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Mediterranean Migration Mosaic

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Monkeys and Moors: Perceptions of Maghrebis in France and Spain

The short distance between the Maghreb, and France and Spain, has allowed for historical and cultural interactions between these two regions. Colonisation and settlement have occurred in both directions, but in more recent times, immigration has trended to the north. With the growing number of Maghrebis in France and Spain comes an increasing awareness of the presence of these populations. With the current economic crisis and the average income of these migrant families (in France for example, the average household income for immigrant families is 31% lower than that of the native born population)¹, immigrants, and Maghrebi immigrants in particular, are being used as the scapegoat by many French and Spanish families to explain their own financial difficulties, and are seen as unfair competition by Spaniards in need of social welfare. Encouraged by anti-immigrant politicians, migrants are often accused of stealing the nation's jobs, despite the fact that immigrants often fill positions and receive salaries that a native Spaniard would refuse. So what has caused France and Spain's negative perceptions of Maghrebis? Recent terrorist acts such as the September 11th 2001 attack on the Twin Towers, the 2004 Madrid train bombings, and Mohamed Merah's shooting spree in Toulouse, in 2012, have negatively impacted perceptions of Muslim communities in France and Spain, who are often lumped together with Islamist terrorists to form "the other." With an increasing fear of terrorism,

¹OECD, "Indicators of Integration: Key Indicators by country." Last modified 2013. Accessed May 7th, 2013. <http://www.oecd.org/migration/integrationindicators/>.

Islamophobia is on the rise and has been especially prevalent in the last few decades as one of the main causes of discrimination towards North Africans. However, it is not the only cause of this xenophobia, as proven during the aftermath of the September 11th attacks, and the 2004 Madrid train bombing. In Osama bin Laden, and the Madrid bombers' justification videos, both Bin Laden and the bombers make reference to the Moorish invasion of Spain in 711 AD, expressing their desire to reclaim Spain and reinstate Muslim rule in the region (Flesler, 2008). Here they are playing on Spain's memories of the Moorish conquest that has, like the involvement of Spain's North African colonial troops in the Spanish Civil War (1936-9), created a negative image of Maghrebis. For France, colonisation and decolonisation have had a huge impact on how the French view immigrants from this region, with colonial superiority and the violence of the Algerian War of Independence greatly influencing how Maghrebis are viewed in France. Negative views of immigrants are brought out by economic crises and this is evident in the discourse of anti-immigrant politicians. Although these negative views of Maghrebi migrants often use a religious tone, these perceptions are rooted in the historical interactions between France, Spain and North Africa and so can only be fully understood by placing them in their historical context.

The global economic crisis that is currently afflicting both Spain and France (though primarily Spain) is amplifying racism and discrimination towards Maghrebi immigrants. As the effects of the crisis were first beginning to be felt, with many thousands of people losing their jobs and livelihoods, a scapegoat was needed to carry blame for others' misfortunes. Immigrants are currently being targeted as they have, on average, lower median household incomes than the native population, and because they are less educated, or their

qualifications do not transfer, they often find employment in sectors such as cleaning that have historically been unappealing to Spaniards, but with the economic crisis, are now more and more palatable to the unemployed native-born population.² These factors mean that they are seen by those Spaniards who are applying for welfare, as unfair competition for grants and social aid, and so, tensions grow, and anti-immigrant sentiments build³. The rapidly increasing Maghrebi populations in France and Spain (for example, from 2000 to 2012, the Moroccan population in Spain skyrocketed from 173,158 to 788,563)⁴, mean that this xenophobia is often targeted towards Maghrebis whose constant presence in the local media bring attention to this group.

Islamist movements in the last few decades have also served to draw notice to these populations. Although Islamophobia has been around for hundreds of years, more recently, terrorist attacks in the United States and Europe like September 11th 2001 and the 2004 Madrid train bombings as well as conflicts in the Middle East such as the Palestine-Israel war have meant that Islam is constantly featured in Spanish and French media.⁵ As the majority of Maghrebi immigrants living in France and Spain are Muslim, they are brought to the fore with all of this media attention on Islam. The recent controversies concerning both the French 2004 law against the wearing of religious symbols such as the hijab in schools, and Spain's version of this debate, as well as the French 2011 law against the wearing of burkas in public places are often used by media, politicians, and immigrants

³ Francisco Calderon, "The Moroccan Experience in the Southwest border of Europe: Sociodemography of immigration in Andalusia and Málaga (lecture, Universidad de Málaga, Málaga, Spain, March 13th 2013)

⁴ Rafael Durán Muñoz, "Migration and Diversity Policies: Moroccans in Spain" (lecture, Universidad de Málaga, Málaga, Spain, March 14th 2013)

⁵ Alec G. Hargreaves "A French Intifada: Ethnic Relations in Contemporary France," (lecture, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA, February 17th 2013)

themselves (as shown in Killian's 2003 research on North African women's response to the headscarves) to demonstrate how the Muslim population (made up primarily by those of Maghreb descent) are discriminated against because of their beliefs⁶. While she disagrees with this as the overall reading of the motivations behind these laws, even Taha describes the hijab as the "primary target" for France's 2004 ban on "ostentatious religious" symbols in schools⁷.

Although religiously based discrimination is present in both Spanish and French society, the xenophobia demonstrated to immigrants, especially those of Maghreb origin, goes beyond simply the religion that these migrants subscribe to. In both France and Spain, historical relations between their countries and the Maghreb region have created negative stereotypes of Maghrebi migrants that continue to influence perceptions of Maghrebis today.

France

France's colonial legacy has had a huge impact on the way that Maghrebi migrants are perceived. The colonial superiority born from her intercontinental empire created an ethnic hierarchy in French society, that, because of France's strong ties with her colonial history (as evidenced by the French government's 2005 attempts to encourage schools to put the emphasis of the positive effects of the French presence in North Africa), is still present in France today. Looking at France's old-world views on colonisation and the way

⁶ Killian, Caitlin. "The Other Side of the Veil: North African Women in France Respond to the Headscarf Affair," *Gender and Society* 17, 4 (Aug. 2003): 567-90.

⁷ Taha, Maisa C. "The Hijab North of Gibraltar: Moroccan Women as Objects of Civic and Social Transformation." *The Journal of North African Studies* 15, no. 4 (2010): 465.

this manifests itself in everyday life, it is clear that discrimination towards Maghrebis is based on more than just religious differences.

The French empire was one of the major expansionist powers during its epoch, with colonies in Asia, the Americas and Africa. In 1945, the French empire was made up of over 60 million people and close to 4 million square miles⁸. As the main colonising power in the Maghreb, in the 19th century France had colonies in Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco and Mauritania. The conquest of Algeria in 1830 was France's foot into the Maghreb region, and would remain her stronghold in the region until the Algerian War of Independence. The territory gained by this invasion was renamed *L'Algérie Française* (French Algeria) and was split into three *départements*, and made an administrative part of France⁹. France later invaded Morocco and Tunisia and formed protectorates in these countries in order to safeguard her Algerian territory¹⁰. The structure of the protectorates differed from France's Algerian territory; where the natives of the protectorates retained some semblance of control of their country, Algeria was considered well and truly part of France¹¹. However, although Algerians were viewed as French subjects, they were not counted as French citizens, despite the fact French Algeria made up three of France's *départements*¹². It was not until the 1950's and 1960's that France reluctantly relinquished power over her possessions in this region.

⁸ Regina Sweeney, "The Fourth Republic and Decolonisation" (lecture, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA, November 5th 2012)

⁹ George Mason University: Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media, "Imperialism in North Africa." Last modified 2006. Accessed May 9, 2013. <http://chnm.gmu.edu/wwh/modules/lesson9/lesson9.php?s=0>.

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Jim House, "The colonial and post-colonial dimensions of Algerian migration to France"



Figure 1: Front Page of *Le Petit Journal*, November 19th 1911

Along with the Enlightenment in the late eighteenth century came France's concept of civilisation as a progression, beginning in Egypt and Mesopotamia and moving steadily to the west.¹³ Because of this vision, France believed that it was her civic duty, her "*mission civilisatrice*", to help develop and protect civilisation throughout the globe.¹⁴ The French empire's large number of colonies and protectorates can be justified by their *mission civilisatrice*; by colonising these regions they were progressing civilisation abroad and enlightening the local peoples to reason. This idea is illustrated by the front cover of the French paper *Le Petit Journal* in its November 19th 1911 issue. As Figure 1 shows, the cover pictured Marianne, the personification of the French Empire, bringing wealth (the horn full of gold) and intelligence (in the form of books) to Morocco. Translated from French, the caption at the bottom of the page reads "France will be able to bring peace, riches and civilisation to Morocco."

This paternal sentiment and vision of France as the harbinger of civilisation and the guiding light of progress helped to create feelings of colonial superiority that have lasted even until today. During our research trip in France, we encountered many people who had

<http://www.history.ac.uk/ihr/Focus/Migration/articles/house.html>

¹³ Wylie, Laurence, and Jean-François Brière. *Les Français*. 3rd ed. Upper Saddle River - N.J: Prentice-Hall, 2001. Print.

¹⁴ Ibid.

either immigrated to France, or had worked with immigrants from the Maghreb region. Clément, a third generation French university student of Algerian origin, recounted his maternal grandparents' story of migration. Having emigrated from Algeria to France during the 1960's, they settled in Caen, a northwestern city not far from Paris. In order to find a job, Clément's grandmother Francine Garcia (née Olivieri) began taking classes to learn how to do taxes. He spoke of her classmates' shock that an Algerian woman would be put into their class, and how they would

accuse her of trying to steal their jobs.

When she would run errands, people would make "monkey sounds" at her because she was African.¹⁵ Although it is

a Belgian cartoon, similar

personifications of Africans as animals,

or lesser humans can be seen in Hergés

"Tintin in the Congo," the second



Figure 2: Animalistic movements in Tintin in the Congo, 1945

volume in the cartoon series "The Adventures of Tintin." In the second version that was republished in colour in 1946, the Congolese speak in grammatically incorrect half sentences and accuse Tintin of witchcraft after he cures a man of his fever. Not only are they drawn to closely resemble the monkeys that play a key role in the storyline, but their poses and movements in the comics are also very animalistic, as shown in Figure 2.

Although Congo is part of what France considers "*Afrique noire*" (Black Africa) and not the

¹⁵ Clément Meric, interviewed by Sarah Goslin and Kathleen Lange at Dickinson College, PA, U.S., February 9th 2013

Maghreb, clearly all Africans are occasionally lumped together as being something less than human, as seen in the case of Clément's grandmother.

These are not isolated cases of colonial racism, and the story of the Redon family's relationship with Momo, a Moroccan migrant worker is particularly telling of these negative perceptions of Maghrebis in France. Immigrant workers from the Maghreb have traditionally made up a large portion of seasonal workers in the French agricultural sector. In Moissac, a small town in the Midi-Pyrenees region in France, we met with Madame Elaine Redon, the mother of an apple and pear orchard owner who employs Maghrebi workers seasonally. Mohamed, known affectionately as "Momo" by the family, is a Moroccan worker who has been coming to work on the Redon farm since Madame Redon's husband was still alive. He lives on a house on the family farm and the Redons pay for his electricity and water. Madame Redon spoke about the times her son, Bernard, would leave for conferences in Paris for several days, and Momo would come and look after her. He would bring her wood, and close the shutters for her, and they would eat their meals together. People who were shocked that Bernard would leave his mother alone with a Moroccan had approached him about this. Somebody even inquired whether or not Momo would be allowed to sit at the same table as his Madame Redon during meals. People would also ask him "When your men are in the field, and she [brings] water to everyone, does she give water to the Moroccans?" These questions were shocking for the Redons, for whom Momo is part of their family. When asked about the likelihood of these negative

perceptions of Maghrebis changing, Madame Redon said that they would change, but not too much and not too quickly.¹⁶

This feeling of colonial superiority is still present in the French psyche, though it is downplayed and not a conscious part of everyday life. Although one dominating value of western society is that we are all born equal (this is not such a recent idea for France, the fight for equality playing a major role in the French revolution of 1789), contradictions are still present in modern day France. Fouzia Touna is the daughter of a Moroccan immigrant living in France. Born in Toulouse, she considers herself French, having lived nearly her whole life in in this region. During their interview, both Fouzia, and her father, Monsieur Touna, explained that they had never really been the victims of discrimination or xenophobia. However, one evening when Fouzia was fifteen, an inebriated man approached her while she was in a phone booth. Seeing that she was of Maghrebi descent, he told her that a white man should not have to wait for her to finish. Although she had only encountered racism once in her life, this encounter is particularly revealing of this deeply ingrained colonial superiority. If the man had not been inebriated, perhaps he would not have acted in the same way as he did in this situation, yet because of the amount of alcohol he had imbibed, his inhibitions had been lowered and he did not censor his thoughts, demonstrating the existence of a perceived cultural hierarchy in France.¹⁷

Looking at Francine Garcia, Momo and the Redon family and Fouzia Touna's stories, as well as the cartoon "Tintin in the Congo," it is evident that the negative colonial perceptions of North Africans as animal, less than human and inferior to the French, born

¹⁶ Elaine Redon, interviewed by Amy Lane and Annabelle Gould, in Moissac, France, February 23rd 2013

¹⁷ Fouzia Touna, interviewed by Kathleen Lange, Xueyin Zha and Catherine Turvey in Toulouse, France, February 20th 2013

from France's paternal and condescending view of her colonies, still have an impact on how Maghrebis are viewed in France, even today. The retention of these colonial views on North Africans living in France is linked to France's attachment to her colonial history, and her unwillingness to relinquish her territories and powers, as demonstrated by her reluctance to give French Polynesia her independence, despite this island nation's desire for autonomy¹⁸.

Colonial superiority gave birth to the personification of Arabs and Africans as unintelligent and uncivilised animals. However, the decolonisation of France's colonial empire following World War II, and the violent war of independence fought between France and Algeria led to the personification of the "Arabe" as being vicious or cruel. The soldiers who fought in this war continue to reinforce this perception, with many still living in France today.

Although many French colonies in Africa pushed for autonomy during the 1950s and 1960s, the Algerian War was one of the most violent wars of independence that France faced in Africa, with many of her other African nations receiving independence through peaceful means. World War II had been effective at destabilising many of the European empires at the time, and France was no exception. Uprisings began in Indochina (Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam), followed by civil unrest and rebellion in Africa. By the 1960's France had given autonomy to Tunisia and Morocco, but not to Algeria. The Algerian War began in 1954, led by the FLN, or Front de Libération Nationale (National Liberation Front), a nationalist organisation that had been trained by Egypt and Iraq. The French colonials living in Algeria at the time resisted liberation (they would eventually become the *pied noir*

¹⁸ "French Polynesia seeks autonomy." *TVNZ*, . sec. World News, October 17, 2007. <http://tvnz.co.nz/content/1407283/4042040.xhtml> (Accessed April 28, 2013)

population) and France desperately tried to hold on to her Algerian territory, going so far as to use a draft to increase her army. With support from the Algerian Muslims, the war continued until 1962, when, after much political unrest in France (the fall of the Fourth Republic, and the creation of Charles de Gaulle's Fifth Republic), France negotiated independence for Algeria.¹⁹

Many French men and women have fathers, uncles or brothers who took part in the Algerian War of Independence, and the historical trauma of this event still plays on the psyche of the French public. For the *pied noir* population living in France (colonials who had to move "back" to France after Algeria received her independence), memories of the war and their subsequent uprooting are strong²⁰. For her book *Unsettling Europe* , Kramer interviewed the Martins, a *pied noir* family who moved from Algeria after the war²¹. In her interview, Madame Martin described her daughter's nightmares about the Algerian war, "Yvette still wakes at night, screaming, from nightmares about the day she took an apple tart to her great-aunt's farm and found the old woman with her throat slit and stuffed with a warning from the Liberation Front"²². Particularly violent, in a *Time* magazine article written in 1958, the Algerian War of Independence was described as "Dirty and cruel, the Algerian rebellion is a war of torture and treachery, of ambush and sabotage"²³. The

¹⁹ Regina Sweeney, "The Fourth Republic and Decolonisation" (lecture, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA, November 5th 2012)

²⁰ Linda Brindeau, "Perspectives and Perceptions of Moroccans and (im)migrants' generational analyses of 'home' and 'elsewhere'" (lecture, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA, February 12th 2013)

²¹ Kramer, Jane. *Unsettling Europe* . New York, N.Y., U.S.A.: Penguin Books, 1990; 1980.

²² Ibid.

²³ "The Reluctant Rebel." *Time* 72, no. 15 (10/13, 1958): 27.

psychological effects left on the soldiers who fought in this violent guerrilla-style war meant that talking about the Algerian War of Independence has been taboo until quite recently²⁴. In his book “Wretched of the Earth” (*Les Condamnés de la Terre*), published in 1961, Frantz Fanon, a member of the Front de Libération Nationale was scathing about the old world views of colonials being somehow less than human and how, if the French treated the Algerians as less than human, then they would act without humanity. Massacres of civilians were carried out and torture performed by both sides, actions that would become a dark stain on France’s colonial involvement in North Africa²⁵.

These atrocities, executed by the Front de Libération Nationale and the French army (including the Harkis, Algerian men who fought with the French, now residing predominantly in France), have rested in the minds of those involved and helped lead to the creation of a negative personification of Arabs as violent and cruel. In *Wretched of the Earth* Fanon also wrote on this personification of the “native” as the epitome of evil:

As if to illustrate the totalitarian nature of colonial exploitation, the colonist turns the colonized into a kind of quintessence of evil. Colonized society is not merely portrayed as a society without values. The colonist is not content with stating that the colonized world has lost its values or worse never possessed any. The “native” is declared impervious to ethics, representing not only the absence of values but also the negation of values. He is, dare we say it, the enemy of values. In other words, absolute evil.

Frantz Fanon, “The Wretched of the Earth,” 1961²⁶

²⁴ Linda Brindeau, “Perspectives and Perceptions of Moroccans and (im)migrants' generational analyses of ‘home’ and ‘elsewhere’” (lecture, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA, February 12th 2013)

²⁵ Preston, Paul. *The Spanish Civil War: Reaction, Revolution and Revenge*. 1 Grove Press ed. New York, N.Y.: Grove Press, Inc., 2007.

²⁶ Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth* [Damnés de la terre.]. New York: Grove Press, 1963; 1961.

This portrayal of the evil Arab became rife in French society in the aftermath of the Algerian War of Independence and has continued to negatively influence perceptions of Maghrebis even today.

Negative perceptions of Maghrebis in France have gone so far that calling somebody a “sale Arabe” (a dirty Arab) has become a commonly used insult in street language. Used against people of any ethnicity, be they Maghrebis or Europeans, Alec G. Hargreaves believes that this usage is a sign that colonial views and perceptions of Maghrebis are still present in modern-day France.²⁷ On November 18th 2009, the story of police racism towards Anyss Arbib, a French university student of Moroccan heritage, made the front cover of the *Libération*, one of France’s leading newspapers. Caught in the celebration for the qualification of the Algerian soccer team for the 2010 Soccer World cup that quickly turned to violence after a CRS (a state security police officer) punched one of the revelers. Arbib was approached by a second CRS who asked him what he was looking at²⁸. Arbib replied that he was merely looking at what was right in front of him, and the CRS swore at him in return, telling him to *ferme ta gueule* (the French equivalent of shut the f*** up) and then sprayed Arbib with tear gas²⁹. When Arbib demanded an explanation for the CRS’s actions, he told him to “*Allez, dégage sale Arabe, aujourd'hui c'est la fête pour vous mais surtout pour nous. On peut vous tabasser comme on veut*” (Give off dirty Arab, today it’s a party for you, but even more for us. We can beat you up how we like)³⁰. This story shows both the negative connotations of the “sale Arabe” jibe (a throwback to French colonial

²⁷ Alec G. Hargreaves “A French Intifada: Ethnic Relations in Contemporary France,” (lecture, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA, February 17th 2013)

²⁸ “Allez, dégage sale Arabe. On peut vous tabasser comme on veut.” *Le Monde*, , sec. Société, November 24, 2009.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

portrayals of Arab natives as animals), and also the discrimination and racism shown towards Maghrebi immigrants in France. Here the police officer is also demonstrating the influence of colonial supremacy; it is his prerogative, as the Frenchman, to decide how the Maghrebis are to be treated.

Many French citizens' old-world view of colonisation as a constructive way of encouraging development and progressing civilisation is evident in a recently attempted education policy change. In 2005, the conservative right-wing of the French government tried to shift the way that history was taught in schools so that emphasis would be placed on the positive effects of French colonisation and the French colonial empire. The law adopted by the French government on February 23, 2005 was created in an attempt to recognise the role that the Harkis (the Algerian colonial forces) played during the Algerian War of Independence. However, a second amendment was also added, declaring that, "School courses should recognise in particular the positive role of the French presence overseas, notably in North Africa"³¹. This amendment led to public outcry that the French state was imposing an "official lie on massacres," and fear amongst the historical community that this would lead to revisionist history being taught in schools³². By focusing more on the positive aspects of immigration and less on the negative outcomes of France's presence overseas according to the government's wishes, teachers were afraid that educational neutrality would be lost³³. Although President Jacques Chirac repealed the law in 2006 after many members of the public had voiced their opposition to the amendment (a petition was also signed by many celebrities and well-known politicians), the fact that this

³¹ Henley, Jon. "French angry at law to teach glory of colonialism." *The Guardian*, sec. World News, April 15, 2005

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

amendment was written, and passed by the French government, demonstrates both France's attachment to her colonial history, and the continuation of old world views on colonisation as having a constructive effect on the colonised countries.

In our "post-colonial" world, France's cultural superiority, born from her colonial empire and old-world views on her *mission civilisatrice*, continues to influence negative perceptions of Maghrebis in France as being somehow less worthy than the French. Hargreaves argues that a sort of cultural hierarchy, left over from her colonial empire, is ever-present in France, with Europeans at the top of the ladder, and colonials, in particular those from the Maghreb, at the bottom.³⁴ The decolonization of the French empire's territories in Africa, in particular the Algerian War of Independence, also created the unfavourable stereotype of Maghrebis as violent and cruel, due to the atrocities committed and the guerrilla style fighting of the war. Hargreaves (2002) agrees that the results of these historical relations, what he describes as the "traumas, grudges and inequalities inherited from the colonial period and the war of independence," are still present in French and Algerian society and thus have an impact on how these countries view each other³⁵. Looking at these perceptions of Maghrebi immigrants; one influenced by French colonial views, the other influenced by the actions of the Front de Libération Nationale during the Algerian War of Independence, it is clear that France's colonial heritage has had, and continues to have, a huge impact on how Maghrebis are viewed in France today.

³⁴ Alec G. Hargreaves "A French Intifada: Ethnic Relations in Contemporary France," (lecture, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA, February 17th 2013)

³⁵ Hargreaves, Alec G. "France and Algeria, 1962-2002: Turning the Page?" *Modern & Contemporary France* 10, no. 4 (11, 2002): 445-447.

Spain

Spain's interactions with the Maghreb region have been less focussed on colonisation than those of France, yet perceptions of Maghrebis living in Spain tend to also be extremely negative. Although Spain did have colonies in North Africa, these unfavourable views on Maghrebi immigrants have come primarily from her historical legacy, though her interactions with her North African colonies have added to and perpetuated these views. This is particularly highlighted by the way that Latin American migrants living in Spain are more readily accepted into Spanish society than North Africans³⁶. Despite the fact that both of these populations are ancient colonies of Spain, an "immigrant hierarchy" exists in Spain, with Latin Americans near the top of this hierarchy as they speak Spanish and are viewed as an old colony, and North Africans at the bottom³⁷. This hierarchy has been influenced by Spain's long and often traumatic history with the Maghreb region. Both the Moorish Invasion of the Iberian Peninsula in 711 AD and General Francisco Franco's use of colonial Moroccan soldiers during the Spanish civil war, and the resulting historical trauma from these two historical events, have instilled fear of Maghrebis in the Spanish public that has led to discrimination and xenophobia.

The Moors were a Muslim army that invaded Iberia in the eighth century and continued to occupy the region until the 15th century, leaving behind a historical legacy for

³⁶ Carmen Garcia and Javier Poleo interviewed by Kathleen Lange et al. at the INCIDE organization, Málaga, Spain, March 19th 2013

³⁷ Sarah Pearl Meier Zimble, 2008 *From North Africans to Latin Americans: An Exploration of Immigrant Hierarchies in Spain* [Honor's thesis], dissertation, Wesleyan University. Her data is consistent with her conclusions; in her thesis she provides data from a survey performed in 2001 that asked the participants to rank their sympathy towards immigrants on a scale from one to ten. Latin Americans were ranked the highest, with a mean value of 7.14 and North Africans were ranked the lowest, with a mean value of 5.89. When this survey was repeated in 2002, the same results were found, but with slightly lower values for each of the different ethnic groups.

the Spanish. The word “moor,” thought to have root in the Latin word “maurus,” meaning dark or black, has become practically synonymous with “North African” for the Spanish. However, historical allusions are made with the use of this word, and it has much stronger connotations than simply defining a region of origin.³⁸ The word moor has come to have negative implications beyond its historical meaning, as explained by Taha in her paper on the hijab³⁹. She uses the common idiom “Hay moros en la costa” [there are Moors on the coast], meaning “watch out!” or “be careful”, to show that the term “Moor” has grown beyond its original definition⁴⁰. The term “Moor,” is also often used to describe Maghrebis in anti-immigrant discourse to draw a connection between Maghrebi immigrants, and the invasion of the Moors⁴¹.

In 711 AD, an army of Arabs, Persians and Berbers crossed the Strait of Gibraltar and conquered the Iberian Peninsula⁴². A Muslim Caliphate replaced the leadership of the various Christian Visigoth monarchs previously in rule, and what resulted from this changeover was peaceful 800-year period of economic and political stability⁴³. Influences from Al-Andalus, or Muslim-ruled Iberia, can be seen in architecture in some parts of Spain, for example the Muslim palace of Al-Hambra in Granada. Although characterised by traditional interpretations as a violent invasion that led to a harsh regime, in reality this was a peaceful period of religious tolerance, during which time Jews, Muslims and

³⁸ Francisco Calderon, “The Moroccan Experience in the Southwest border of Europe: Sociodemography of immigration in Andalusia and Málaga (lecture, Universidad de Málaga, Málaga, Spain, March 13th 2013)

³⁹ Taha, Maisa C. "The Hijab North of Gibraltar: Moroccan Women as Objects of Civic and Social Transformation." *The Journal of North African Studies* 15, no. 4 (2010): 465.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Devisse, Jean. "The Legacy of Al-Andalus." *UNESCO Sources* no. 70 (06, 1995): 15.

⁴³ Ibid.

Christians lived side by side in relative religious harmony⁴⁴. Christians were made to pay their Muslim overlords taxes known as “jizya,” but apart from these levies they were treated much the same as their fellow Muslims.⁴⁵

However, the psychological effects of being invaded and occupied by the Moors have left behind what Flesler describes as “historical trauma”⁴⁶. Despite the fact that the period of Muslim occupation was relatively peaceful, the loss of Spain in the eighth century brings up bad memories for the Spanish. Flesler believes that, having been written and rewritten for so long as a story of loss to vicious invaders (despite evidence to the contrary), the myth of the Muslim’s harsh regime has endured and helped to perpetuate Spain’s historical trauma⁴⁷. From the invasion comes this image of the violent, conquering Moor that continues to influence perceptions of Maghrebi migrants in Spain. In her article, Flesler describes this personification of the Moor: “The figure of the violent, lustful Moor who invades Spain to kill and rape its inhabitants, has haunted the Spanish imagination...”⁴⁸.

In anti-immigrant and anti-Maghreb discourse, politicians often make reference to the Muslim invasion, and the mythical figure of the violent invading Moor, so that their audience will draw negative connections between this historical event, and present-day Maghrebi immigration. They encourage this mental association of Maghrebi migrants with

⁴⁴ Flesler, Daniela. *The Return of the Moor: Spanish Responses to Contemporary Moroccan Immigration*. Purdue Studies in Romance Literatures. West Lafayette, Ind.: Purdue University Press, 2008.

⁴⁵ Francisco Calderon, “The Moroccan Experience in the Southwest border of Europe: Sociodemography of immigration in Andalusia and Málaga (lecture, Universidad de Málaga, Málaga, Spain, March 13th 2013)

⁴⁶ Flesler, Daniela. *The Return of the Moor: Spanish Responses to Contemporary Moroccan Immigration*. Purdue Studies in Romance Literatures. West Lafayette, Ind.: Purdue University Press, 2008.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

the Moorish invaders, perpetuating negative perceptions of this population. These politicians describe the recent waves of Maghreb immigration to Spain as the “second coming of the Moors,” or the “return of the Moors,” to play on Spain’s ever-present historical trauma⁴⁹. However, using the word Moor to describe somebody of Maghrebi origin has become extremely pejorative, and as the West’s fascination with political correctness grows, this term is dropping out of everyday political discourse (though it is still present in the rhetoric of those radicals who are strongly opposed to the presence of Maghrebis in Spanish society). Spain’s fear of a repeat invasion means that much xenophobia and discrimination is directed towards immigrants and Spanish of Maghreb origin or descent.

Like the politicians that make reference to the Muslim invasion of the Iberian Peninsula to instil fear in the Spanish public, terrorist leaders have also played on Spain’s historical trauma stemming from the Moorish occupation, by making reference to Al-Andalus and the Muslim invasion, and using their “historical claim to the Iberian Peninsula” in order to justify their attacks. The rhetoric used by the organisers of these attacks has galvanised even more anti-Muslim, and thus anti-Maghreb sentiment in Spain, linking Maghrebis and Moors with terrorism. In their explanations of their attacks, the group that committed the Madrid bombings, and Osama bin Laden, the organiser of the September 11th terrorist attack make reference to their groups’ aspirations to reclaim Spain and reinstate Muslim rule⁵⁰.

⁴⁹ Taha, Maisa C. "The Hijab North of Gibraltar: Moroccan Women as Objects of Civic and Social Transformation." *The Journal of North African Studies* 15, no. 4 (2010): 465.

⁵⁰ Flesler, Daniela. *The Return of the Moor: Spanish Responses to Contemporary Moroccan Immigration*. Purdue Studies in Romance Literatures. West Lafayette, Ind.: Purdue University Press, 2008.

In 2004, four trains were bombed in Madrid by an Al Qaeda inspired group, leading to hundreds of deaths and several thousands injured in what has been called "Europe's worst Islamist terrorist attack"⁵¹. A video explanation of this attack later found in the exploded apartment where those responsible for the attack had apparently been living, made reference to Al-Andalus⁵². In the aftermath of the September 11th World Trade Center attacks, Osama bin Laden also made his desire to restore the Muslim nation state of Al-Andalus known⁵³. In making reference to Muslim occupied Spain, these terrorist leaders are linking terrorism with the Moors, and thus, Maghrebis. By attempting to instil fear in the Spanish public, they are encouraging negative perceptions of Maghrebi immigrants living in Spain, personifying them as terrorists, or Islamist sympathisers.

North African involvement in the Spanish civil war created similar perceptions of Maghrebi immigrants in Spain, as the Algerian War of Independence did for immigrants living France. Both France and Spain's stereotypes of Maghrebis as being violent and cruel were born from these times of war, blurring the lines between peaceful Maghrebi immigrants, and the Moorish of war.⁵⁴

Moroccan support of General Franco prior to, and during the Spanish Civil War, spurred negative portrayals of Maghrebis in Spain (and added to those already created during the Spanish colonial wars). Spain established colonies in northwestern Morocco in

⁵¹ "The Worst Islamist Attack in European History." *The Guardian*, 10/31/2007, 2007, Online, sec. Background.

⁵² Flesler, Daniela. *The Return of the Moor: Spanish Responses to Contemporary Moroccan Immigration*. Purdue Studies in Romance Literatures. West Lafayette, Ind.: Purdue University Press, 2008.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Francisco Calderon, "The Moroccan Experience in the Southwest border of Europe: Sociodemography of immigration in Andalusia and Málaga (lecture, Universidad de Málaga, Málaga, Spain, March 13th 2013)

the early twentieth century, and it was from these colonies that General Franco enlisted military aid in both the rebellion of Asturias and the Spanish Civil War. Although the Spanish Civil War is already regarded as a bloody and violent military coup, with atrocities committed by both sides towards their fellow countrymen, the Moroccan support of the Nationalists, led by General Franco, against the Republicans, was a particularly traumatic experience for the Spanish public. Some of the Civil War battles took place in Morocco and on Moroccan islands, and the Moorish military units (these soldiers were known as *Regulares*) helped General Franco carry out his coup d'état.⁵⁵

Playing a crucial role in Franco's victory, the *Regulares* became known for their extreme cruelty when facing their opposition. The Moroccan soldiers, along with the Spanish Foreign Legion, became infamous for the way they crushed the Asturian uprising prior to the Civil War⁵⁶. In October 1934, in fear of the future of their fascist-leaning right wing government, a group of socialists, anarchists and communists, headed by coal miners, led a social revolution in Asturias⁵⁷. Moroccan *Regulares*, as part of the Army of Africa led by General Franco, helped to quickly and efficiently crush the uprising. As Álvarez explains, the Moroccan soldiers were primarily blamed by the left for the large number of socialist casualties during the Asturia uprising, and the use of the Army of Africa made the Spanish public draw parallels to the Spanish colonial wars, and the invasion of the Moors:

⁵⁵ Francisco Calderon, "The Moroccan Experience in the Southwest border of Europe: Sociodemography of immigration in Andalusia and Málaga (lecture, Universidad de Málaga, Málaga, Spain, March 13th 2013)

⁵⁶ Álvarez, José E. "The Spanish Foreign Legion during the Asturian Uprising of October 1934." *War in History* 18, no. 2 (04, 2011): 200-224.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

Another legacy of the uprising was that the left as a whole held the Legion and the Moroccan Regulares principally responsible for crushing the Asturian revolution, as well as for the immediate repression, summary executions, and looting that followed... Moreover, the use of these colonial troops further reinforced the perception, especially of those on the left, that the government was bringing the brutalities of the colonial war in Spanish Morocco to the peninsula. In addition, the ancient frontier enemy, the Moor, and his new associate the Legionary, had been unleashed in Asturias to kill, plunder, and defile the countryside.

José E. Álvarez, "The Spanish Foreign Legion during the Asturian Uprising of October 1934," 2011⁵⁸

Not only did the violent quashing of this social uprising magnify the large divisions between the left and right that would eventually lead to the Civil War in 1936, but by using Moroccan soldiers against Spanish rebels, Maghrebis were portrayed to the Spanish public as cruel and inhuman. The development of this negative stereotype continued with the participation of the Moroccan colonial troops in the Civil War.

⁵⁸ Álvarez, José E. "The Spanish Foreign Legion during the Asturian Uprising of October 1934." *War in History* 18, no. 2 (04, 2011): 200-224.

The 47 000 strong Moroccan *Regulares*, as part of General Franco's Army of Africa, also played an important role in the Spanish Civil War, and were famous for their often indiscriminating massacres and loots of small villages, the goods obtained from this pillaging often being sold en route to the next village⁵⁹. The *Regulares* and African Legionnaires



Figure 3: Bodies from the Massacre of Badajoz, left on the street to instil fear in the local population

became infamous for their viciousness, as displayed in their massacre of Badajoz, the capital of Extremadura, in August 1936⁶⁰. Jay Allen, an American journalist who arrived shortly afterwards wrote about the locals' descriptions of the bloodbath. Men and women who had fought to defend their city were round up during the day and sent to the bullring where they would be shot, "...After the first night [of the killings] the blood was supposed to be palm deep...Eighteen hundred men – there were women, too – were mowed down there in twelve hours. There is more blood than you would think in 1800 bodies"⁶¹. The colonial forces then left the bodies of the dead in the streets of Badajoz for several days afterward in order to instil fear in the local population (see figure 3.)⁶².

However, massacres were not the only acts of violence executed by the *Regulares* and Legionnaires. Mass rape of the rebels' wives were carried out by these colonial forces,

⁵⁹ Preston, Paul. *The Spanish Civil War: Reaction, Revolution and Revenge*. 1 Grove Press ed. New York, N.Y.: Grove Press, Inc., 2007.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid

urged on by their officers⁶³. General Queipo de Llano, one of Franco's leading military men, graphically described this abuse to foreign journalists:

Our brave Legionaries and Regulares have shown the red cowards what it means to be a man. And, incidentally, the wives of the reds too. These Communist and Anarchist women, after all, have made themselves fair game by their doctrine of free love. And now they have at least made the acquaintance of real men, and not milksops of militiamen. Kicking their legs about and struggling won't save them.

General Queipo de Llano, 1936, quoted in Paul Preston's "The Spanish Civil War: Reaction, Revolution and Revenge"⁶⁴

The rapes of numerous working-class women during the Spanish Civil War have rested in Spanish memory, and this abuse, although encouraged by the white Spanish officers, has been linked to Maghrebis living in Spain, adding to the Spanish's damaging assessments of North Africans.

Due to the infamous viciousness of the Army of Africa, Francisco Franco's use of Moroccan troops was a very traumatic experience for the Spanish public.⁶⁵ The Moroccan involvement in these two major events; the uprising in Asturias in the lead-up to the Spanish Civil War, and the Spanish Civil war itself (though in particular the massacre at Badajoz), have been remembered as particularly violent, and the rape of many thousands of Republican women during the War was added onto their list of offenses. The violence shown towards the Spanish public during both the uprising and the Civil War in the form of massacres and rape, has added to the perceptions of Maghrebis as vicious and evil, a

⁶³ Preston, Paul. *The Spanish Civil War: Reaction, Revolution and Revenge*. 1 Grove Press ed. New York, N.Y.: Grove Press, Inc., 2007.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Francisco Calderon, "The Moroccan Experience in the Southwest border of Europe: Sociodemography of immigration in Andalusia and Málaga (lecture, Universidad de Málaga, Málaga, Spain, March 13th 2013)

negative stereotype leftover from the Moorish invasion and resulting Muslim occupation of the Iberian peninsula.

These perceptions and stereotypes are still visible today, as demonstrated by the 2000 race riots in El Ejido⁶⁶. Conflict broke out after a mentally disturbed Moroccan immigrant killed a Spanish woman in the agricultural town of El Ejido⁶⁷. Immigrants' shantytowns were destroyed in the race driven riots that followed the initial incident. In an interview after her death, the fiancé of Encarnacion Lopez, the woman who was killed, displayed the sort of anti-Maghrebi views that many Spaniards share; "...But a woman is worth nothing to a Moroccan. He'd exchange her for a goat or a sheep"⁶⁸. This statement is reminiscent of the mass rapes of women during the Spanish Civil War, and despite having been spoken in the twenty-first century, harkens back to old-world colonial views, similar to those of France, of uncivilized natives with no values. Looking for the reason behind the strength of the locals' response towards the attack, perhaps it could be explained by suggesting that the rioters felt that the actions of this one immigrant proved their stereotype of the Moroccan "Moor" as violent and inhuman and were somehow justified in attempting to eliminate this threat (though in doing so, they are ignoring the hypocrisy of their strong reaction to the murder of a Spanish woman by a Moroccan man, in contrast to very little reaction to the numerous Spanish women killed by Spanish natives each year).

⁶⁶ Agrela, Belén. *Spain as a Recent Country of Immigration: How Immigration Became a Symbolic, Political, and Cultural Problem in the "New Spain"*. Center for Comparative Immigration Studies, University of California at San Diego. Working Paper 57. San Diego, Cal: August 2002.

⁶⁷ Cohen, Roger. "Europe's Migrant Fears Rend a Spanish Town." *New York Times*, , sec. World, May 8th, 2000.

⁶⁸ Ibid

Conclusion

The current economic crisis in Europe has brought attention to local immigrant populations who are seen as unfair competition for social aid and welfare benefits. The rise of Islamist movements and terrorist acts such as the September 11th attacks on the World Trade Center, the 2004 Madrid train bombings and Mohamed Merah's shooting spree in Toulouse, France in 2012, have also resulted in a political focus on Islam, and as the majority of Maghrebi immigrants in France are Muslim, the blame for these acts is often shifted onto these immigrants in the form of xenophobia and discrimination. However, cultural tensions between these Maghrebi immigrants, and France and Spain go beyond mere religious discrimination. In order to understand the French and Spanish publics' inherent fear and dislike of Maghrebi immigrants, we must put this anti-Maghreb sentiment into its historical context. By observing the root causes of these ethnic tensions, it becomes clear that historical relations between North Africa and southwestern Europe have had a large impact on perceptions of Maghreb immigrants in France and Spain, and they continue to influence negative stereotypes in these two countries. Although Spain's discrimination towards Maghrebis stems from the historical trauma of the Moorish invasion of 711 AD and fear of reconquest, France's discrimination is primarily colonially based, with old-world colonial views of Africans as being somehow less human and less worthy than the French, resulting in the formation of an ethnic hierarchy present in French society even today. In both France and Spain, the stereotype of the vicious and cruel Maghrebi exist because of the Maghreb's involvement in the Spanish Civil War and the Algerian War of Independence. As the economic crisis continues, and blame is placed on the

Maghrebis, as Madame Redon said, there is very little chance that these negative stereotypes and perceptions will change anytime soon.

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