aim to demonstrate how such a disputed notion is not reducible to a single aspect. Yet, it reflects the dynamics of interconnection and interdependence existing in different contexts. That is, disentangling such a complex concept is fundamental to understanding in what way – both at the political elite and the popular-masses level – Neo-Ottomanism has been fluctuating between a mindset of reaction and restoration.

What mostly distinguishes the eight chapters of Yavuz's work from other accounts¹ becomes immediately clear in the Introduction and Chapter 1. Here, a rich theoretical-historical framework provides the basis to capture the importance of how different conceptualizations of the same term can be shaped by different elements, and can themselves shape different outcomes. Appropriately, a sound premise depicts the distinctive versions characterizing the more recent Republican Ottomanism, other than dissimilarities from its 19th century original predecessor movement. Although treating this new Ottomanism as «[...] a social

¹ Just to name some: Fisher Onar 2009; Ergin & Karakaya 2017; Wastnidge 2019.

imaginary, that is, a set of shared norms, symbols, and myths that constitute the collective framework of understanding and ways of representing collective life» (p. 25), the author also underlines how it assumes different shades when attaching itself to specific ideologies.

This is supportive of Yavuz's main argument: the imagery of the Ottoman past is the most crucial determinant of Turkish identity and provides the primary context of politics. Specifically, Yavuz argues that Republican Ottomanism is constituted with various elements from history, but at its essence is the nostalgia for the past. In turn, this nostalgia has significant influence on the frictions between secular and Islamic variants of Turkish identity provoked by the Kemalist Westernizing reforms. Coherently with the idea that nostalgia can serve to recover something of value in the past as well as something missing in the present (Lears 1998:59-66), Yavuz states that

Neo-Ottomanism means the formation of a historical consciousness (i.e., how people think and look at their past from different perspectives) to cope with the present issues and challenges. This consciousness has been formed by numerous cultural, literary, and cognitive factors that interact with each other as well (p. 4).

Above all, he agrees with Aktay that in conservative Muslim circles in Turkey there is always some sense of lingering political nostalgia (Aktay 1997) and a deep sense of loss in Turkish society (p. 21). In this light, the author succeeds where previous accounts have failed: detecting the roots that gave momentum to the emergence of Ottomanism under new vests. Indeed, he sounds unquestionable when finding that, although the Kemalist Republic's nation-building policy of forgetting the Ottoman past aimed to create a new national and secular (Turkish and Western) identity,

[...] the imperial “ghost” still haunts the state and society and has done so since the empire collapsed. The more it was pressed, the more it responded with the same intensity of “remembering” that imperial past (p.6).

This perpetual tension runs throughout Yavuz's book. He advocates that the “Jacobin” attitude of Atatürk's reforms paved the way for a reactionary force that the pro-Ottoman myth-making industry has canalized over time until the visible one exposed by President Erdoğan and his AKP (p. 65). Accordingly, he catches a mutually constitutive relationship that, due to different combinations of these attachments, leads to either Islamization of the Ottoman heritage or the Ottomanization of Islam within various identity construction sites. Hence,

the vague concept of nostalgia is here well-explained as the main force shaping these alternatives, by constructing historical memory to envision a future for the nation and by allowing the creation of an identity that heals the deep division in the self that underlies the sense of loss or ontological insecurity characterizing Turkish society (Ciftci & Yavuz 2021:314-317).

Chapter 2 substantiates these propositions with an analysis over the social, economic, and intellectual origins shaping memory construction from the Ottoman past, including the changing demographic makeup of Turkey, suppression of memories by the top-down modernization project, democratization, the Cold War and making of a Turkish-Islamic synthesis, leftist interpretation of history, and neoliberal economic policies.

Built on this background, Chapter 3 surely represents the real added value of Yavuz's work, since it distinguishes itself for comprehensively exploring the strong correlations and interdependencies between literary and political dimensions of post-imperial nostalgia. Focusing on the intellectual contributions of key figures like A.H Tanpinar, N.F Kisakürek, and S. Ayverdi, literature is identified as a major battleground (p. 68), and – according to each author's ideological affinities – as a transmission belt for an «aestheticization» of the empire over questions of belonging, remembrance, and ideology. Moreover, Yavuz is pioneering in surveying the linking of those authors with left and right-wing counteractive «alternative identities» to the Kemalist secular outlook of the early Turkish Republic. In addition, the chapter accurately examines Said Nursi's heritage and the influence of various Nurcu communities – especially Gülenist movements – to demonstrate the synergy between religion, Ottoman-Turkish identities, and policymaking processes.

Coherently, Chapters 4, 5, and 6 present a novel approach to the tenures of politicians, such as Erbakan, Özal, and Erdoğan, to explain different versions of Ottomanism as the determinants of the most formidable religious conservative political movements since the 1980s. Yavuz is original in discerning between «reflective» and «restorative» Neo-Ottomanism. The former, as expressed by Özal, revived and reframed progressive, cosmopolitan, and universal elements of the Ottoman Empire to counter the tight Kemalist tutelage (p. 124). Restorative nostalgia has become salient since 2002, when the AKP and President Erdoğan started adopting a different construction of the Ottoman past which tries to restore the Islamic character of the Empire domestically – as opposed to its cosmopolitan one – by discursively reproducing its past glories (p. 140). Similarly, in foreign policy, Turkey now seeks to restore presence or influence in the post-Ottoman space by promoting Turkey's «historical responsibility» toward those territories and peoples (p. 202).

Finally, Chapter 7 and 8 discuss the international dimension of Ottomanism by looking at the evolution of Turkish Foreign Policy (TFP) during the AKP rule and its consequences. In contrast with other either realist or constructivist accounts, Yavuz convincingly argues that politicized Neo-Ottoman nostalgia has little to do with history or the past and is much more connected to contemporary feelings of exclusion, marginalization, displacement, and especially discontinuity of identity (p. 24). Within this discourse, nostalgia operates as a tool for political mobilization and integration since it aims to restore, or rather to emulate, former Ottoman successes by combining traumatic memory and stressful experiences with an idealized, fictional, and decontextualized understanding of the past. Such an approach explains Turkey's recent proactive engagement in exploring new alliances on the basis of Islamic solidarity. Consequently, Yavuz ably explains how Turkey seeks to exploit strategically its erstwhile geopolitical reach by relying on a supposed «historical responsibility» in order to strengthen and reaffirm relationships with areas that used to be under Ottoman rule (p. 201; 181). Another point deserving attention is that, though recognizing Erdoğan's own logics of power, he rejects the notion that the AKP's anti-Westernism and Islamist-Ottomanist worldview led it directly to radical shifts for domestic political purposes. In fact, he considers this argument to be «[...] essentialist and Orientalist since it treats human conduct as an outcome of identity and considers Islamic and Ottomanist thinking mutually exclusive toward European identity» (p. 192). Here, Yavuz argues that TFP under the AKP was driven by the emergence of a new Islamo-Ottomanist Turkish elite who have hegemonic desires but, more importantly, by geopolitical structural changes (p. 198). Thus, his thesis also holds from a theoretical and methodological viewpoint: «[...] identities influence national interests, whereas ideology acquires a well-defined intervening role between the external environment and the foreign policy outcome» (p. 201). At the same time, the main take-away from Chapter 8 is that, in tandem with disillusionment with its traditional Western camp, the feeling of a new TFP based on “Neo-Ottomanism” in the Balkans and in the Middle East is perceived as a threat or as an expansionist strategy aiming to revive an imperialist past.

All in all, Yavuz's merit lies in having overcome the frequent Westernism² vis-à-vis Islamism dichotomy. As he notes, this can no longer hold when dealing with the quick and effective way Erdoğan and his AKP deployed a thoroughly nationalist version of it, thereby fueling Turkey's eternal “Sèvres syndrome”, na-

² Differently from Occidentalism, Westernism is here to be intended as Turkey's choice – from its early republican phase until the late 1990s – to anchor itself to the West in terms of security, culture, and an institutional framework in order to emancipate itself from its Ottoman past. See Chua 2017; Kushner 2019.

mely its hostile suspicion toward the risk of the country's disintegrations because of pressures from minorities and foreign powers. In accordance with a common Turkish saying – *bizler hüzünlü bir milletiz* ("we are a nation of melancholy") – *Nostalgia for the Empire* reminds us that «[t]he ghost of the empire has permeated the vision and hopes of Turkey deeply enough to transcend the political portfolio of any ruling Turkish government, regardless of its partisan bearings» (p. 202).

Yavuz has once again managed to recall how policies, discourses, and everyday practices in today's Turkey – including the latest reversals accompanying the latest governments – are inextricably related to the fine yet durable *fil rouge* connecting ideal retrospective concepts such as Neo-Ottomanism to both the Ottoman Empire and the ongoing modern republican successor. Books like this are crucial not only for a general understanding the multiple façades composing the Ottomanism topic itself, but also: (1) to enlarge the effort in assessing origins and future directions of the erratic changes typically affecting Turkey's socio-political milieu; (2) to evaluate the capacity of this new flow of works in redeeming accounts about Turkey out of embeddedness in Western-centered outlooks. In the end, if the current socio-political dream (Levitash 2010) re-imagining the Ottoman past can be seen as a cognitive utopia linked to a nostalgia for the bygone Empire, Yavuz's work allows us to interpret Neo-Ottomanism also as a retrotopia situated at the axis between the past and future and shaping the daily imaginary in contemporary Turkey.

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Maydan è la prima rivista italiana di studi sui mondi arabi, semitici e islamici diretta da dottorande/i e laureate/i, il cui scopo principale è quello di incoraggiare la produzione di primi articoli di ricerca da parte di giovani studiose/i. Questa piattaforma si pone come un percorso di formazione continua che coinvolge sia le autrici e gli autori sia il Comitato editoriale della rivista, spronandole/li alla riflessione sulla ricerca e allo sviluppo delle abilità necessarie per la produzione, redazione e divulgazione di articoli scientifici. In tal modo, *Maydan* intende sostenere l'ingresso dei giovani studiose/i nel mondo della ricerca e favorirne i contatti e il dialogo. *Maydan* ruota attorno a un'ampia visione dei mondi arabi, semitici e islamici, che comprende le aree geografiche del Medio Oriente e del Nord Africa, le regioni del Sahel, del Caucaso, dell'Asia centrale e del Sud-est asiatico. La rivista prende come punto di partenza i mondi arabi per poi allargare la propria visione ai mondi semitici e a tutte quelle aree storicamente permeate dalla cultura islamica. *Maydan* dà spazio anche a contributi riguardanti le connessioni di queste aree geografiche con Europa, Nord America e resto del mondo. Gli ambiti di interesse di *Maydan* includono l'antropologia, l'archeologia, l'arte, il diritto, l'economia, la filosofia, la letteratura, la linguistica, la religione, le scienze politiche, la sociologia e la storia. La rivista ha cadenza annuale. Gli articoli inviati sono sottoposti a un processo di doppia revisione tra pari che prevede, quando necessario, l'ausilio di un comitato scientifico internazionale, costituito da docenti delle varie discipline.

