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# Beyond the Disciplinary Borders : A New Challenge

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#### Abstract

Present society needs a new approach to knowledge, mainly required by the fast succession of the transformation of society and by the multidimensionality of the daily life problems. It is necessary, therefore, a more and more transdisciplinary perspective, able to connect the efforts of all social sciences and humanities. Moreover, it is essential an approach to history which may create a sort of circle between knowledge of the past and attention to the present world. These considerations are particularly important about the Mediterranean, which today is affected by dramatic shifts and problems of historical significance.

Keywords: Civilization, History, Mediterranean, Social sciences, Transdisciplinarity.

The idea at the roots of this new Journal is to generate a "knowledge" through which society can observe the phenomena that it produces and become able to continuously improve itself. As Bourdieu had said in his acceptance speech of the CNRS Gold Medal, the task of human and social sciences is "the critical unhinging of the manoeuvring and manipulation of citizens and of consumers that rely on perverse usages of science" (Bourdieu, 2013, p. 12) going beyond the questions posed by common sense or by the media as they are often induced and not real.

In other words, the journal aims to produce a knowledge able to tie the understanding of the present to that of the past (Bloch, 1981, p. 50), avoiding both the idea that history is an antiquarian science (Bloch 1981, p. 38) and the opposition among those who remove the bandage of the "extinct gods" and sociologists, economists, journalists: the sole explorers of the present.

This choice is even more important if we think to the quote from Bernarnd of Clairvaux mentioned by Johan Huizinga at the beginning of his *La crisi della civiltà*: «Habet mundus iste noctes suas et non paucas» - aiming to "prophetically" indicate the obsessed world in which Europe was struggling. Such an obsession raises doubts about the durability of the social system and anxiety about the decline of society (Huizinga 1978, p. 4).

Today, the multidimensional crisis of society (economic, social, cultural, etc.) and the attempts to define and implement new policies have avoided neither the decline of the juridical protection nor the deterioration of the social fabric, which needs to be re-built with new forms of solidarity (Zoll, 2000), in order to provide the citizens non to only the "learning to be", but also the welfare. Social sciences and humanities find their place in this process of re-building. Knowledge must pay attention to all the aspects of the transformation of society, and not only to some specific areas, because the action of the research cannot be just technical - considering achieved the understanding of the society and exercising a mere control over it – but should include a reflection on his own activities. Social sciences and humanities can break the wall of the complexity of problems and situations of people's daily life, allowing a better conjunction of the objective and subjective dimension. If order characterized the traditional societies, disorder is the feature of the contemporary societies and, therefore, scholars are forced to re-define paradigms and methods in order to make knowledge an experience of interchange, coming from encounters and conflicts among disciplines, beyond any real or virtual border which limits their "rooms for manoeuvre".

On the basis of this assertion, the journal aims to discuss different topics with a transdisciplinary approach (Piaget 1972). It is more and more necessary, indeed, to build new synergies and new epistemological relations among different, but complementary, sciences. It is necessary that this process, begun in the first decades of the XX century, may continue through trans-disciplinary synthesis. The experience of the school of *Les Annales*, the awareness by the historians of the relativism of their science and of the need to deal with the assault of social sciences in which quantification is sovereign, constitute the highest expression of «total history» (Le Goff, 1980), which is one of the purposes of the Journal of Mediterranean Knowledge.

Transdisciplinarity, indeed, is not understood as a «superdiscipline», but as a new interdisciplinary approach that lead knowledge towards «qui ne se contenterait pas d'atteindre des interactions ou réciprocités entre recherches spécialisées, mais situerait ces liasions à l'intérieur d'un système total sans frontières stables entre les disciplines» (Piaget, 1972, p. 170).

The Journal of Mediterranean Knowledge aims at proposing an interpretation of the present world able to deepen the knowledge of the past without alienating the researcher from the context in which he lives, but making it belong to his time and his country, so that the point of view that the historian draws from his time, may enable him to disclose hidden aspects of the past. An interpretation of the past as a process of continuous movement, which drags with him the historian (Carr, 1982, p. 142) and led to hate the indifference, «il peso morto della storia» (Gramsci, 1973, p. 97).

As for the present world, the multidimensionality of the daily life problems and the fast succession of transformation of society urge to recompose the differences of points of view and perspectives of the disciplines, in order to concretize the cooperation among them. It is necessary, therefore, to open a dialogue which may overcome the "formal" disciplinary and terminological barriers. Only from the permeability and from the flexibility of the disciplinary borders, "beyond the disciplines" and acknowledging them as "different disciplines", it is possible to open up to a knowledge free from positivism, which may try to give responses to the social problems

The work of researchers in social sciences and humanities, as well as the resulting knowledge produced, are to be intended, as Bourdieu stated over twenty years ago, as a "public service" and represented in a dual manner: on the one hand, they allow an "institutional support" that does not mean meeting all the needs of society, but giving scientific answers to actual problems, not with the "solution", but by suggesting possible routes for the improvement of the need concerned. On the other hand, they allow the development of a "critical and active citizen" very close to the ideal type of Schütz's "well-informed citizen" (Schütz, 1946) which, revised according to the present society (Mangone, 2014), appears to be advocating the establishment of a modern citizenship revealed through social reflexivity (Donati, 2011), an aspect of individual reflexivity that is neither subjective nor structural but related to the reality of social relations.

It is desirable, therefore, that the tangible and intangible knowledge of the Mediterranean – not denying the autonomy of individual sciences, but abandoning the excessive self-centredness that confine them within their frameworks and paradigms – may become a reflective knowledge, able to promote the building of relations among individuals and to ease the encounter with the Other. Aware that only dialogue can make the society open to a re-composition of the cultural differences, with due regard to the peculiarities of each culture.

These theoretical and methodological premises drive this new scientific journey since the first issue, whose keyword is *Borders*. Borders, because «the Mediterranean is not just a geographical concept. Its borders are not defined neither in terms of space nor in time. We do not know how and in what way to determine them: they cannot be defined according to their sovereignty or history and are neither state nor national: they resemble a chalk-drawn circle that continues to be delineated and erased, which the waves and the winds, businesses and inspirations expand or shrink» (Matvejevic, 2013, p. 18).

The elimination of borders which characterizes the global society should allow free movement of populations or part of populations, in a voluntary or involuntary manner, peacefully or non-peacefully – in this sense, think to the thousands of migrants abandoned on open sea by the traffickers in the Mediterranean, that from cradle of civilization has become an open-air cemetery. In truth, this does not happen (think to the wall on the borders between Hungary and Serbia), but anyway global society produces situations in which different cultures are "forced" to meet and to coexist, permeating the social and cultural processes of the host societies.

Indeed, the co-presence of different cultures encourages the construction of new, multivalent, trans-ethnic cultural identities within a multidimensional process of interaction between people of different cultural identities, who, through the encounter of cultures, live a deep and complex conflict/reception experience as a valuable opportunity for personal growth for everyone, in order to change everything representing an obstacle to the construction of a new civil society.

The thoughts expressed within the debate on interculturalism and multiculturalism are based on cultural and identity issues: the great challenge faced with difficulty by society and social systems (among which we can find the European Union), is whether they should be seen as closed systems (non-welcoming) or as open systems (welcoming) towards "other cultures"; what Baumann (1999) called "the multicultural enigma". Culture is not an absolute and the same goes for identity; both are dynamic: the benefits derived from culture depend on its very process of reconstruction, and the dominant discourse of culture as an immutable inheritance is just a subcomponent (often a conservative one) of a process.

In the light of these considerations, all contributions represent an attempt to rethinking the "boundaries" – in a very broad sense – and rethinking the boundaries means rethinking the current idea of Europe and the Mediterranean.

The monographic section opens with the article by Pierpaolo Donati *The Cultural Borders of Citizenship in a Multicultural Society* that discuss about "inclusion" as one of the basic problems confronting multicultural societies and he asks: What does it mean inclusion? And inclusion to what? The article contends that the political inclusion of minorities into a 'universalistic culture' can be wholly misleading if the concept of political inclusion is not well managed in terms of the articulation of the borders between different cultures. In order to manage borders without either denying the boundaries, or consider the boundaries as barriers that separate cultures, we need a new relational semantics of borders.

A specific perspective on Maghreb is presented by Louisa Dris-Aït Hamadouche with an article titled *Algeria post Arab Spring: The Forced Virtualisation of the Borders* because she reflects on land borders of Algeria. So, even if Algeria is considered a stable country, this stability is fragile and is likely to be more precarious if the country has to face simultaneously an economic crisis and delicate presidential succession. Domestic incertitude coupled to regional conflicts puts the Algerian borders under unprecedented pressure. Consequently, almost all the governmental declarations expressed worries about the vulnerability of the borders, and assurances about the security services determination to assure the state security.

On the area of the Maghreb also insists another article written by Emmanuel Cardona Gil, Hicham Jamid and Linda Gardelle (*The highly Skilled Maghrebians "on the move": A Circular Cross-border Dynamic from the Mediterranean*) that aims at analyzing the migration process of Maghrebian engineers. It was observed that the migration of these highly skilled individuals is neither irrevocable nor unidirectional. They may be regarded as being permanently "on the move" between their home country, the country where they studied and other destinations. They develop new strategies which symbolically question national borders and create multiple identities or hybrids of transcultural values.

The article written by Andrea Ciampani, *Social Europe as a Multilevel Governance: The Italian Perspective* closes the monographic section shifting the attention from Africa to Europe. To understand the situation of social dynamics and actors within the European process of integration the author wonders how much we learnt by the historical reflection, by now mature in Italy too, about existence and meaning of "Social Europe". Europe, indeed, is not only made by public authorities and agreements among governments, but also by social forces. Over the years, these forces met beyond the national borders, trying to give an European approach to the social problems, with the establishment of confederations of trade-unions. Much still to be done and today – mainly after the great recession began in 2007 – the construction of a real Social Europe is more and more needed.

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## The Cultural Borders of Citizenship in a Multicultural Society

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#### Abstract

One of the basic problems confronting multicultural societies is the *inclusion* of cultural differences into a common citizenship. What does it mean inclusion? And inclusion to what? The 'inclusion' formula of modernity (lib/lab) leads to the inadequacy of the forms of cultural universalism as conceptualized and practiced in the processes of Western modernization. The more we globalize the social world, the more we come to reinforce 'local cultures'. The paper contends that the political inclusion of minorities into a 'universalistic culture' can be wholly misleading if the concept of political inclusion is not well managed in terms of the articulation of the borders between different cultures. In order to manage borders without either denying the boundaries (as in the assimilation solution), or consider the boundaries as barriers that separate cultures (as in the communitarian multiculturalism), we need a new relational semantics of borders.

Keywords: Citizenship, Cultural borders, Multicultural society, Relational sociology.

#### 1. The issue: the challenge of the 'new' multiculturalism to modern citizenship

1.1. There is no doubt that the modern concept of citizenship, as it relates to the modern idea of nation-state, is experiencing a period of great instability and change. The reasons do not so much lie in democracy itself, as a form of government (the political institutions of representation not being usually involved), as in the socio-political national institutions of citizenship, i.e. all institutions responsible for granting what are commonly referred to as 'rights of citizenship'.

In recent years, the studies on the mutations in citizenship have become crystallized in an ever-shifting landscape shaped by the flows of markets, technologies, stable populations and migrants. Apparently, there is a general consensus on the argument that the elements of citizenship (rights, entitlements, etc.) are becoming disarticulated from each other, and becoming re-articulated with universalizing criteria of neoliberalism and human rights pushed forward by a new (global?) civil society (Ong, 2006).

In many countries, due to growing migration processes, new 'global assemblages' define zones of social claims and political entitlements. The space of the 'assemblage', rather than the national terrain, becomes the site for social and political mobilizations by diverse groups in motion. In the Mediterranean zone, global markets and migrant flows challenge traditional state citizenship. In camps of the disenfranchised or displaced, sheer survival becomes the ground for political claims. Thus, particular constellations shape specific problems and resolutions to questions of contemporary living, further disarticulating and deterritorializing aspects of citizenship. In short, instead of all citizens enjoying a unified bundle of citizenship rights, we have a shifting political landscape in which heterogeneous populations claim diverse rights and benefits associated with citizenship, as well as universalizing criteria of neoliberal norms or human rights.

Citizenship is in flux, challenged by shifting cultural boundaries of the nation-states and innovative forms of political action. My purpose is to explain why and how this shifting boundaries are emerging and put forward the argument that a *transmodern* (societal) citizenship is currently springing from a nascent global civil society, rather than from the nation-state, stemming from a new multicultural society generated by increasing migrations.

All over the world contemporary societies are rediscovering the cultural roots of citizenship, i.e. the cultural bases of what it means to be a citizen in a particular social context. This process is wide spreading at all levels: local, regional, national, supranational. Tensions, conflicts, and clashes are emerging everywhere. In a sense, we are witnessing the simple fact that 'each culture has its own citizenship', and vice versa. At the same time, citizenship is a way (a political one) to design and implement the relationships among different cultures, be they co-operative or conflictual. Changes in a cultural system affect changes in the forms and contents of what it means to be a citizen in the societies where that particular culture is influential.

Today, large scale processes are putting into danger what Western countries are used to call modern citizenship. These trends produce new theories, practices and perspectives concerning the complex of citizenship rights and duties. They are called (or can be called) anti-modern, postmodern, neo-modern. What are they? How can we conceive of the complex settings of relationships that these trends create between culture and citizenship?

In the West as well as in the East, in the North as well as in the South of the globe, different forms of citizenship, besides having different configurations, have nevertheless something in common. Can we draw the lines of division as well as the lines of convergence? Whatever they might be, they produce different balances and combinations of the global and local cultural dimensions of citizenship.

Cultural changes are inducing processes of differentiation within and between nation-state citizenship, as well as processes of globalization. Societies are confronted with new issues. In the end these are the main questions to be dealt with: what are the cultural dynamics changing the cultural premises of citizenship in the different parts of the world? And: how does the different complexes of citizenship react to them in the different contexts?

New forms of interdependences and links between 'local' identities and 'broader' solidarities are building up a *post-lib/lab* citizenship, which stems from adaptive forms of learning new relational practices in dealing with social issues where citizenship rights and obligations are involved. From a sociological point of view, may be that a new *societal semantics* is emerging, according to which citizenship becomes a complex of rights and duties not only of individuals but also of social groups, arranging civic life into a number of social autonomies capable of reconciling collective goals and self-management practices, solidarity and identity issues. This is the new challenge for citizenship in an *after*(or *trans*)-modern world.<sup>1</sup> I claim that the name of this new game is *societal citizenship* (Donati, 2006) or citizenship of social autonomies expressing their own culture.

1.2. Ever since human cultures have confronted themselves, swinging between a decent living together and clashing one against the other. Why do we perceive today that the relationships between different cultures have

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> In my language. *after*-modern is different from *post*-modern in so far as 'after' means a deep/sweeping *discontinuity* with modernity, while 'post' is usually understood as a radicalization of modernity or late modernity.

become a new challenge, different from the past?

There are, of course, many different reasons. In this paper I will take into consideration three main 'causes', which are playing a major role: i) first, the changes in the quantity and quality of migrations as related to cultural changes both in sending and receiving countries; ii) second, the crisis of citizenship as referred to the typical modern nation-state; iii) third, the process of globalization in so far as it diverges from a process of universalization.

These three orders of reasons are interrelated among them. The dynamics they imply altogether lead to the obsolescence and inadequacy of the forms of universalism as conceptualized and practiced in the processes of modernization so far. In order to understand where multicultural societies are going to, and whether a new universalism is possible or not, we need a new approach. I will call it 'relational' in so far as it is based on the relational management of memberships. Its main task is to provide a general framework which can be able to articulate, by differentiating and reintegrating, the different types of universalism emerging today in interaction with the new forms of localism and particularism.

1.3. Undoubtedly it would be useful to analyse how the issues of coexistence between cultures change over time, particularly in relation to the quality and quantity of migrations. But empirical data are very poor or not available, and moreover there is not enough room here. A tentative typology could suggest a distinction among the following types:

a) *relatively integrated multicultural societies* seem to be linked to traditional settlements created through slow historical processes in the presence of a scarce and limited migration; the sequence variation, selection, stabilization can be helpful in the interpretation of this process, provided that the social differentiation be slow enough and that integration forces prevail over conflicts; but, in any case, integrated multicultural societies stem from particular conditions favourable to the stability of contacts and associations amongst people of different cultures through an idea and practice of human or civil society (for instance in some areas of the Far East and also in some areas of the Mediterranean basin);

b) *conflicting multicultural societies* are linked to the segregation/segmentation of societal and migratory structures; usually they have been created through historical processes unable to achieve a minimum of stabilization, either because of the lack of a unifying political power (for instance in many areas of the USA), or because civil society was not able to give itself an efficient political system (for instance in the former Yugoslavia, and in certain areas of Italy); in this cases a process of differentationwith-integration was not produced, so that the conflict between cultures has dominated;

c) today we are witnessing the emergence of what I would call *fluctuating multicultural society* which is typical of highly mobile and stratified contexts based upon the principle of social differentiation; here migrations are characterized by features of massive instability and conflict among different cultures.

The three forms (a, b, c) have not a linear relationship among them. There is no continuity and no adaptation, let alone a kind of *up-grading* adaptation, among them. The mere flowing of time and the mere reiteration of communications are not enough to provide a good coexistence between different cultures.

1.4. Today the third type (fluctuating multiculturalism) endangers all the other kinds of multicultural orders. Why is it so?

A trivial answer says that it is so because migration processes are now taking place on a global, i.e. planetary, level. Large-scale demographic unbalances produce rising expectations for migrations; the invasion of Western modernization into other cultures takes on a violent character; and in many countries the capacity to provide political regulations for all these processes decreases day by day.

In this scenario, everybody must become a migrant from the cultural point of view. No one type of community can guarantee the survival of a particular culture or a particular social group if that culture or group wants to avoid the inter-cultural confrontation under the umbrella of the nation-state citizenship as it has been conceived and practiced in the modern age - see the societal community theorized by Parsons (2007). Within modernity, universalism and communitarianism tend to become antithetical (Rasmussen, 1990).

That is why we can say that the challenge of multiculturalism is new. It is like that in so far as the ideas and practices of democratic citizenship – as

modernity thinks of it, i.e. as a *lib/lab* configuration<sup>2</sup> – are no longer able to provide significant steps further in the resolution of the issues connected with the political coexistence among different cultures.

Today we have to acknowledge that the outcome of what we are used to call (Western) modern democracy is something which resembles a paradoxical community: a community made by people without any real community. Modern democracy in fact normatively prescribes a community where people are supposed not to be linked to any particular community. As a matter of fact, citizenship becomes a place where what is common to all people is only a kind of universal uprooting. Citizenship still means the necessity to abandon one's own memberships and may be also belongings.

1.5. Among the very many different paradoxes of our contemporary society, there is one point which deserves a particular inspection: why is it happening today that globalization increases at the same time that universalism decreases? Or: how is it that we witness the emergence of particular cultural attachments in the presence of widespreading processes of cultural globalization?

My feeling is that the 'causes' of this paradox (i.e. the more society globalizes the more we see cultural conflicts coming up) are different in different contexts:

- in Europe we could see the motive of an unprecedented demographic depression amongst native populations,

- in the USA there is the crisis of the national ideologies which have traditionally provided a cultural cement; the ideas of *melting pot* and *salad bowl* are in crisis, and a new ideology seems to propagate which is centered on the idea of walking around carefully (*streetwise*), and to proceed through *negative capabilities*.

- in other continents, what is emerging is above all a reaction against the cultural violence of the Western modernization as guided by precise interests and identities that are aliens to those peoples.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> By *lib/lab* I mean the compromise between liberal and labour (socialist) ideologies, or between capitalist market and political democracy. The lib/lab configuration of citizenship is based upon the idea that human emancipation is an optimum combination (hybridization) of liberal freedom and socialist equality, leaving aside the issue of social solidarity (Donati, 2000).

We ask ourselves: can we bring the issue of cultural coexistence back to some design of cultural universalism? According to Klaus Eder, one of the basic problems confronting post-industrial societies is "the *inclusion* of cultural differences into a universalistic political and social order (in a democratically organized civil society)" (1993, p. 169). To me this statement which is widely shared among Western scholars - is certainly attractive, but it should be discussed at length. What does it mean inclusion? And inclusion to what?

An easy criticism to Eder's perspective is that it leaves completely apart the problem of the quality and quantity of the crisis of Western universalism as incorporated in the inclusion formula of modernity.

Eder's suggestion is clearly made by the viewpoint of Western society, and for this reason it meets a great limit: it rejects the idea that different cultures could have different conceptions of citizenship (understood as the complex of rights and obligations which characterize a full participation of individuals and groups to a political community).

The historical process generated by the West produces the crisis of the universalism as created by the West itself. It is in the Western world where collective and widespread fears arise concerning the idea that we could come to live in a world without any universal value or norm. And it is there that a crucial question arises: can we still think in terms of some form of cultural universalism?

Within the postmodern Western climate the answer seems to be negative. Most people say: the process of modernization is over. And the proof is precisely seen in the fact that the more we globalize the social world, the more we come to reinforce local cultures which are particularistic (Gutmann, 1992). This is undoubtedly a clear symptom of a historical turn. The problem of multiculturalism is no longer an heritage of past traditions, but an issue brought about by the present social system. It is a need which is generated again and again precisely in globalized localities ('glocalities').

1.6. My feeling is that the perspective of coping with the issues linked to a multicultural society by means of political inclusion of minorities into a 'general system' (be it a nation-state or anything alike or equivalent) can be utopian and even dangerous if the concept of political inclusion is not well articulated. Briefly: the failures in achieving a peaceful multicultural society may not be linked to mere deficiencies in what we are used to call 'political inclusion'. Lacks and lags may be due to the quality of such an inclusion: if it is thought in terms of inclusion into a *culturally neutral* public sphere (as it is widely thought in Europe) or into a *morally qualified* public sphere (as it is widely believed in the USA), and in the second case what kind of moral qualification the public sphere should have.

I wish to argue here that issues linked to the coexistence of different cultures derive from the fact that they cannot be dealt with in terms of the binary couple '*political* inclusion vs exclusion'.

## 2. Ethnocentrism and racism in the postmodern society

2.1. According to some scholars, the more society becomes postmodern the more ethnocentrism and racism lose their importance or at least can be restrained. This perspective can be exemplified by the picture of *Tooting*, the 'global village' within the Great London described by Martin Albrow (1996).

Except some particular areas, anyway, it seems that the contrary is true: the failure of the rule of modernity, and the crisis of many control mechanisms set up by the welfare state, seem to produce a revival of ethnocentrism and racism in many places, perhaps the majority of the countries. The urban dynamics seems to create ethnic villages again and again, as E. Anderson (1990) has brilliantly described for an American town.

Of course, one can observe that the U.K. is not equal to the U.S. But, to my mind, the persistence of ethnic and racial discriminations does not depend only on the different context, i.e. on the peculiarities of each country. One could notice that ethnic and racial discriminations tend to re-emerge within the same contexts in which they were supposed to have been overcome.

We should pay attention to the fact that ethnocentrism and racism (like other cultural forms, e.g. nationalism) are becoming more and more different from the past.

Despite the fact that these cultural forms cannot presume to get a cultural hegemony, they can reproduce themselves here and there more easily than yesterday. As a matter of fact, ethnocentrism and racism become more and more social constructions which are useful to redefine social relationships locally. What is implied here is certainly the redefinition of power relationships (both internal and external to a social group). But, more generally, what is implied is the control over the resources affecting all the identities and interests of social life.

To the extent that society enters into a configuration of advanced modernity, so to assume postmodern features, as it happens today in Europe and - in a different way - in the U.S., the clashes between cultures *change their meanings and their functions*:

- generally speaking, cultures are no longer global ideologies that fight one against the other at the higher level of the cultural meanings, but they become local representations which are used for much more limited and contingent goals and strategies;

- generally speaking, the cultural dynamics no longer has the function of closing the boundaries of each culture towards its external world, but, on the contrary, it has the task of including more complexity from outside, so to stabilize itself through a 'chaotic order'.

Under these conditions, it seems impossible to resort to a universalistic system of symbolic and structural references in order to find out a solution to the issue of a multicultural coexistence.

2.2. It is trivial to observe that on the earth there was never a factual universalism among human populations. But it is nevertheless true that there were and still are many systems of thought which pretend to bring about some form of universalism (they correspond, in fact, to patterns of civilization).

Some scholars have observed that many 'universalisms' have represented, as a matter of fact, forms of disguised particularism. The criticism to Christianity has come to claim that, for instance, the empire of Alexander the Great was much more universalistic than all the forms of Christian universalism, both in old times and in the contemporary West.

What is sure is that the secularization of the Christian universalism has reached its peak in what we usually call the American civil religion. But one can observe that this religion too is meeting a very deep crisis. Suffice it to quote the arguments by N. Luhmann (1977), who argues for the death of this civil religion, and the well-known forecast on the clash of civilizations made by S. Huntington, to cite only two perspectives.

Undoubtedly many scholars do not agree on the death of the American civil religion. Possibly, for instance, J.C. Alexander (2008) would make a lot of objections to these perspectives. But I suppose that even Alexander could not deny the symptoms of the new forms of ethnocentrism and racism which are appearing in the USA: he only would claim that American civil society is strong enough to react democratically to them. So the question become: until when can the American model of civil society be strong enough to regenerate a civil religion? And what about those societies in which there is no such a religion?

## 3. Globalization vs universalism

3.1. Some people think that, under conditions of post-modernity, viable solutions to the difficulties of a multicultural coexistence might come from the so called processes of globalization (see Featherstone, 1990). But many others are doubtful about that (Archer, 1985). I believe that we must distinguish carefully between universalism and globalization. By universalism I mean a cultural order based upon values common to all human beings, or, better said, values which ask for the maximum respect of the human persons as such. By globalization I do not mean mere inter-dependence on a global scale, but a peculiar dynamics of cultural standardization.

a. As a matter of fact, globalization does not eliminate ethnocentrism and racism; globalization makes them only more latent, more wadded, and under many respects it privatizes them; in sum, globalization seems to be not a culture properly understood, but on the contrary a kind of sterilization of culture.

b. Globalization means much more a treatment of commercials than a linguistic, expressive or symbolic communication able to sustain real and meaningful social relationships. For this reason, globalization - as modernity understands it - comes to be a new cultural Babel which does not really help much in the multicultural dialogue. Dialogue is a matter of interpersonal socio-cultural relationships, not a mere juxtaposition of individuals sharing a common symbolic code through which they can exchange informations. 3.2. What I want to underline is that globalization and universalism are not synonymous.

Globalization means a process of standardization, particularly the standardization of the mind, that stratifies, separates and connects people through an implicit cultural determinism. It is a structural process (one could say: a structural effect) that leaves small room to both intentional action and symbolic evaluation.

On the contrary, universalism is an intentional and value process, one which must rely upon the presence and the contributions of human subjects. It aims at connecting human beings without confusing them (it makes them similar not identical). Universalism refers to human subjects who cope with existential issues by interpreting their situation as a problem of mutual reciprocity.<sup>3</sup>

In sum: globalization is a systemic process (a process of system integration) whereas universalism relies upon a relational process of social integration centered on the human person. Both of them are useful, but we must not get confused as to what is their different orientation to what, in social life, is 'human'. While in the case of globalization the human person is reduced to a sign, i.e. a reference for a merely performative communication, in the case of universalism the human person is and must be conceived of as the focus of a moral conscience.

## 4. Is a 'new universalism' possible? Which universalism?

4.1. The idea of universalism can be understood in many different ways. In general, anyway, those who appeal to universalism do that by having in mind one target: to urge the observer to learn how to see the Other as a human being instead of something else, e.g. a specimen of a race.

It is precisely this distinction which is (and must be) used in evaluating and selecting the types of possible universalism. For a good selection one is

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> From this point of view, it is interesting to notice that what we call *streetwise* culture develops in the context of experienced interpersonal relationships through which individuals "may learn to see people rather than race and to rely less on prejudice and stereotyping" (Anderson, 1990, p. 253).

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sent back to a relational thought which must be able to see the singularity of the human person as a 'concrete universal', not as an individuality of a species. It is from this angle that the functional equivalence among the different forms of cultural universalism fail.

4.2. Let us consider the different forms of cultural universalism. A tentative list could be the following:

- the *substantial or comprehensive universalism*, according to which there are objective human rights which are universal in the sense of being out there (Hudson, 1993);

- the *deliberative universalism*, according to which we can arrive at decisions who are taken by a discursive community of people making reasonable choices (Habermas, 2002);

- the *conventional universalism*, according to which "there is nothing deep down inside us except what we have put there ourselves, no criterion that we have not created in the course of creating a practice, no standard of rationality that is not an appeal to a such a criterion, no rigorous argumentation that is not obedience to our own conventions" (Rorty, 1982, p. xiii);

- the *functional universalism*, according to which the two sides of the distinction particular/universal are interchangeable, so that the universal is only an operator of differences (see T. Parsons and N. Luhmann);

- the *symbolic universalism*, according to which mankind is able to elaborate cultural patterns that can be meaningful for everybody (see Walzer, 1983; Alexander, 2008).

Each of these types of universalism has different capabilities in order to produce a viable and meaningful distinction between a (human) person and a non(human)-person.

What must be underlined is the fact that today most forms of universalism articulate such a distinction through oppositions (binary distinctions) which impede a relational management of the two sides of the coin.

Substantial universalism is opposed to conventional universalism, deliberative universalism is opposed to functional universalism, and so on. Each form is interpreted and developed through the negation (both internal and external) of its opposite. By this way universalism becomes a paradox: not only it denies its own universality, but it comes to deny the wholeness of the human person which should precisely be the focus of its directive distinction. We must remember that many nation-states still now are built up from a binary logic according to which a majority of people is supposed to be identified by a common history, common culture and language *against* the so called national minorities, which are supposed to be detrimental to a harmonious state development. In early modernity, the nation-state has been built up as an explicit and intentional negation of a multi-national state. National citizenship, therefore, is a form of restriction of what is civil in the sense of being able to recognize the human person as such against other features of the individual (such as his/her language, religion, the colour of the skin, and so on). It would be useful to remember the controversy between John Stuart Mill, who was a supporter of the nation-state, and John Dalberg-Acton who, on the contrary, argued that the combination of various nations within a state was a necessary condition of civilized life.

What is at stake is a kind of universalism which we could call *universalism of multiple loyalties*. We are still within a form of universalism in which one loyalty (for instance to a nation-state or a religion) is supposed to absorb all other memberships and symbolic references.

Under conditions of social complexity, as it happens today, the major trouble for a universalistic perspective is to put the human person as the focus of social action so to avoid any reduction of the person to something alien to the dignity of a human being.

Such an orientation is something necessary for a multicultural society which wants to deserve the title of 'human'. But the universalism of multiple loyalties is very difficult to be conceived and managed. One should be able to avoid a kind of hierarchy between different memberships which can be detrimental to the human conscience, as well as to avoid a fundamentalist perspective. One must be able to activate a relational management of the loyalties to different values and norms.

A culture which can be able to perform these operations is not available yet. For this reason, the universalism of multiple loyalties keeps being very weak, and sometimes seems to have no premises.

4.3. Perhaps today we can think of its premises as lying in a different vision of the human individual as an intrinsically relational being. It is on this general presupposition that we can found a *relational universalism*, as distinct from all the other kinds of universalism (which have no relationality

properly).

Relational universalism does presuppose a certain cultural vision of society, i.e. a certain idea of the process of civilization. It implies a concept of societal citizenship rather than state citizenship (Donati, 2006).

Relational universalism emphasizes the capability to relate what is different, i.e. to manage the difference by seeing a synergic relationship instead of an opposition (or binary distinction). From this point of view, we can see how far it is from violence as it is incorporated in the use of the binary oppositions proper to modern thought (think of Luhmann's logic), starting from the dialectic master/slave as theorized by F. Hegel.

Relational universalism presupposes the maximum feasible interior freedom of the individual at the same time that it requires the maximum adhesion to the Alter as a bearer of a (human) condition which needs a comprehension and a sharing in terms of basic values and norms. Is it a paradox? Under many important aspects, the answer can be positive. But this paradox can be highly instructive, since it can be coped with only by resorting to a peculiar notion of common good.

Such common good, which might be properly called *relational good* (Donati, 2015a), does not require equality in the identities of the people involved in it. It requires that the good be produced and enjoyed together by every participant in the game.

In order to manage this paradox, modern Western culture has resorted to many devices:

- the reference to the (enlightened) Reason, or to a systemic functional equivalent of it (as it has been stressed in Parsons and Luhmann),

- the reference to the Subject (as rediscovered, for instance, by A. Touraine),

- the reference to the 'Human Existence' (for instance F. Crespi following M. Heidegger).

More recently, particularly in sociology, it has appeared a new form of management of the paradoxes connected to a universalistic stance which is called *euryalistics*: it consists in asking the observer to change its position (the point of observation) continuously so to escape from the paradox in which one risks to be imprisoned (Luhmann, 1990). But evidently such an euryalistics does not solve the paradoxes, it only bring them to the paroxysm.

What is interesting to observe is the fact that, step by step, in all these perspectives, a progressive obliteration of the reference to the universalism of the human rights has taken place. The legitimation for such a result is nowadays that there is no anthropology available for supporting the universalism of human rights. It is no accident that the universalism of human rights has gone away together with the notion of a common good and an anthropology able to see it. Today universal human rights are simply understood as subjective requests that should be recognized in so far as they are shared by a collective entity sufficiently strong to impose them to the public opinion and consequently to the governments.

To me there is no real difference between the paroxysm of cultural differences (as emphasized by Luhmann's euryalistics) and the aestheticism of the postmodern culture. Both of them spring out from the fear they have in common in coping with the issue of interpreting (giving meaning) to cultural differences. Both of them are unable to elaborate symbols which can represent the cultural difference as familiar. Can we look for another way out to the ultimate outcome of modernity, i.e. the perspectives of paroxysm and aestheticism?

The more we consider the crisis of modernity, the more we realize that a multicultural coexistence requires an open-minded religious perspective. Kierkegaard argued that only what is absolute can give freedom to human beings. Modernity, as we know, argues just in the opposite way: for modernity freedom can be achieved only through the negation of what is absolute. S.N. Eisenstadt (1992) has shown what is the issue of charismatic legitimation involved in all that.

#### 5. Conclusions

We need a new vision of human existence to manage the cultural borders in such a way as to preserve the differences while taking care of what links them and can be shared by them. This amounts to find out a new 'relational culture', i.e. a culture of social relations that can be able to see and deal with the 'enigma' of the borders themselves (Donati 2015b), that consists in having to connect different people, different styles of life, different memberships, different citizenships, without neither reproducing their separation nor make them clash with each other.

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# *Algeria Post Arab Spring : The Forced Virtualisation of the Borders*

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#### Abstract

Algeria is the core of the Maghreb and shares land borders with seven countries Maghreb and Sahel countries. However, since 2011, none of the seven land borders is stable and secure. So, even if Algeria is considered as a stable country, this stability is fragile and is likely to be more precarious if the country has to face simultaneously an economic crisis and delicate presidential succession. Domestic incertitude coupled to regional conflicts puts the Algerian borders under unprecedented pressure. Consequently, almost all the governmental declarations expressed worries about the vulnerability of the borders, and assurances about the security services determination to assure the state security. However, to what extant this promise can be entirely fulfilled, regarding the borders' characteristics and the specificity of the context? Why is the virtualization of the borders forced? As regards to the growing permeability of the borders, can their militarization guarantee their security?

Key words: Algeria, Borders, Sovereignty, Securitization, Threats.

#### Introduction

The globalization has produced a direct effect on the virtualization of the countries' borders. In most of the cases, this virtualization is the consequence of free trade agreements, economic cooperation and easy people circulation. In the most developed cases, the national borders have disappeared, providing room for four guaranteed freedoms (circulation of goods, services, capitals and persons). However, globalization has also strengthened the fears of spreading crises and conflicts. Actually, the 2008 financial crisis started in the United States and spread out all around the world... The war in Syria is no longer a classical civil war but became an international war in which regional and international powers are involved. Many other examples could be given to illustrate the capacity of crises and conflicts to cross the national borders and impact many non implied parties. Consequently, many countries have felt the necessity of higher protection and seen the borders as the natural way to do so. Hence, instead of opening the borders, they try to strengthen their control on them.

Algeria undoubtedly fits into this second tendency. Since its independence in 1962, this North-African state is the core of the Maghreb and shares land borders with seven countries. During decades, the borders which represented a high security concern were the western one, the Algerian-Moroccan borders. Actually, the strained bilateral relations have always had a direct impact in militarizing the control of both sides' borders.

This article will focus on the post Arab spring period that impacted negatively the security of the Algerian borders. In fact, since 2011, none of the seven land borders is stable and secure. From Tunisia in the north-east, to Libya, Niger, Mali and Mauritania in the western south and the south, several new and old risks are threatening. So, even if Algeria is considered as a stable country, this stability is fragile and is likely to be more precarious if the country has to face simultaneously an economic crisis and delicate presidential succession. Domestic incertitude coupled to regional conflicts puts the Algerian borders under unprecedented pressure. These last years, and regarding the regional tensions, almost all political debates have focused on security issues. Consequently, almost all the governmental declarations expressed worries about the vulnerability of the borders, and assurances about the security services determination to assure the national security. However, to what extant this promise can be entirely fulfilled, regarding the borders' characteristics and the specificity of the context? Regarding the growing porosity of the borders, can their militarization guarantee their security?

To answer these questions, this article will discuss the hypothesis that the virtualisation of the Algerian borders is a forced process because of their deep rooted securitization. In the first section, this article will try to explain why the Algerian leaders find difficult to give up their securitized perception of the borders' security by diving into historical dimension. Then, we will analyze the present characteristics of the Algerian borders and more specifically their virtualisation, through three important crossborder dimensions: human, economic and security dimension.

#### 1. The Deep Roots of Borders' Securitization

The borders are undoubtedly considered as a part of the national identity, sovereignty and security. According to Anthony Giddens, when borders merged with national government, violence was established in the heart of national governments. These lasts can do anything to protect their borders because their elimination means the lost of sovereignty (Manijeh, 2014).

The Algerian government has always dealt with borders as a security issue. The process of securitization<sup>1</sup> of the borders has preceded the Algeria's independence in 1962 and never left the Algerian policy towards the borders. In fact, just last March, the National Liberation Front (FLN), the most important support of the president Bouteflika, announced the launch of his a national initiative called the "national defending wall". The FLN called all the political forces and the organizations of the civil society to join this huge gathering in order to face the threats that Algeria is facing inside and outside the country. Surprisingly, the opposition does not develop another speech, far from it. It has also referred to borders securitization but considered that the president is not able to guarantee the security of the borders since he is no longer able to govern<sup>2</sup> and since the political system as a whole has no democratic legitimacy<sup>3</sup>. It should be pointed that the securitized opposition speech is surprising because securitization advantages the government positions. Actually, violence and the fear of foreign or domestic enemy have had a deep effect on the borders' perception. In this section, we will explain the impact of different forms of violence in the history of borders securitization.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "The main argument of securitization theory is that security is a (illocutionary) speech act. 'It is by labeling something a security issue that it becomes one'. By stating that a particular referent object is threatened in its existence, a securitizing actor claims a right to extraordinary measures to ensure the referent object's survival. The issue is then moved out of the sphere of normal politics into the realm of emergency politics, where it can be dealt with swiftly and without the normal (democratic) rules and regulations of policy-making" (Taureck, 2006, p. 54).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> This is the main argument of Ali Benflis, the challenger of Abdelaziz Bouteflika in the 2014 presidential election.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> This is the argument of the opposition organized in a coalition called the National Coordination for Freedom and Democratic Transition (CNLTD).

#### The Independence and the Sand Wars

Boundaries determine territorial jurisdiction of each national government (either land or water border) and, consequently, the national government. Therefore, borders have an important role in identifying national government. Without this territorial jurisdiction, government isn't "realized," and its governance is meaningless. In other words, the existence or absence of borders equates to the existence or absence of government. For this reason, governments allow any military action to protect their borders, often allocate a huge military budget and sometimes launch wars to secure and securitize the national borders. This is what Algeria did through several steps.

The first step of securitization of the borders has not only preceded the independence but also allowed it. Actually, these borders are the fruit of a long violent and political fight against French colonization (1830-1962), ended after a bloody independence war (1954-1962). It is important to notice that independence war could have been shorter and less deadly if the Algerian leaders had accepted the French proposition of dividing the country into two parts: independence for the north, French remaining domination in the south<sup>4</sup>. However, the Algerian fighters refused to give up the south not only because they knew how rich it was, but also because their identity as a future national government was based on kicking out the colonial government from all the territory and replace it as the government of liberty for all the Algerian people. In addition, it should be pointed out that the fighters called themselves "mujahidin", which gives their fight and their cause a religious-sacred dimension that can hardly be bargained.

According to Algerian point of view, colonization comprised a definite territory; the new government could not win its entire identity by governing only a part of it. Besides, the principle of holding the borders inherited from colonization was not only a juridical statement but also a part of the future Algerian state to such extant that Algeria have been defended this principle over the years and in all circumstances.

The second step of securitization of the borders happened just after the independence of the country. It is the "sand war" that opposed Algeria to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> For more details, see (Courrière, 2001; Harbi, 1981).

Morocco. The origin of this war was the territorial Moroccan requests. In order to reestablish the "Greater Morocco", the monarchy demanded the inclusion of the western Algerian regions (Tindouf, Béchar between others) under its sovereignty, because they have been incorporated into Algeria under the French rule. Considering that they fought to liberate all the territory, the then-new Algerian government rejected the request of the Moroccan leaders who decided to attack Algeria on October 13-14, 1963. Despite the superiority of the Moroccan army and the obvious unbalanced of power, the Algerian army resisted to the attack until the intervention of the Organization of African Unity. Its mediation stopped the war in November 1963 but did not end the rancor. The official political speech has maintained alive the feeling that Algerian people were betrayed by their neighbor and that the threat remains big on the other side of the border. It is worthy noticing that like Morocco<sup>5</sup>, Algeria used this borders' war to delegitimize the political opposition movements. Indeed, in the name of preserving the territorial integrity, the armed rebellion of the FFS (Front of Socialist Forces) was neutralized as soon as its members join the national army against Morocco.

These two steps in the Algerian recent history put the borders at the core of the Algerian regime legitimacy. Despite the important ideological shift of 1989, the revolutionary legitimacy that shapes the borders' perception did not lose its sacred dimension. Hence, even the most critical opponents defend the idea that the present national borders are legitimate, rightful and must be protected against any internal or external danger. This consensus has remained strong and gets stronger each time Algeria seemed or was threatened. The war on terrorism was undoubtedly one of these major threats in which the notion of borders was central and paradoxical.

## The War Against Terrorism

During the nineties, Algeria faced a very violent terrorism that caused 200000 deaths and thousands of disappeared persons. One could consider this strife as an exclusively domestic affair, since the numerous terrorist groups were Algerians and their goals were related to a political stake,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> The leader of UNFP, Mehdi Ben Barka, was sentenced to death in absentia.

which is taking power. Hence, they claimed that they were fighting for restoring the Islamists right to govern Algeria after the victory of the FIS (Islamic Front for Salvation) in the 1991 legislative elections. However, the notion of borders had an important impact and took a new and paradoxical dimension during that period. Indeed, the borders became synonym of protection as well as nuisance.

On one hand, and from the beginning of the conflict, the Algerian government claimed that the terrorist groups were that resisting and injuring because they get supports from outside. These supports were financial, military, political and ideological coming from foreign media, international NGO's and some "hostile" governments. The conspiracy theory was widely used to explain the resilience of the terrorist groups and their capacity to cause damages. For illustrative purposes, Algeria caught its diplomatic relations with Iran in the mid nineties after accusing Teheran of supporting the FIS insurgency. For their part, the Algerian-Moroccan and Algerian-Saudi relations were very strained for basically the same reasons. While the western neighbor was accused to open the borders to material support (basically arms) to the terrorist groups, the petro-monarchy was blamed for violating the Algerian symbolic integrity by diffusing an aggressive and extremist ideology. The Algerian government has not only considered the wahhabi salafism as a non Algerian ideology but also a danger for its national identity and territorial integrity. Consequently, and according to this first point of view, the Algerian borders were not sufficiently consolidated and needed stronger measures to assure the Algerian security. In order to close this loophole, Algeria decided to close its land borders with Morocco and maintained this decision since 1994. More than two decades later, the Algerian government still considers that the national security requires keeping the borders closed and under the military control<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> According to the 2014 report of the United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the area devoted to the cultivation of cannabis in Morocco is estimated at 57,000 hectares against 10,000 hectares in Afghanistan. According to the Director General of the National Office for Fight against Drug and Drug Addiction (ONLDT), Mohamed Benhalla, "the cannabis resin which represents the largest amount of the drugs seized in Algeria, comes from the neighboring country Morocco. 80.80% of the cannabis resin were seized in the western region of the country. In Algeria, about 182 tones of cannabis resin were seized in 2014 against more than 211 tones in 2013, down 13% of the seized quantities, a drop due to the strengthening of the security system at the borders.

On another hand, the strife has turned the borders onto a kind of closing and isolating wall. Is it about the wall of a huge prison? The image maybe exaggerated but it expresses the isolation in which Algeria has been maintained during several years. This isolation had two aspects. The material and concrete aspect consisted in reducing the contacts and exchanges at their strict minimum level. For instance, almost all the western air companies had left the country, making traveling from and to Algeria very difficult. The second aspect was symbolic and consisted in the Algeria's political isolation. It is worthy reminding that the nature and the source of the violence in the country was subject of contradictory debate. On one hand, some defined this violence as the expression of an extremist political party (FIS) who wanted to get to power by any means and in order to make of Algeria a new Afghanistan<sup>7</sup>. On another hand, another analysis consisted in linking the armed groups to the regime refusal to recognize the FIS victory in the legislative elections on December 1991<sup>8</sup>. According to this point of view, several states and media in the world considered the regime was as responsible of the strife and used "political violence", instead of "terrorism". Worst, they also used the famous "who killed who" to accuse the government security forces of perpetrating violence, illegal and immoral actions against civilians to delegitimize the Islamist armed groups.

This means that the securitization of the borders and their militarization have a double impact: on one hand they can provide a certain protection and reduce some threats, but on another hand, they isolate the country from its environment and deprived it of the opportunities this environment can offer. This securitized perception of the borders has a direct consequence on the perception of the borders porosity, which is considered as a constraint or a fait accompli.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> This position was lead by the militaries, called the "Janviéristes" and a part of secular and islamist opposition, like RCD and Hamas.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> The FLN lead by Abdelhamid Mehri and the opponent party, the FFS, rejected the "Janviéristes" decision.

#### 2. The Virtulisation of the Borders as a Fait Accompli

Borders are made to protect the state and the people they live in but some borders are more protecting than others and some borders are easier to protect than others. Algeria is Northern-African country and shares its land borders with seven Maghreb and Sahel countries<sup>9</sup>. It is bordered by the Mediterranean Sea in north, and shares maritime borders with Italy and Spain. It is worthy noticing that the official discourses as well as that of the opposition complain about the permeability of the borders. So, why have the Algerian borders become virtual?

#### The Human Cross-border Dimension

Algeria is the largest African country and more than 80 percent of the territory is covered by the Sahara. These two aspects means that Algeria is deeply rooted in both the Maghreb and the Sahel regions. It is worthy noticing that the borders are not the result of a long nation-building process but the consequence of the European colonization which split the region into pieces called states, divided people into groups called nations, and created separated destinies from common histories. The absence or the fragility of the nation-state in the region has something to do with this historical fact.

The Algerian Arab-Amazigh identity has a continuation behind the borders and shares a common patrimony with the neighboring people in terms of traditions, language, spirituality, history and destiny. Actually, the Algerians living on the borders have more than neighborhood relations with the population of the other side of the boundaries. Sometimes, the same family is divided between an Algerian part and a Tunisian/or Moroccan or Malian one. For instance, the Kel Ahaggar (Algeria) and Kel Adagh (Mali), live in the Algerian-Malian borders. These two big Tuareg tribes have occupied the same spaces and, then, concluded economic alliances, strengthened by matrimonial alliances (Bellil & Dida, 1993). These close identities are also consolidated by a religious factor. All people of the region belong to sunni

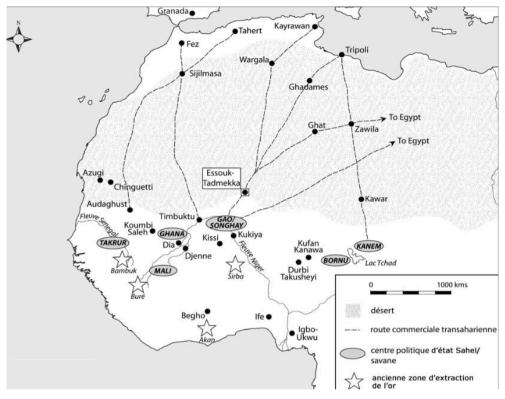
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Morocco in west, Mauritania and Mali in south west, Niger in south east, Libya and Tunisia in east and it has a small border stretch to Western Sahara in west.

Malekite rite and share a long history of traditional popular religious faith. The zawaya (traditional brotherhoods) play an important symbolic authority in Algeria as well as in the neighboring countries. Besides, three cities concentrate this spiritual convergence: Chinguitti in Mauritania known as the 7<sup>th</sup> Islamic holy city, Tumbuctou in Mali considered as the city of 333 saints and Tadmekka, the previous capital of Adagh, also in Mali (Nixon, 2013). Furthermore, one of three most famous saints of Tumbuctou is sheikh Sidi Aboulkassim Kounti, born in Algeria.

Its geographical situation has put Algeria at the core of a huge space of exchanges and social mobility, while the climatic conditions have created an ancestral social mobility, at the vertical level (south to the north and vice versa) as well as the horizontal one (East to west and vice versa). In these rude areas, the link between humans is stronger than the link with the territory. People need to rely on each other to be able to face the harsh nature. As a consequence, people have a dynamic and flexible perception of non fixed territory. In their mental scheme, the territory has functional borders instead of definitive one. In other words, Algeria and its neighbors constitute a huge space of social mobility and diversity. Many examples illustrate this assertion. Hence, the terrible dry periods of the 70's and 80's pushed thousands of Malians and Nigerians to emigrate towards Algeria and Libya (Brachet et al., 2011). Otherwise, many breeders would not have survived in their native country. Earlier in the fifties, many sahelian people came to the south of the then colonized Algeria to build French military bases, notably in Regane (Brachet et al., 2011). Nowadays, Tamanrasset, a southern district, is like Tumbuctou and Agadez, a turning point of very ancient solidarity, commercial and cultural exchanges.

This cross-border human mobility has also political and security causes. Indeed, the recurrent conflicts and instability in Mali, Niger, Chad, Mauritania, Burkina Faso, in addition to Western Sahara issue have pushed many refugees towards North Africa and Algeria in particular. Some of them want to stop their trip in Algeria before going back home, while some others tried to achieve Europe.

To sum up, Algeria is an inseparable part of its environment because Algerians are inseparable from the neighboring people (Map 1). Ancestral symbolic links bring them together as economic links used to do.



Map 1: Social mobility cross Algeria's borders

## The Cross-border Economic Dimension

The second factor that expresses the virtualisation of the Algerian borders as a fait accompli is the important exchanges between the populations living on the opposite sides of these borders. It is worthy noticing that most of these exchanges are done through illegal ways, passing through Adrar, Tamanrasset, In Salah and Bordj Badji Mokhtar (from Algeria) to Gao and Kidal (Mali); or through Tamanrasset via In Guezzam to Agadez and Arlit (Niger). Paradoxically, while official trade is ridiculously low (less than 1% of the Algerian foreign trade), smuggling constitutes a structural phenomenon and a permanent link between Algerian people and their neighbors. Actually, the informal exchanges equal 75 times the formal ones: \$2 million against \$150 million only with Mali.

Source : (Nixon, 2013).

In 2011, 160 trucks crossed the southern Algerian borders per week (OCDE, 2014). Indeed, smuggling cross the Algerian borders assure a vital economic function to such extant that it contributes in reducing poverty in some poor areas. For instance, it must be noticed that poverty rate in northern Mali is lower than in the south thanks to the low prices of the smuggled (and subsidized) goods that benefit from the short distance, compared to the southern Mali<sup>10</sup>. For instance, the couscous (one the main popular dish in North Africa) is ten times cheaper in Bamako than in Kidal. In Niger, the smuggled products are 30% more expensive in the south than in the north which logically impacts the consumption capacities (Raballand et al., 2014). That is, the more the populations live closed to the borders, the more they profit from the subsidized goods coming from Algeria, the more the ties between populations are strong.

However, this phenomenon has several bad consequences. The first, but not the most dangerous, is financial and economic since it generates tensions in the Algerian market (cyclical shortages) and causes loss of incomes (low taxes). In 2011, the supporting of smuggled goods caused a direct financial loss of \$45 million. Due to government anti-smuggling action, subsidy losses through smuggling for 2014 fell to \$10 million. (Ed McAllister , 2015)<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, the most important smuggled good is oil. Hence, 1.5 billion of liters cross illegally the Algerian land borders, which represent 25% of the national production, the consumption of 600000 vehicles and \$12.8 million<sup>12</sup>. This phenomenon is likely to continue as long as the Algerian oil will remain the third cheaper one in the world.

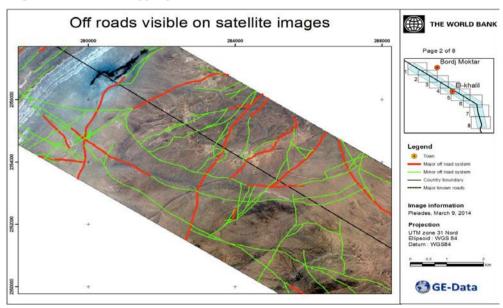
It should be noticing that people living in borders have totally integrated smuggling (Map 2) as an ordinary local behavior. Smuggling has perfectly assimilated the borders permeability, the cultural continuity, the existence of ancestral roads' trade, the diverse forms of complicity and the market lows (equilibrium of demand and supply). This complicity represents an

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> The prices of these goods are attractive because they come from Algeria where they are supported by the government.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Ed McAllister, "Anti-terrorism measures to 'close' Algeria's borders increases protest risks as free movement of goods and smuggling affected", Jane's Intelligence Review, 07 May 2015, http://www.janes.com/article/51244/anti-terrorism-measures-to-close-algeria-sborders-increases-protest-risks-as-free-movement-of-goods-and-smuggling-affected

<sup>12</sup> APS, 24/07/2013

efficient cross-borders organization which guarantees that the products the customs agents had captured will be recovered by their owners after auction sales. This situation has weakened the local authorities and created non-lows areas in which people can get their life incredibly better through informal networks. For instance, in Tamanrasset, a bordering district in the extreme south of Algeria, a smuggler wins dinars 100000 a week, more than the MP salary<sup>13</sup>.



Map 2: The roads of smuggling

Source: La Normalité de l'informalité: Une estimation du commerce informel entre le Mali et l'Algérie. The red roads represent the main cross-borders roads, the green ones represent the smugglers' roads.

However, the most worrying consequences of the cross-border smuggling are linked to the fact that the ordinary and tolerated smuggling can take the same roads than the dangerous drugs and arms trafficking. Consequently, what was "tolerated" and "acceptable" in a certain period has become a big security concern since 2011.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> «Corruption et contrebande à Tamanrasset», *El Watan*, 09/07/2014, http://www.tamanrasset.net/corruption-et-contrebande-a-tamanrasset/

# The Cross-border Security Threats

The two previous points introduce logically to the third one. The human and economic cross-border continuations lead understandably to security continuation which includes interdependence and easy spreading threats. These lasts have considerably increased with the collapse of Libya and instability of Tunisia and Mali.

These threats have economic origins as well as security-military ones. Firstly, the socio-economic issues analyzed above can easily turn to security concern since the borders between classical smuggling that aims earning one's living and new smuggling that implies complicity with criminal groups are getting thinner. This collusion can be a deliberate choice or an imposed fait accompli. In fact, there is growing pressure coming from the youth which does no more accept the marginalization their parents have always lived in. The Algerian southern regions are no longer the quietness regions they used to be in the past when they were the contradiction of the usually contesting northern cities. Besides Amenokal Ahmed Idabir (a Tuareg leader), has already warned the political authorities about the potential consequences of remaining exclusion and frustration of the youth<sup>14</sup>.

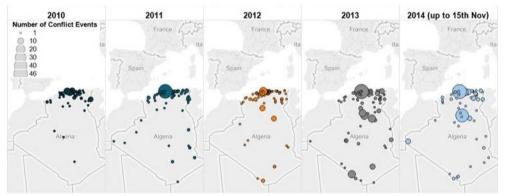


Fig. 1 - Number of conflict events by location in Algeria, from 2010-15th November 2014

Source: http://www.crisis.acleddata.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Figure-2-Number-of-Conflict-Events-by-Location-in-Algeria-from-2010-15th-November-2014.jpg

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> «Amenokal Ahmed Ibadir, Situation dans le sud : Entretien avec, chef suprême des Touaregs», TSA, 15/01/2015.

The figure 1 shows that the social movements have increased significantly in the south since the beginning of the Arab spring. This region was relatively secluded from this type of social tensions before this period. Most of these riots are short-lived, low intensity and geographically limited. If they can arise on the least pretext in the northern cities (a defeat in a football match, the distribution of housing...) (Dris-Aït Hamadouche, 2013) the contestation in the south is linked to the feeling that the population live under socio-economic marginalization. Contestation in Ghardaïa, Ouargla and In Salaha regions mix between economic frustrations and social marginalization.

Secondly, the disappearance of Libyan state and the regional chaos have thrown the Algerian borders in an unprecedented vulnerability. Since 2011, Algerian military forces have to assure the security of the borders with weak or inexistent counterpart on the other side, which makes the mission harder than it already is. The first consequence of this new situation is the spectacular increase of the weapons discovered on the Algerian territory<sup>15</sup>. In this context, more the defense ministry announces he caught weapons, more the worry increases about the arms shipments that escape from the security services. In addition to the quantity aspect, the regular security reports show that the quality of the weapons seized is changing. Compared to the past ones, the present seizures include more dangerous, modern and sophisticated weapons<sup>16</sup>. Consequently, one of the most formidable risks would be another attack against hydrocarbon basis which represents the country's economic heartland<sup>17</sup>.

In addition to arms trafficking, the porosity of the borders are also used for drug trafficking. This last includes West Africa in a huge cross-border network. Like arms' case, drug trafficking is getting more and more worrying since the drug implied is changing, moving from the "simple" cannabis to the alarming cocaine. This trafficking generates \$900 million per year in this African sub-region (IEEE & IMDEP, 2013) This shift is not a coinci-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> APS, 11/04/2016; Lamine Chikhi, «Wary of disorder in Libya and Mali, Algerian army targets southern smuggling», Reuters, 11/05/2015.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Akram Kharief, «Saisies d'armes : Du jamais vu dans l'histoire de l'Algérie», El Watan, 15/04/2016.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> In Amenas gas facility, which produces 18% of Algeria's exports, was attacked in January 2013. It is still a trauma.

dence. Hence, drug trafficking became one of the main terrorist financial resources. AQIM, Ansar Dine and the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa have moved beyond making money from kidnapping ransoms (Caulderwood, 2015). Their funds also come from the cocaine crossing the Atlantic Ocean, from Colombia, Peru and Bolivia, to western Africa, and the Algerian Sahara (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes , 2014). Besides, by 2014, there had been a major increase in cocaine seizures in Algeria.

If it t is established that terrorists are not the main drug traffickers, it is also verified that they have concluded a deal with drug sellers by providing them security (Lounas, 2014). This alliance allows criminals and terrorists to profit from this very lucrative cross-border trade and to face together the security actions.

Then, the militarization of the borders is the direct consequence of the transnationalisation of the threats. Algeria has closed 6400 km of its borders with Mauritania, Mali, Niger, and Libya, and placed its border crossings under military control. Hence, 70000 troops have been deployed and defense zones forbidden to civilians have been created the length of Algeria's land borders, with a shoot-to-kill policy on vehicles not responding to identification requests (McAllister, 2015). The militarization of the borders has succeeded their securitization, with this paradoxical result: the borders have never been more vulnerable.

# Conclusion

This article tried to analyze why and how the Algerian borders are getting more and more virtual. It showed that this virtualization is not the result of a deliberate choice but the consequence of *a fait accompli*. From this point of view, the securitization of the borders and, then, their militarization has a very controversial impact. Yes, it reduces smuggling but has aggravated the situation of the populations who survive through informal trade one on hand, and pushed the smugglers to look for protection from criminal group, on another hand. Thus, a forced virtualisation of the borders is the consequence of securitized perception of these borders. However, this deduction is not inevitable, far from it. Indeed, the specificity of the region engenders the specificity of the borders which, finally, artificially divide similar areas, and unsuitably separate connected populations. Subsequently, there is another possible perception and management of the borders in which their virtualization would be prepared, planed accompanied and rewarding for both sides of the borders. For instance, in the economic field, the Algerian government could profit from the ancestral exchanges to launch an ambitious transnational economic program of regional development. It could start with energy investments of Sonatrach and Sonelgaz<sup>18</sup>. The region of Assihar in Tamanrasset (the important district in the south of Algeria) could become an industrial zone by including actors from the other sides of the borders. For instance, exotic fruits or livestock could constitute the basis of fruitful cross-border agro industry to reduce jobless which constitutes a persistent problem and a source of tensions<sup>19</sup>.

Incontestably, Algeria is likely to feel a growing need for a "soft" and wanted virtualisation of the borders that implied to stop seeing the borders' virtualisation as a constraint but as an opportunity. This shift in the perception of borders' security is far to be an easy step. It is conditioned by the de-securitization of the borders which is linked to a deep political change. Actually, if the militarization of the borders can be explained by the regional instability since 2011, their securitization cannot be justified by referring to the present geopolitical context, since this securitization has preceded it. By contrast, this securitization goes side by side with securiti-

<sup>19</sup> «Commerce interafricain : l'Algérie mise sur le sud du pays», Le Midi Libre, 14/04/ 2012.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> These two public companies produce and sell oil and gaz. Sonatrach is the largest oil and gas company in Algeria and Africa. The company operates in exploration, production, pipeline transportation and marketing of hydrocarbons and by products. The international strategy of the company includes operations in several parts of the world namely: in Africa (Mali, Niger, Libya, Egypt), in Europe (Spain, Italy, Portugal, Great Britain), in Latin America (Peru) and in the USA. With a turnover nearing \$56,1 billion in 2010, Sonatrach is ranked first company in Africa and 12th in the world. It is also 4th world LNG exporter, 3rd world LPG exporter and 5th World Natural gas exporter. Sonelgaz (Socièté Nationale de l'Electricité et du Gaz, National Society for Electricity and Gas) is in charge of electricity and natural gas distribution in Algeria. It was established in 1969 and was given a monopoly over the distribution and selling of natural gas within the country as well as the production, distribution, importation, and exportation of electricity. It employs nearly 20,000 people.

zation of politics, governance and legitimacy which includes the demonization of the "other", presented as the potential enemy. That is to say that the constructive virtualisation of the borders can hardly become true without the de-securitization of the political system.

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# The Highly Skilled Maghrebians "on the move" : A Circular Cross-border Dynamic from the Mediterranean

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#### Abstract:

Arising from the internationalization of training, when communication conditions have changed and now offer innumerable opportunities, highly skilled graduates manage their careersconfident of unlimited possibilities. Following a qualitative study carried out within a research project on Maghrebian graduates educated in French engineering schools, this paper aims at analyzing the migration process of Maghrebian engineers.

It was observed that the migration of these highly skilled individuals is neither irrevocable nor unidirectional. They may be regarded as being permanently "on the move" between their home country, the country where they studied and other destinations. At the cutting edge of IT, their mastery of digital technologies enables them to be almost permanently connected with several worlds – home or (former) host country(ies). They develop new strategies which symbolically question national borders and create multiple identities or hybrids of transcultural values.

Keywords: Circular cross-border dynamic, Highly skilled Maghrebians, Mobility.

#### Introduction

In the first years of independence, education in a foreign school was considered to be the best route to forming a new ruling elite for the countries of the Maghreb. To begin with, these young graduates returned to their native country to serve their State, which bestowed a familiar, temporary character upon such a distancing. Since then, whereas part of their education is still accomplished abroad, injunctions to the internationalization of their pathway are gradually replacing those to their return. Thus, their distancing is potentially lasting or definitive, which complicates the plotting of individual paths. Whatever its nature, those who choose it or are pushed into it, must evolve in different social, historical and cultural contexts in which they must establish a position. How do they solve the question of their geographical location and its nature, (temporary, definitive etc)? How do they handle the distancing from their native country and from their host country? What strategies do they develop to manage possible multiple belongings? Questions are raised as to their identification with different lands and cultures and thus representations of space and mobility.

Within the framework of a research project conducted between 2011 and 2014<sup>1</sup>, over one hundred semi-directive interviews of Maghrebian student engineers and graduate engineers were carried out. This enquiry, through the analysis of the choices made by these individuals throughout their professional career paths, and a structured analysis of their accounts, enabled an insight into how these career paths were formed, the motivation behind them, and the struggles and stresses experienced. This article deals with their ways of coping with these conflicts, especially between the native and host countries.

The first part of the article shows how in following the international pathway, the highly qualified and skilledMaghrebiansbecome caught in an "in-between" dynamic, with which they will have to cope throughout their existence. The second part presents an up-date on the experience of circulating within the spaces observed through the framework of the enquiry. Via an examination of the diverse explanations, it reveals the importance that this question holds in the discussions and minds of the interviewees. Finally, by questioning their representations of mobility, the third part leads to a debate upon the existence of a new perception of space and borders which could be of future benefit for the countries of the Maghreb, and enable the populations concerned to have a more comfortable experience of their possible multiplebelongings.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The Tassili research project on the career paths of Maghrebian student engineers (since 1995) has been led by theEngineer Training and Professionalization team of ENSTA Bretagne, attached to the Training Research Centre (in French, the CRF), in collaboration with the Algerian Ministery for Higher Education and Research, CREAD of Algiers, thanks to the financing of the French Foreign Ministry and the Algerian Ministry for Higher Education and Research (Partnership Hubert CurienTassili 11 MDU 840).

## 1. The existence of an « in-between » dynamic

Complexification of individual pathways

Whereas until the beginning of the 1970s, immigration of the unskilled male workforce formed the main migratory flow from the Maghreb, the last three decades have seen significant changes in international Maghrebian migration. The feminization of the migratory population, the lowering of its age or even the increased levels of education and qualifications of the candidates upon leaving are all elements representative of these changes. Following their independence, Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia saw the first waves of expatriation of their qualified migrants, mostly to France. There were often different motives for leaving, however, the pursuit of higher education, mostly by engineers, remained the main trigger for this so-called "skilled" migration<sup>2</sup>. Although the existence of this phenomenon preceded the period of decolonization, engineer training abroad was still the preferred method through which the technical elite were selected in the countries of the Maghreb (Ben Sedrine & Gobe, 2001). To begin with, engineers who had trained abroad returned to their country immediately upon graduation, to work on industrial development in national companies or in different ministries. When the process of economic liberalization was unleashed in the mid 1980s, more opportunities opened up for them to join the private sector, still on national territory. Thus, in a way, the national borders withheld their career opportunities, which meant that their stays abroad were temporary in nature, and one knew exactly when they would come to an end.

Faced with a sharp decline in the public sector and a lack of pulling power in the careers proposed within this burgeoning industry (Gobe, 2004), the situation evolved in the following decade which enabled the internationalization of their careerpaths. Indeed, certain "pioneers" decided

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Despite a marked diversification in recent times, in the number of host countries, (Canada, the United States, England, China, Japan etc), France remains the destination of choice for these Maghrebian students, who figure among the most numerous groups of students in this country. According to the French Ministry for National Education, Higher Education and Research, in 2013-2014, France received 295 084 international students of whom the Moroccans were the most numerous (33 899),followed by Chinese Students (30 176), Algerians (21 936) and Tunisians (11 869).

to play out all or part of their career abroad, which would not fail to stimulate numerous debates, mainly concerning the "brain drain". This phenomenon, which was widely stigmatized in the 1990s, is less so today. At a time of economic globalization and worldwide exchanges, foreign citizens are considered to be human, scientific and technical capital, not only a factor in the creation of economic wealth and growth, but a guarantee of the skills sought by the companies. In fact, the States seem to have understood the interest this skills mobilization (Meyer 2008) of their scientific and technical diaspora<sup>3</sup> (Meyer, 2004) could generate, hence a change of direction in the speeches of politicians toward graduates abroad, especially in Tunisia and Morocco<sup>4</sup>. Thus, today, the injunctions of the internationalization of career paths replace those of the return to the country, and in so doing, offer the opportunity of internationalizing the career path. Moreover, these injunctions to the internationalization of the career path,find themselves reinforced by the norms which currently govern higher education (Elliot &al.2011) be it through promoting student mobility or international careers for example, which can also stimulate new ideas for careers. That is why the situations confronting highly qualified and skilled Maghrebians today are different from those experienced by their predecessors. If the period abroad is henceforth possibly lasting or permanent, one never really knows when it is going to end, nor its true profile, which complicates the plotting of individual careers and migratory paths. The internationalization of the career paths of highly skilled Maghrebians places them in an "in-between" dynamic between their native and host countries, with which they will have to contend throughout their existence.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Some countries in Asia, such as India (Varrel, 2008), South Korea, Vietnam and Taiwan (Gaillard& Gaillard, 2002) and Central America, such as Mexico and Colombia (Meyer, 2012,2008) could be quoted as examples of countries which have reversed the migratory flow of highly trained people. These countries have developed suitable political and institutional arrangements to encourage their expatriates to return and contribute to industrial and economic growth via their professional ability and technological know-how. <sup>4</sup> Although Canada and the United States are increasingly fascinating destinations for the qualified migrants, France remains the country which receives the highest number.

The need to establish a position

For the Maghrebian students, arriving abroad leads to a process of socialization in a new environment which is different from their own. They are liable to acquire new and different cultural and social norms. Thus embarking on an international study path leads to a migratory experience which sets off a reconfiguration of their way of life. The students pick up new social practices and adapt those of their native countries. Their immersion in a new socio-cultural environmentde facto influences the way in which they see themselves (the mirror effect of the experience of alterity), and changes the way they perceive their native and host societies. In so doing, they must establish their position within the different contexts, according to their personal values, their aspirations etc. In the same way, when they graduate, the fact of evolving in potentially multiple sociocultural contexts leads to added complications. They are faced with numerous questions that they must attempt to answer. What strategies should they develop to adapt to their new socio-cultural environment? What relations should they maintain with their native and host societies? What perception do they have of their career path, their profession as an engineer and their history? How do they solve the question of where they will settle and for how long (temporary, definitive etc)? What are the effects of the distancing from their native, study and host countries on their physical being and sense of identity? What strategies do they develop to cope with possible multiple belongings? Finally, what are the forms and the socio-spatial practices that emerge from their migratory situations? This is a question of their identification with different lands and cultures, and thus representations of space and mobility.

Whereas the unskilled male work force of Maghrebian origin has been studied since the first half of the twentieth century (Ray, 1938; Sayad, 1999; Atouf, 2009), the less numerous studies of the highly qualified and skilled migrants date from the beginning of the twenty-firstcentury. Although mobility for studies is still one of the least studied aspects of international migration (Dia, 2014), it has been the subject of a series of studies and research programs. For the Maghreb, the studies have highlighted the realities of student mobility such as their social background to begin with(Gerard, 2008), pressure experienced (Lanoue,2008), academic choices and social insertion experienced (Borgogno&al., 1998), what has

really become of the students or the question of their return home after their studies (Geisser, 2000;Gobe, 2001). Whereas other authors could also be quoted, such as Sylvie Mazzella (2009) or Michèle Leclerc-Olive et al. (2011) for example, it should be noted that most research conducted has focused on students and not graduates. Except for Jean-Baptiste Meyer (2004; 2008) and to a lesser extent Gaillard & Gaillard (1998) it is rare that studies are carried out on highly qualified and skilled professionals who originated from the Maghreb. As to the manner in which these specific migrants handle the distancing, several studies of ungualified Maghrebian migrants prove useful. Their practices have brought to light the existence of a new migratory dynamic (Ma Mung, 1998; Tarrius, 2001, 2012), between the countries north and south of the Mediterranean. However, what about highly qualified and skilled migrants? If we can assume that they also exist within this specific population, what exactly is their profile?Do these engineers exhibit circulatory practices or specific mobility profiles? This article attempts to answer such questions.

The engineers that we met within the framework of the study had graduated from different French engineering schools between 1995 and 2013, after having obtained their Baccalaureate (High School Diploma) in their native countries, had followed preparatory classes for French engineering schools in France, or theMaghreb or entered directly via a university. They occupy engineering positions in France, the Maghreb or other countries. To understand how the career path of these highly qualified and skilled migrants was constructed as well as how they handled their multiple belongings, and to obtain their view of their previous paths, their current situation and their projects, questions with an interactionist perspective were asked.

Eighty-five semi-directive interviews were carried out of Algerian, Moroccan and Tunisian students in training in engineering schools in France<sup>5</sup> and qualified working engineersin several countries<sup>6</sup>. As for the analytical approach, we carried out a structural analysis of the interviews, so as to up-date the rationale involved. In so doing, we managed to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> They are ENSTA Bretagne, INSA Lyon, Telecom Bretagne, Centrale Lille and Centrale Marseille.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Among them, 22 work in France, 12 in Morocco and 9 work elsewhere in the world (Canada, Sweden, Dubai, Kuwait, Germany, Switzerland, England, Australia, Poland).

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identify, from the different points of view, what sense the interviewee madeof the references available concerning his profession, his family, his native culture, his school etc. In the same way, from the conversation, we were able to pinpoint the representation of space and relationships with mobility that the individual employed to construct the rationale of his career path.

## 2. Circulation at the heart of concerns

# Undetermined paths

Although to a certain extent, the views held by the students had to be put into perspective being somewhat « unclear » from time to time, it was still apparent that upon their arrival in France, a large majority of them considered their return to be an obligation, or at least to be a strong probability, according to an initial model of success which consists in studying abroad, often in France, then acquiring a little or a lot of professional experience before returning to their country. If the Maghrebian students adapt to their situation as immigrants with ease (Balac, 2008 : 30), especially in France<sup>7</sup>, several events have already loomed large during this period which have brought about a major movement of transformation in the initial objectives (De Gourcy, 2013: 337) and brought to light the existence of the perpetual modulation of different migratory projects. This process, far from disappearing, even increases with time in their professional activity, due to the necessity of taking into account the decisions to be made, mostly concerning their family. Thus, the prospects of returning reduce proportionally in relation to the amount of time spent abroad. That is why, despite the initial statements, the migratory projects of certain engineers sometimes take on the form of a long term immigration and lasting socio-economic integration. In reality, the returns or nonreturns are explained by a range of variables which depend directly on the individuals themselves and on the weight they give them (view of the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Mostly originating from towns, they master the French language and are endowed with intercultural awareness obtained in their native countries (attendance of French schools and cultural centers, existence of French radio and television channels in the countries of the Maghreb).

family, professional opportunities, relationship with the original and host countries, acculturation), whilst these variables never discriminate the question in one way or another (Gardelle & Cardona Gil, 2015). They appear to be finally, something eminently personal and unique which is often totally distinct from any considerations linked to the professional activity. Considering themselves to be on a "suspended migratory sentence" for some, in mid stream or permanently settled for others, none of them rule out their return. These engineers for whom all doors seem to be open if they wish, even settled elsewhere, with a family, house and job, for whom the return home is always possible, convey an approach to mobility not based on constraint but on personal aspiration and not definitive but continual adaptation.

The professional identity of these engineers is built in a multidimensional context, which mixes personal aspiration, family injunctions and political and economic contexts. The choices made revealed in the interviews of the graduates generally appear to result from the reflection on precise personal intentions arrived at in a rational way and in rigorously evaluated contexts (Lemaître, Gardelle & Cardona Gil, 2015). All of them describe their path as originating from a series of choices that they made in relation to the priorities that they had fixed andtheir personal aspirations. Their vision of mobility as much as their relationship to their country of origin, without determining their path were revealed to be at the heart of their concerns. Although they referred to their family background, their native country and/or their culture, the rationale of the students' discussion revolved around their attachment to the different dimensions of an engineering career. When in the world of work, things evolve. References to the profession diminish and mostly give way to questioning which seems sometimes to no longer revolve around the place (country) of activity of this same profession. The rationale of the discussions becomes mostly of the type "Continue to work in France", 'Return to Morocco", "Go to Australia" etc. The family, cultural and to a lesser extent, political or even patriotic dimensions, are most often employed to justify their stance and the choices made. By analyzing the rationaleexpressed by the student and the graduate and how it evolves we can put forward that we are in the presence of a population of Maghrebian engineers who construct their paths autonomously if we compare them to the previous generation which was tied to the country by the obligation to return. Thus their priorities seem to be based on the personal (forging a career, personal fulfillment) or family spheres rather than a calling to follow an imposed model.

They are different from the others however, in the importance that they give to the opening of possible fields, that is to say the rapport they have with their environment; certain graduates express a continuous desire to broaden it (by being constantly on the lookout for opportunities) or satisfaction with their current situation (by privileging professional stability). In some ways, the models brought to light (Ali Benali & Nafa, 2015) resemble the characterization of the international mobility of executivesproposed by Anne-Catherine Wagner (1998; 2005). Indeed, we find "international managers", extremely internationally mobile professionals who see their career as being in a transnational space, within a spirit of migratory circulation. However, it is not at all a question of individuals who are totally detached from any sense of belonging to a country or national identity, but people who consider themselves to be binational or bi-cultural, who mold their paths between two countries, generally their native country and that in which they work or have studied. The Maghrebian graduates whose paths we have studied thus fall within a mindset of space spanning several countries and of perpetual travelling among different spaces which are familiar to them (Jamid, 2015). Whereas some of the engineers interviewed went back to Morocco immediately or several years after having graduated as an engineer and admit that they have little inclination to travel the world, they still maintain more or less solid and regular contact with the country or countries in which they evolved, for example through the media, by professional collaboration or by choice of holiday destination, without necessarily planning to return there to settle. If others appear to be very open to the idea of one more or less far off day returning to France, or elsewhere, and, they do not exclude it, returning again to Morocco, it is a circulation in transnational space in different forms which is envisagedand which falls within a veritable migratory circulation dynamic (Ma Munget al., 1998).

The existence of a circulatory rationale

This part proposes to embark upon specific reflection concerning the migration of the graduates in their socio-spatial dimensions. By analyzing their mobility as well as the fragmentation of their migratory paths, it reveals the existence, whatever the profile of the interviewee, of circulatory practices, and thus an "in-between" stance, taken as much for social and professional promotion as for an objective of personal fulfillment or family stability. Whereas the questions of return or non return of the students at the end of their studies have long been the subject of debate over the "brain drain" problematic, our study showed that the migration of highly-qualified and skilled individuals is not definitive and unidirectional. In reality, many Maghrebian engineers trained abroad can be considered as being in perpetual movement among their native country, host country and others.

Indeed, some of the engineers that we interviewed within the framework of this studyseem to have developed true "know-how-to-move" (Tarrius,1992) which enables them to be mobile within numerous geographical spaces. Thus, some traverse new lands and new destinations, which are sometimes unforeseen "After an assignment in Algeria in 2004, I did almost two more years, until summer 2006. From there, they were assignments that led to climbing the ladder...after 5 years I had become more or less the equivalent of assignment manager,...Then, I received an offer from a company (in Paris). The company was called REXEL. I was contacted by a head hunter....After two years at REXEL...I went back to ALSTOM...after two years in Paris....they sent me to Dubai....Normally my contract will finish next year and then my objective is to go back to France, or go to another foreign country" (Khalil, engineer from Algeria, living in Dubai).

By devising new paths and migratory strategies, they fall into a new circulatory dynamic which is among increasingly numerous countries: "Let us say that my idea was in another direction. It was that I would do my studies in France, graduate in France....work a little in France and then go abroad. But as I found an internship which led to me being employed in Australia, well I reversed the sequence. It's go abroad a little, come back to France....not long term. For more or less 4 years....and then leave for Canada...more or less settle there, there or the United States..." (Farid, Moroccan engineer now in Morocco). They have a thirst for knowledge, culture, to discover the world, whilst gaining as much

experience as possible: "It was to speak English...have a cultural shock...I like doing different things. I hate monotony. What I know, I know already. So why not learn something else, see something else...it was a springboard for my career".

Despite this explosion of migratory paths, it is still noticeable that the individuals concerned, eager for things new, never cut the ties which link them to their native culture, and their nearest and dearest. This presents itself as a permanent to and fro movement between the countries of origin and settlement. For example, in a single year, 2012, over which the Algerian engineer was interviewed, he returned at least six times to his native country:"I return very, very often, as soon as the opportunity arises. Since 2012, I have returned five times, and I will return again in November. My family is there, my friends are there, there...that's my country..." Indeed, the most important thing for these engineers is to keep in contact with all the spaces with which they identify, between the two shores of the Mediterranean: "The answer is simple, I have built my life here, I have my ties here...it is more and more difficult to say that the time to return is near, it is like the day when I said to myself, I came and it is easier to leave. I tell myself that perhaps one day, I will create something there....the thing that I am looking for is to stay between the two *shores"* (Youssef, engineer from Morocco, living in France).

This circulatory dynamic is not just exclusive to engineers who have settled abroad. It also concerns those who returned home. To this end, the return is often only a particular stage in the migratory path, and in no way constitutes a permanent settlement: "After having been away for 6 years, been a foreigner for 6 years, and returning, I said to myself...I think that perhaps I am someone who does not like to stay in one place for too long. I am not speaking about a company, I am speaking about a country. There is this international group and, I am really thinking about it, telling myself that at the end of 3 years....I will think about a little international mobility. I admit, I am not necessarily thinking about France, but aboveall perhaps England or Canada" (Samira, Moroccan engineer working in Morocco). In any case, this return does not imply cutting the ties with the country or countries traversed by the individuals, quite on the contrary, they are firmly set in an "in-between" rationale: "When I started to become autonomous, I was autonomous in France, so I would like to see what would happen in Morocco, I would like to test that, I would like to work there to see if it would work, but I would not rule out returning to France....There, I would quite happily go to the Paris region... I sometimes tell myself, my family....they are

*with us....there are relatives there too....why not return to France"* (Sanaa, Moroccan engineer living in Morocco).

Finally, if migration appears to be rarely definitive or uni-directional, the impossibility which is widely shared to determine a possible return to their native country, reveals the current existence of a transnational circulatory dynamic for numerous expatriates. This migratory rationale is demonstrated by frequent toing and froing between the country of settlement and the native country, on the part of the Maghrebian engineers who hold transcultural values (Roulleau-Berger, 2011) and who have a multi-identity. In order to try to alleviate the stress caused by the question of this multiple belonging, many of them develop reappropriation of space strategies by updating new practices.

#### 3. Another perception of borders and mobility

From a circulatory rationale to an identity quest

Thesettlement of highly skilled Maghrebians abroad in no way indicates that they have cut their ties with their native society. To show their attachment to their native countries, most of them demonstrate a rationale of spatial practicality, spanning their country of settlement and their country of origin. Thus, they become transmigrants, touring perpetually between home and home (Tarrius, 1989; 1992; 2010; 2011). Beyond the question of geographical circulation lies the question of identification with several cultural spaces, which can be seen as a true identity quest. Indeed, thanks to their spatial fluidity, the people interviewed seemed to belong to several lands, countries and/or cultures. They demonstrate a certain attachment to social, cultural and/or professional ways of life of the countries in which they have settled. Some of them progressively share the values, sometimes up to a point where they wish to become a citizen of the country in question: "I am starting to love France, love certain of its values. [...] And so there is a need, there is a desire which is born within us. [...]I feel France to be a part of me and I would like to be able to be French" (Tarik, engineer from Morocco, living in France). Some of them, even openly, consider themselves to be a national without having first started administrative procedures: "Iam settled here, I have children, I bought a house. [...]. Today,I consider myself to be French" (Kamal, engineer from Morocco, living in France). Some consider that this step towards naturalization is not just a right but a duty "I think that to ask for the nationality is a strong gesture. [...]I have understood a lot of things in this culture, I did my studies here, I have mixed with the elite, I have mixed with industrialists, and I feel it is quite within my rights and a duty to obtain the nationality" (Mehdi, engineer from Algeria, living in France).

So as not to cut their ties with the socio-cultural references of their origin in favor of those where they reside, they employ numerous strategies, aiming to stabilize the different components that they consider to be their identity. Some integrate transnational networks, for example (Cesari, 1997, Lacroix, 2004; 2006), which link their countries of origin and residence, enabling them to participate in the social, economic and cultural lives of the two spaces. Others become involved with the ATUGE<sup>8</sup>, AMGE<sup>9</sup> or REAGE<sup>10</sup>, associations, with similar objectives: "The link[with the country of origin] is my actions, mostly within associations, in favor of a better Algerian economy That is why I am a member of REAGE today, and we try to hold economic colloquiums, such as the one we organized a few days ago, to try to facilitate exchanges between the two countries in terms of people, skills and also industries and partnerships. So that is the least I can do today, it is really to keep in touch...to share what I have learned in France and the United States with the youngsters....It is the return on investment that Algeria granted us... it is really the least we can do for Algeria. To put it simply, because we love our country" (Amine, Algerian engineer living in France).

If associations remain an inevitable dynamic in this transnational rationale, some are, according to them, involved for personal reasons, such as Jamal, an Algerian engineer who had created a digital platform aiming to promote his country's image. Thus, they sometimes employ their professional skills to further knowledge of their cultural heritage and their native countries abroad: "It is true I am[...] in France, but as I told you, I have a site aiming to promote a different image of Algeria to the one that is shown in the media[...]. It's tourism, heritage and culture that allow people to know a little about Algeria, what the beautifulcountryside looks like, what the traditions and

<sup>8</sup> Association of Tunisians at Universities or Grandes Ecoles (graduate schools)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Association of Moroccans in Grandes Ecoles (graduate schools)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Algerian Graduate School Students' Network

*culture are...who the characters are, all of which are the making of Algerian culture, music and art..."*We also met people who felt resolutely "binational" and who wished tobe seen as players in each country where they felt a belonging, without having to make a choice.

This cross-border dynamic, is not just exclusive to engineers who have settled abroad, but also concerns those who have chosen to return, and for whom conservation or thedevelopment of ties with the country or countries which they have experienced is essential. This is the case, for example, for Mounir, a Moroccan engineer, convinced that his role as an executive in a training and computer consultancy office for Moroccan and European SMEs wishing to invest and set up in Africa, could have made him an ambassador for the creation of a branch of the CNAM in Morocco:"I really regret the fact that the executive management of the CNAM did not seek me out as a former CNAM engineer and member of the UNICNAM when the CNAM Morocco opened. I would have liked them to have associated me with this type of action. My role as link and my knowledge of Moroccan institutions would have been an opportunity for CNAM-Morocco to have developed a series of courses *targeting Moroccan executive management*". He was all the more disappointed that such a project, according to him, would have been an opportunity to work on a joint project between the two countries and thus to maintain strong ties with France.

Development of the ICTs and presence in different spaces

With the acceleration of worldwide exchanges, the development of transport means and above allinformation and communication technologies (ICT), we are seeing a new figure of a migrant emerging, the « connected migrant » (Diminescu, 2002), who « circulates, who makes contact but who does not become detached from his original group » (Hily, 2009). The virtual ties that he maintains with his family back home or most of the people he met in the different countries he has been to, facilitates his presence in the different spaces in which he would like to evolve. The « copresence » (Diminescu, 2002, Nedelcu, 2009), by sometimes going as far as to give an impression of never having left his native country, helps resolve the questions of distancing and multiple belongings. Feeling guilty for not being present at home(Boldassar, 2010) gives way to the opportunity to be in many places at the same time, such as Aziz,

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aMoroccan engineer who felt he was just as much in Sweden as in Morocco, in Algeria or even France: "It is as if I had never left Morocco...I am not really far from Morocco. For example, when the connection worked, I skyped my mother....I watch all the Moroccan and Algerian news....the elections for example, I look at all the countries, I read the news a lot in Arabic. For me, it is as if I live in Morocco, even my parents are surprised, they say "but how do you know that? You haven't been here for a year, since last year, how do you know that?" This form of copresence exists as much among engineers who have chosen to return to their native countries. Despite their return, they still use the media and ICTs to keep in permanent contact with their former country of immigration, which led some of them to say that they are tele-immigrants: "In fact, I am a tele-immigrant. I follow the French news daily" (Hamid, Moroccan engineer returned for living in Morocco).

Finally, the digital revolution that we are currently experiencing has favored the emergence of new social and communication practices (Rigoni, 2010) at the same time that it has turned relations with space and borders upside down. Thanks to the Internet, social networks and digital platforms, highly qualified and skilledMaghrebians can communicate with their nearest and dearest and share their ideas. Beyond its communicational function, the use of the web has also facilitated their copresence in several places at the same time (Nedelcu, 2009, 2010; Diminescu, 2002, 2010), and become a social support which enables them to maintain and create broadened networks built in distinct temporalities (Marchandise, 2013), and thus preserve their links with their native country as well as those in which they have worked or trained. Thus, they no longer find themselves in a situation of "double absence" (Sayad, 1998), but rather in a logic of "double presence" (Diminescu, 2002; 2010; Nedelcu, 2009; 2010), or multiple presence. Thus the highly qualified and skilled migrants manage to maintain permanent links with the different environments in which they have evolved, just like their fellow Maghrebian expatriates. The impression of distancing gives way gradually to multiple presence mainly thanks to new information and communication technologies. Thus they manage to conciliate their multiple belongings within this circulatory trans-border dynamic.

In the light of globalization of international migratory flows (Wihtol De Wenden, 2010 ; 2009; Simon, 2008) and the internationalization of the job

market, the mobility of highly qualified and skilled migrants has become multilateral and polycentric (Meyer *et al*, 2001 : 341). Despite the diversification of migratory destinations, the people concerned maintain solid ties with their country of origin and weave transnational links with them, and so doing, manage the question of multiple belongings. Through this transnational dynamic, which is often formalized in the form of networks and associations, they form a "diaspora of knowledge" (Meyer, 2008 : 55) which aims to contribute to the development of their countries of settlement and origin. In this transnational perspective, the development of new information and communication technologies plays a leading role, participating in the presence of these highly qualified and skilled migrants in different spaces within which they have evolved.

## Conclusion

The research conducted on foreign-trained Maghrebian engineers' migratory paths confirms the existence of a new circulatory dynamic which, far from being limited to a single geographical settlement dimension, seems to continually adopt new forms. In the current context of the internationalization of higher education and career paths, and also the globalization of communication, this leads us to ask questions over the potential development of this new way of experiencing international mobility and considering borders.

If training abroad and the injunctions of the internationalization of career paths placed highly qualified and skilledMaghrebians in an "inbetween" dynamic, this dynamic seems set to accentuate as their career advances, mostly due to the growing awareness of the different, especially family spheres of existence. Thus, the questions of settlement of and identification with different lands often end by becoming central in the views of the interviewees. To try to sooth the tensions associated with the question of distancing brought about by each decision made, these highly qualified and skilledMaghrebians develop reappropriation of space strategies by creating new strategies (constant toing and froing among the native and host countries, the creation of networks, associations, interconnectivity of individuals etc) which symbolically question national borders and create multiple identities, hybrids of transcultural values.

Whether they return to their native countries immediately upon graduation, after a first experience abroad or whether they chose to stay longer, or even permanently, the highly qualified and skilledMaghrebians manage to conciliate the multiple belongings within this transnational dynamic. Not having the impression that they have made definitive choices, which would suppose that they had abandoned part of themselves, they maintain permanent contacts with the "unoccupied" lands, whatever their geographical location. The impression of a multiple presence replaces in some ways the impression of distancing, for those individuals who feel they are able to act. Would not the States on the two shores of the Mediterranean, if they made the effort, profit from this circulatory dynamic, which seems to bring them ever closer together? This is an element which current debate around the subject of bi-nationality in some of the countries concerned does not seem, for all that, to take into account.

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# Social Europe as a Multilevel Governance : The Italian Perspective

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#### Abstract

The article deals with history and historiography of Social Europe, understood as integration of social forces (mainly the trade-unions) of the different European countries. The communitarian dimension of trade-unionism, indeed, is a topic more and more considered by historians. Starting from the first attempts of Europeanization of social dynamics in the '50s, the article follows the development of Social Europe trough its different stages: the political approach to the "social affairs" in 1957-1964; the spreading of the need to establish an European trade-union movement; the "long tunnel" of 1974-1984; the renewed tradeunionist awareness which made emerge a "Social Europe"; the social protocols annexed to the treaties of Maastricht and Amsterdam. The article underlines the scarce capacity for initiative of an articulated European trade-union representation, but points out that social dimension has always accompanied the success of the stages for the European unification and the reasons of its expansion.

Keywords: European Trade-Unionism, Labour history, Social Europe, Trade Unions.

To understand the situation of social dynamics and actors within the European process of integration today we can question how much we learnt by the historical reflection, by now mature in Italy too, about existence and meaning of "Social Europe" (Ciampani, 2009; Ciampani & Gabaglio, 2010).

To offer an appropriate answer to this more and more important need, we have once again to get a shared awareness on the matter, also in order to consider the nature of the contribution given by the Italian political and social actors to the emergence of the historical and ideal profile of the European integration (Ballini & Varsori, 2004).

It is known that some research paths emerged during the 1990s (Ciampani, 1995a), drawing attention on the social actors for the European unification and within the European unification, contributed to deepen the knowledge of the political-institutional dynamics of European communities (Varsori, 2000) and allowed to recognize the proper spheres of the building of a Social Europe, as well as of its emergence through the *acquis communautarie* and the processes of European governance (Varsori, 2006a). The international community of scholars can aspire to elaborate more and more articulated and shared proposals of chronology's definition. The scientific feature of such studies, far from leading to an "alternative" view of the Europeanization processes, allowed to improve the framework of the historical reconstruction of integration with elements and profiles neglected until now (Varsori, 2001).

In this context of historical reconstruction, the particular Italian contribution to the building of the social dynamics of integration emerges, giving life to a widespread perception which traditionally considers Italy as a protagonist of the social animation of the community life. Starting from the larger and larger deepening of the evolution of trade-unionism and from the recognition of the different approaches to the European unification, it was possible to individuate labour paths and political reasons which oriented the position and the initiative of the Italian trade unions (Ciampani, 2009; Ciampani & Pellegrini, 2005). Thus the deep Europeanist position of the Cisl in front of the Schuman Plan (Ciampani, 2013), the strong tie of the Uil with the planning of the European social democracy (Ciampani, 2004) and, in the wake of the signature of the Treaty of Rome, the progressive acceptation of Cgil concerns the European integration (Del Biondo, 1997; Ciampani 2010), emerged. Such perspectives contended first with the pioneering and founding experience of the ECSC (Spierenburg & Poidevin, 1993; Ranieri & Tosi 2004) and, through the heated debate about the ECD (Preda, 1990; Ballini, 2009), after the agreements on the EU Single Market and the EURATOM, in the Sixties intertwined in a complex political process of dialogue between social actors and European Commission (Mechi, 2008).

Thus the peculiar viewing point of the Italian perspective allows to highlight in a completely paradigmatic way that the process of integration contributed to modify the European trade-unions, just when the participation of the trade-union movement in the community life outlined the social face of Europe, which at last took shape thanks to the establishment of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and to the Social Dialogue started by Delors (Ciampani, 2015a).

In order to give a synthetic content to the complex movement of research and European studies promoted at the beginning of the Nineties, after the weak attention paid until then by the historiography to the social and economic dynamics of the history of international and European relations (Varsori, 1992), we can agree that "Social Europe" appears not only as an ideal wished (and feared) by political actors and social players, but as a recognizable process of integration of the European reality, of which we can revisit the essential historical moments and the specific socialeconomic, politic and institutional features. In this sense, Italian historiography gave a significant contribution of deepening, which allowed to overtake some chronological setting, sometimes acritically borrowed from sociological or juridical-normative approaches. Moreover, it is possible to understand the evolution of Social Europe multi-level dynamics, both about the relations of the different actors involved in the process of political-institutional integration and about its deployment on different levels of action in a wider and wider European territorial area (Ciampani, 2015b). Actually we cannot imagine the contemporary Europe without considering economic-social challenges which affect it and which, therefore, should be addressed by the national ruling classes' analysis, by the community establishment and by the protagonists of the international governance (Ganapini, 2007).

After the first studies which in Italy drew attention on the political and economic relevance of the social aspects of Europe in the wake of World War II (Romero, 1989; Formigoni, 1991; Guasconi, 1999), the historiographical interest toward the social dynamics of the integration process seems to have been stimulated by the individuation and by the definition of the concept of "trade union diplomacy" – the action exercised by States on the national unions to achieve goals of foreign policy (Ciampani, 1998), and by the finding within the historical process of the beginning of real "international relations" of the social actors, such as those promoted by the greatest trade-unions of Europe (Ciampani, 2006).

Thus it was possible to understand and to confirm the outcomes which the international historiography was achieving in the reflection on the un-

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ions within the Cold War. Converging with the MacShane's studies, indeed, trade-union divisions no longer appeared as the mere social consequence of a geopolitical contraposition among blocs, but as one of the factors which made the bipolar confrontation a clash between opposed views of the political, social and economic life (MacShane, 1992; Antonioli et al., 1999). In a perspective different from the North-European "Labour history", the Italian studies on the evolution of the international presence of trade union confederations were renewed in the belief that in the second half of the XX century they had begun to modify the previous internationalist approach (Ciampani, 2002). To bring into focus this complex and articulated passage, historiography revealed the need for new paths of reconstruction and interpretation of the international trade-union organizations (Pasture, 1999; Dolvik, 1999; Degimbe, 1999; Savoini, 2000, Carew et al., 2000; Friso, 2000).

In this context, the specific features of the internal interplay of the West-European trade union experience emerged (Ciampani, 1995a); that is also why a study of the socio-economic dynamics and of their actors within European integration was requested, since the Fifties, by emphasizing the way they contribute to create an "other way for Europe" besides the political-institutional way, which until then was almost the sole subject of the historical analysis. The need of analysing position and international strategies of national trade-unions (Ciampani, 2000; Iuso, 2001), as well as, the European projection of employers' associations (Segreto, 2000; 2006; Petrini, 2004), highlighted the opportunity to locate and exploit archives useful to increase the knowledge of the European integration process (Ciampani, 1995b).

Within the Italian research, from time to time a pressing process urged the archival investigation and the interpretation of its outcome, achieving significant results for the historical knowledge of the process of development of the European trade-union representation. First this allowed the most accurate historiography to increase the "summary" of the traditional readings of the European integration's history (Saba, 1997). Finally, within this field of studies it was possible to individuate at least three central points for the understanding of the paths of European unification, which highlight the absolute relevance of social dynamics and actors: the access of the trade-union representation to the decision-making process of a supranational body like the ECSC and the use of the social measures contained by the 1952 Treaty (Mechi, 1999; 2000); the reasons of the foundation, the growth and the limits of the European economic and social committee (Varsori, 2000); the development of the European process of professional training, which resulted in the establishment of the CEDEFOP (Petrini, 2004; Varsori, 2006c).

It was not a mere updating of the issue, to be taken into account within a general reading of the European integration process: the effect produced by the investigation on social dimension has soon influenced the research on social and political aspects. In some cases the result of such research directed the decision to investigate and re-read some well-known events, such as the 1969 Conference of The Hague (Guasconi, 2007); in other cases they led to enhance some biographical profiles, such as that of the European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, which renews worthy lines of historical research (Becherucci, 2008). These studies, moreover, unavoidably lead to renew the general interpretative profiles of integration process, for example drawing the attention of the scientific community, and more in general of the European ruling class, on the question of the European social policy as a historical problem (Ciampani, 2008).

Therefore the European social-political conjuncture in which the above mentioned investigation started, between the signature of the Social Protocol of Maastricht and its enclosing in the Treaty of Amsterdam, has certainly eased the attention of the historians for "Social Europe". However the historical studies, also for the link with a serious archive research, did not emphasize the features of the present. On the contrary, with an outcome with many methodological implications, they agreed in individuating the origin of "Social Europe" within the establishment of the ECSC (Ranieri & Tosi, 2004)

Thus not only the connection between the rise of social dimension and the birth of integration process has been highlighted, but also the foundation for reaching an historical-critic understanding of the elements which influenced its evolution has been emphasized. The same difficult period in which "Social Europe" took shape (between the establishment of the ETUC at the beginning of the Seventies and the implementation of the Single European Act at the end of the Eighties), provide for a confirmation of the above mentioned historical results. If, in the first time, the political need for integration enables the social dynamics at community level, in the following decades it is possible to see their increasing value in support of the European political initiatives.

Finally, the recent historiography and the considerations raised by it allow to define the two essential features of Social Europe as subject of historical investigation. We need, first of all, to consider the progressive introduction of European social actors into the communitarian decision-making process on labour, as well as the social participation in their implementation in several concerned sectors and fields of activity, within local, regional and national areas. This issue appears to be tied with phenomena which in Europe, since the end of World War II, problematically arose at national level (think to the difficult process of programming and concertation in Italy) as well as at international level (as is highlighted by the evolution of the ERP Plan within the OEEC and later within the OCDE). Secondarily, we have to adequately evaluate the important acquis communautaire of social measures established under the pressure of the access of social parties to the life of the European communities and of the request of competences on the matter of "social policy" by the community bodies. Around this issue, in which private-collective suggestions and publicistic interventions are intertwined, the problematic of an eventual European welfare and the need for a larger social governance beside the EU's government are connected.

These two elements allow to welcome the profile assumed by Social Europe and the plurality of levels which contribute to define it. Its historical path, from the Schumann Plan of 1950 to the Treaty of Amsterdam of 1997, presents significant moments of discontinuity and a substantial alternation between the emergence of the social actors in the process of integration and the restoration of the rule of the intergovernmental politics on the social-economic dynamics (Varsori, 2005).

If the first participation in a supranational body in the history of the European trade-unionism certainly contributed to the birth of a social dimension of Europe in the ECSC (1950-1957), the starting phase of the EEC saw the attempt to use a political approach to the "social affairs", which soon revealed its limits (1957-1964). The intense activity connected to the fusion of the executives of the treaties and the demand of an European

leading role in the second half of the Sixties allowed the spreading of the need to establish an European trade-union movement and to involve it in addressing the problems of the economic and social development of integration (1965-1974). The internal and external weakness of the trade-unionist proposal, still in progress, tied with a renewed political tension among governments within a "long tunnel" (1974-1984). The Delors Commission and a renewed trade-unionist awareness made emerge a "Social Europe" which by then would correspond to the complex dynamics of interdependence of the a single European market launched towards the economic and monetary unification (1984-1997).

Even considering the sequence of these five historical phases, it seems perceivable the articulation of Social Europe on different levels, which demand to be investigated within the interdependencies which can be properly individuated as international social relations. It is easily identifiable, along the whole concerned period, a first action plan connected to the political initiative promoted in the international relations by social players such as the trade-unions: it involves not only the national confederation of several countries, but also the international and continental trade-union organizations. Think to the confrontation, after World War II, between the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICTFU) and the International Confederation of Christian Trade Unions (CISC). Moreover, over the years the strategic dynamics internal to each of these confederations were different. As regards the most dynamic and vital confederations, the ICFTU, it is possible to recognize the development of different perspectives of international "politics" in its regional bodies, first in the European Regional Organization (ERO/ICFTU). Within this body a serious controversy arose between the group of the trade unions of the countries in favour of the integration process (tied among them first in the form of the Committee of the XXI unions member of the ECSC, and later, since 1958, in the European trade-union Secretariat) and that of the supporters of the European area of free trade, led by the British. Consider, moreover, the complex political-international issue which, in this trade union sector, led to the passage from the ECFTU/ICFTU, created in 1969, to the birth of the ECTU which, being the result of an unification with the Christian trade-unionism, could not remain, in form and substance, a regional body of the ICFTU. Think, finally, to the growing level of dialogue of these organizations with the governments and the national States, with the supranational institutions, with the Community bodies, with the entities of the international economic-financial system in the wake of Bretton Woods.

A second development level of Social Europe is featured by the involvement of the social parties in the Europeanist action and in the Community institutions, more or less consciously eased by the multiplication of the trading venues and of the promotion of juridical-normative instruments, considered opportune to make the rights operational, as well as the social measures related to ECSC, EEC and EURATOM, until the Treaty of Amsterdam which enclosed the social protocol. This way a social Europe constituted by communitarian "places" more or less formalized (from the working groups to the sectoral summits) which have the task to survey the evolution of the working conditions in the member countries and some aspects of their legislation, from which decisions and regulations affecting the national social-economic dynamics take place. Besides the venues indicated by the Treaties themselves, such as the Advisory Committee of the ECSC and the following European Economic and Social Committee, we can mention at least the role of the tripartite conferences among ministries of Labour, Commission, employers' (public and private) and trade-unions' representation. The first of them, in April 1970, represented an arrival point and, at same time, the beginning of a relevant path, as demonstrated by the following establishment of a permanent Committee on employment (Savoini, 2000; Degimbe, 1999; Guasconi, 2006). Along with the strengthening of other "places" of Social Europe (think to the mentioned European Centre for Professional Training), there were Community strategies (from the Social Dialogue to the extraordinary summit on employment until the agenda of Lisboa), and framework agreements on specific issues (in particular for agriculture) and on general issues about some modalities of the working relations (from the parental leave to the part-time work until the telework).

Beside this institutional and normative level, there is a third development of Social Europe in the multiform process of local, regional, sectoral, national, interregional, transnational and cross-border social process in the Member States of the EU. It seems a still indefinable phenomenon for the historical studies, both for its recent development and for the lack of identification of its dynamism. However, some research can open a path to reach a better understanding of this more and more relevant level of action. While a still neglected approach is that of the European trade-unions groups by sector, once again investigations appears to use the two features of Social Europe: the participation of the social actors in the processes of governance and the instruments of the Community policies. In this direction archival research and interpretative analysis moved towards the interregional trade-unions councils, born for the first time in 1976 among unions of bordering Member States; at same level new studies are addressing the Social Fund after the reforms of the first half of the Seventies (Ciampani & Clari, 2012). They are processes of governance of the labour market connected to development policies acting in an independent way. The opening of research projects on the experience of the European Works Councils, born after the 1994 directive, could contribute to highlight the important connection of these process with the social-economic grow of the EU.

Considering the historiographical results about process and wideness of the rise of Social Europe, we can try to deepen the way with which the establishment of an European trade union movement influenced the politicalinstitutional form of Europe, while the integration process was contributing to modify the attitudes of the West-Europe national trade unions. Italian events can offer, in this perspective, an interesting point of view to shed light on the intertwine of trade union reasons and political needs along the interrelation which connects the internal debate to the European choice of Italy (Varsori, 2006b).

Finally, Italian experience led us to a further reflection on the sense of the path towards the establishment of Social Europe. First, it must be considered that in the historiographical analysis we have to distinguish between the adhesion or opposition approach to its establishment among those who assumed it for party political reasons or trade-union reasons and those who committed in easing or opposing it for political tradition or for trade-union paths. Such opportune distinction can tell many things about the meaning of the interdependence relation between national and European dimension, about the meaning of the expectation to obtain at European level what was unreachable on the national level. Moreover, it can suggest the size of the deepness of the historical processes which led, at the beginning of the Nineties, to rethink the relations between political and social in the European social-political tradition and which appears to make Social Europe a paradigm for other regional areas, where processes of market unification precede the political integration. At the hearth of these "views" of Social Europe it appears to stand, once again, the need and the perspective pointed out by Emil Noel to Malfatti in June 1970, when it considered that trade union leaders "desiderano partecipare veramente all'elaborazione dei principali orientamenti politici della Commissione. I rappresentanti degli industriali si sono espressi fino ad ora in maniera meno forte su questo punto. Si tratterà di una profonda modifica della nozione e dello stile dei rapporti tra attori sociali e Commissione, che darà loro quella intensità che hanno nella maggior parte degli stati membri" (quoted in Guasconi, 2004, p. 159).

Certainly, Social Europe, which cannot be understood without evaluating reasons and value of the birth of the ETUC, of the social dialogue and of the Maastricht social protocol, appears not to fully develop the ability of private-collective regulation through forms of governance. This highlights the weakness of the European entrepreneurs' association (national and sectoral) and a scarce capacity for initiative of an articulated European tradeunion representation (Tilly, 2012; Borońska–Hryniewiecka, 2012). In spite of all its limits, however, it appears to be not only defined in its main historical features, but also bound to re-affirm a special relation among social and political dimensions, considering that over time social dimension has always accompanied the success of the stages for the European unification and the reasons of its expansion.

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# To Re-educate oneself to Citizenship within the Cultural Pluralism

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#### Abstract

In a world dominated by pluralism and where 'diversity is reality', the extension of citizenship becomes a hot topic of the conflict of modernity, so much so that many have discussed the possibility of a primacy of *human rights* on the *citizen rights* (Walzer, 2014). This theme arouses reflection on the conditioning that the physical and social borders have on processes of identification. If, then, the current political situation is marked by fear, humiliation, hope (Moïsi, 2009), the question that arises is this: how is it possible to promote the value of otherness for every human face, recognized as *identical* and at the same time to pursue the defence of its boundary beyond which the *difference* arises? To answer may be useful to educate oneself to a practice *to emotions*, "rediscovering the pervasiveness of different cultural processes [...] and the power that these have to model individual interests expressed in social actions" (Colafato, 1998, p. 10 – our translation).

Keywords: Globalization, Borders, Citizenship, Emotions, Pluralisms.

"In life matters not what happens inside, but what happens on the *border* of own and others' consciousness, on the threshold" (Bachtin, 1988, p. 100)

## 1. In the Beginning it Was ... Globalization

Globalization is presented as a set of material and symbolic processes and is defined by Bauman as the "compression of space and time" (1998, p. 4). With its economic, technological, ecological, political changes it creates endless cross-connections and requires a broader view of own local community.

However people sense its direct effects, especially on the cultural level, due to the enormous extension of communication, the mixture of lifestyles, the encounter of different cultures as a result of migration or the speed of transport, and with the hybridized forms of music, literature and art. Despite the myth of globalization as a religion, which would tend inexorably towards the unification of the world, we are actually facing a "ubiquitous patchwork": global processes do not tend to unity or uniformity, but if left to themselves, they help move away the ideal of community, producing serious imbalances and inequalities.

Just this last affirmation justifies the fact that the demand for a more liveable community among men is becoming more pressing. However it seems that we must content ourselves with the *community surrogates*, as communities are no longer natural (the "warm circle" as mentioned by G. Rosenberg, 2001). Contrary to natural communities, these surrogates do not know how to solve the dichotomy freedom/security, indeed they exacerbate it. It is precisely on this relationship, for example, that Bauman focuses his analysis: "if it is true that community gives security, it always requires some sacrifice of freedom" (Bauman, 2001, p. 6).

Modern individualism makes us more insecure, because it offers (and not to everybody) freedom in exchange for security. And the same insecurity that afflicts the individual in the age of globalization generates the absence of community. "At a time when community collapses, the notion of identity is invented" (Young, 1994, p. 164). Identity means going out of the pack; it means to be different and, as such, unique; and therefore, the search for identity can only divide and separate. However, the vulnerability of individual identity leads us to look for "community-hangers" on which people hang their fears otherwise lived individually (Bauman, 2001, p. 17).

Therefore, not surprisingly, in our increasingly globalized world, "something that is not happening is the disappearance of borders". On the contrary it seems that more and new ones arise at every street corner of any dilapidated neighbourhood of our planet" (Friedman, 1999, p. 241).

As a matter of fact a social, *stable* environment no longer exists and the tendency not to put down roots anywhere advances: a strange modern form of cosmopolitanism that denies an *a priori* community and produces the *global élite*, a phenomenon generated as a result of what Reich (1992) calls the "secession of the successfull man". According to Bauman, also the new cosmopolitans feel the need for "community", but, of course, they

tend to create flexible communities and "on time", which can be removed easily and that leverage only on their dreams and desires. The result is a frantic search for a social environment, safely and overprotected, and community becomes the favourite tool, the preferred method of those who believe that "sameness" means only the exclusion of foreigners. The "safe community" thus becomes a "voluntary ghetto". This situation favours mechanisms of segregation and exclusion which are self-perpetuating and self-reinforcing<sup>1</sup>.

The search for a safe space emphasizes the importance of the emotional dimension of globalization. The "safety indicators of self", as Moïsi calls them (2009, p. 22), scientifically measure the level of confidence of the population in their future, the ability to capitalize on their skills and even transcend them. And the level of self-confidence is well expressed by three primary emotions: fear, hope and humiliation (Ibid, p. 22)<sup>2</sup>.

The rediscovery of emotions is necessary where States like those in the West, can no longer rely on historical ideals or economies and become too evanescent; therefore in these scenarios a distress attitude arises together with a desire to protect themselves from hostile forces. "But the main reason why today's globalized world is a fertile ground for the blossoming or even the explosion of emotions is that globalization causes insecurity and raises the problem of identity. [...] Identity is closely linked to self-confidence and in turn self-confidence, or its absence, is expressed in emotions, particularly fear, hope and humiliation" (Ibid, p. 29). The intertwining of these emotions is the key to understand the other and discover the identity of themselves.

But emotions, sometimes, can generate errors and the resulting emotional distress can elicit situations of non-recognition of the other's face, of indifference. That is what happens when people, crossing the border, become for us *radically others*, not referable to our world and towards whom it will not be possible to activate any action of "solicitude" (Ricoeur, 1997).

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The same multi-culturalism seems to be, in the eyes of Bauman, a "solution non-solution" to all these problems; a kind of resignation and indifference that has hit the educated classes who strive only to keep redefining inequalities so expounding an essentially conservative force (Belloni, 2005).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Fear is the lack of self-confidence [...]; hope is, on the contrary, expression of self-confidence [...]; humiliation, finally, is the injured self-confidence of those who have lost hope in the future [...] (Moïsi, 2009, pp. 20-21).

## 2. The Border and the Stranger

"What looks like a conquest of globalization for some people, represents a reduction of the local dimension to others; for some people globalization signals new freedoms, for many others it descends as an unwanted and cruel fate. Mobility rises to the highest rank among the values that give prestige and the freedom of movement itself quickly becomes the main factor of social stratification in our times" (Bauman, 1998, p. 4). On these assertions by Bauman the sensitive issue of migration triggers, a phenomenon with an increasingly broad spectrum . that is transforming the western societies in pluralistic and multicultural places. Immigrants express a demand for the recognition of the special rights on the cultural level that prompts us to revise and re-read the connotations and the identity of the modern state. Not surprisingly, one of the most heartfelt problems in this field is represented by the type of space given to particular cultural rights within the framework of a unified society (Santerini, 2009, our translation).

The matter of the border stands as the matter of the space to occupy.

"The important thing in order to claim any right within an unlimited space is to enter it, to settle there, to sneak inside, taking possession of an area of interest, to occupy an area that, each time, may be social, political, sexual, mental, economic. Only after occupying this space, if you want, you can trace the outline, close it within a boundary, delimit it. The experience of the border starts, therefore, always from the inside" (Zanini, 1997, pp. 30-31)<sup>3</sup>. Therefore, "it is hard to think that someone belongs to something (to a community, a political organization) without imagining, at the same time, a policy of separation, the definition of boundaries (Costa, 1999, p. 43)<sup>4</sup>. It is, therefore, the function that the border plays in defining an "inside" and "outside", with respect to the reference community, to give it the character of "establishment of institutions" (Balibar, 2010, p. 315).

According to an interesting perspective on the origin of the concept of border it can be understood as: limen or limes (Cacciari, 2000, pp. 73-79)<sup>5</sup>. Limen is the threshold, the pass through which one enters a domain or

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Our translation by Zanini, 1997. <sup>4</sup> Our translation by Costa, 1999.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Oru translation by Cacciari, 2000.

comes out of it and *limes* is, instead, the path that surrounds a territory, which contains its form.

Based on this etymological suggestion, Gomarasca supposes a boundary model organized according to two fundamental theses. "The first thesis (T1) concerns the structure of the border, its essential duality: there is no boundary that is not limen and limes together. In fact, the border is never rigid. It indicates the line along which the two men are touching (cum-finis)<sup>6</sup>. The second argument (T2) concerns the writing of the border: we can live (and therefore build) a space only if we draw boundaries. Here, above all, the anthropological significance of the concept is at stake : each of us constantly establishes borders while acting and interpreting the world (Mezzadra, 2000, p. 149). In other words, men are beings who produce, wherever they live, guarded spaces" (Gomarasca, 2004, p. 18)<sup>7</sup>.

The correlation of these two theses leads us to affirm that the boundary makes distinctions while uniting and therefore "no border can eliminate or leave out another one, because it implies it in its very being" (Ibid, p. 19). However, only rarely it happens that solidarity mechanisms activate processes of concern to the other; in most cases it is the opposite to occur, with episodes of hostility, fear and indifference, evoking ethnocentrism as a universal feature of human groups. "A natural consequence related to the construction of the border is to throw out, to expel from the area that has been created s/he-what is considered as an intruder. Exclusion leads someone or something to the edge of an area, away from the centre: this is where the outcast is (Geremek, 2012, 391-421). And sometimes this can also be pushed over the border until it becomes a foreigner, that is something other than what you want to contain within the boundary" (Zanini, 1997, p. 55)<sup>8</sup>.

This attitude towards the other has a strong correlation with the social structure and cultural environment. "The attitude towards the foreigner depends on the way of feeling and being of the community, social groups and individuals. The individual and, above all, the community identity, de-

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Simmel's picture of the frame metaphorically describes very well this thesis: "for the social group, the frame assumes a function very similar to that which it has for a work of art. In this one it exerts the two functions, which are exactly the two aspects of a single function: to mark the boundary of the work of art as to the surrounding environment and to close it in itself" (Simmel, 1989, p. 529).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Our translation by Gomarasca, 2004.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Our translation by Zanini, 1997.

termines the attitudes and strategies of action" (Cotesta, 2002, p. 5)<sup>9</sup>. In other words, the exclusion mechanism arises from the inability to be able to classify, by their own cultural categories, the peripheral elements, seen as deviant, dangerous anyway. This is how "the stranger becomes someone who is not a member of our own field from the beginning; then when s/he gets there,s/he imports a set of special features, qualities, which, in the long run, can modify, more or less in depth, its character" (Zanini, 1997, p. 60)<sup>10</sup>.

The stranger disrupts the familiarity of the space of belonging and requires, in any case, to rearrange this space and to revise the limits<sup>11</sup>. This reorganization depends on the ability to integrate other individuals in own environment; when there is no such ability, we add a little self- confidence, then we tend to assume basically suspicious and hostile attitudes." (Simmel, 1989, p. 580).

In short, "on the border and across the border differences are structured: the symbolic, the legal and the political ones. Differences having other differences, between those who have rights and those without; between those who belong to a particular community and those who are excluded" (Nuzzo 2006, p. 129)<sup>12</sup>. Thus, the boundary builds its own citizens according to approval and uniformity criteria (inward), becoming a "necessary condition and, at the same time, 'non-democratic' of democracy" (Rigo, 2015 pp. 10-14)<sup>13</sup>.

## 3. Education for a Global Citizenship

The problem of the border, its physical geometry and its value in the setting up of the citizen and of the foreigner sets up the basis for the issue

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Our translation by Cotesta, 2002

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Our translation by Zanini, 1997.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Being a foreigner, for Simmel, means that "the distant subject is near" (1989 p. 582) and that the difference is close to our environments and insists to enter and remain there; the stranger is not exactly "the traveler who today comes and tomorrow goes, but [...] the one who today comes, and tomorrow stays - so to say the potential traveler who, not having continued to move, has not entirely overcome the absence of ties of going and coming" (Simmel, 1989, p. 580).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Our translation by Nuzzo, 2006.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Our translation by Rigo, 2015.

of citizenship and, therefore, of the strategies for the recognition of the identity of a subject.

However, the complexity of modern society is gradually undermining the role of the territorial boundaries as mechanisms of understanding and reducing complexity, positioning them along non-linear trajectories (Luhmann, 1982, pp. 238-240). Distance does not seem to count much and space has ceased to be an obstacle; "the very meaning of geography starts

to be questioned at any level. We have become all nomads but still in touch with each other" (Benedikt, 1995, p.42)

This situation directs the reflection on the meaning of citizenship and the need to educate ourselves to new forms of coexistence among different identities. It is no coincidence that there is an ongoing major debate on the extension of citizenship rights, which involves the review of the issue of national identity. Has the collective profile of the nation-state to remain linked to that of religious or national origin, or transformed itself, including new items, brought by different ethnic and cultural groups?

The solution is not unique. You could untie the political culture of the ethnic one or "strengthen the real citizenship, rather than imaginary, ensuring more security rights and solidarity enshrined in the Constitution" (Schnapper, 1994, p.78).

As we have previously anticipated when you extend more rights to noncitizens the word 'citizenship' gives way to the broader concept of *global citizenship*.

However to internalize this new vision (of spaces, places, costumes) implies a pedagogical reflection on the concept of border, not as a division but as opportunities for contacts.

To think of a global citizenship is possible if you become aware of belonging to an increasingly complex world, in which phenomena and events have close connections and interdependencies. It is to perceive the world, as in Luhmam's vision, as a set of autonomous systems able to autogenerate their own borders (Luhmann, 2001, p. 101) and independent from the observation of others. Understood in this way, they are subject to a multi-establishment and co-penetrability, that is to the interweaving of intra and extra-systemic relationships.

"In order to respect each other you need to engage in the difficult task to understand it, to change perspective, knowing that it is impossible to completely overcome egocentrism. Conversion is very difficult and even more difficult is the fusion of cultural horizons" (Tabboni, 2006, p. 12)<sup>14</sup>. Cassano would say that the ideal condition would be to put oneself in a situation of listening and proximity that would allow to "creep into the place of the other through imagination" (1989, p. 9)<sup>15</sup>.

However, this broadening of perspective does not mean the loss of national placement and the indispensable reference to the state. It should rather be understood as a multiplication of belongings, without cancelling the local dimension but accompanying it. The construction of the global citizenship implies that every person lives a plurality of identities and memberships (social, religious, cultural, ethnic, professional, etc.); consequently, the national bond will not be exhaustive. The *global citizen* is s/he who will also be able to exercise her/his rights as a simple person, and not only as the citizen of a state and s/he will depend on ties that go beyond the state membership (Sen, 2000).

It is evident that the training/educational matter is in terms of understanding how to learn and live that freedom of belonging, conceived as an additional and not subtractive one. "Education will help train people free to decide what priority to give to their identity; people aware of the interdependence of groups and peoples also distant from each other and aware of the responsibility of the bonds that unite individuals on the planet. In addition, education will have to fight against all forms of resurgent nationalism, ethnicity and racism, but it should not deprive individuals of that particular and 'hot' form of identity lived within their own culture" (Santerini, 2009)<sup>16</sup>.

## Conclusions

Globalization has undermined the solidity of this conviction, generating a twofold situation: on the one hand, disorientation and disintegration that promote neo-tribalisms and phenomena of fundamentalism both in West-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Our translation by Tabboni, 2006.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Our translation by Cassano, 1989.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Our translation by Santerini, 2009.

ern and Eastern Countries; on the other hand, increased communications' networks that have made the world infinitely small.

In addition, the rapid technological revolution in the field of media has transformed the times and modes of communication, eliminating the spacetime dimension in favour of a *mobile* vision of the people's lives (Elliott, Urry, 2013)<sup>17</sup>.

In any case, this change of spatial relations has challenged the idea of a citizenship only linked to a specific place and it seems to suggest a model in which the spatial dimension replaces the territorial one. To the social, cultural, economic implications and transformations corresponds a more complex and multidimensional concept of citizenship. Being a citizen does it mean to fulfil town electoral duties, to actively participate in the management of territorial issues, to know the laws of the State, or to express a sense of national identity? Do civic behaviours relate more to the private sphere or to the public one? What relationship is created between rights and duties within the society of multiple citizenships?

In order to attempt an answer to these questions the framework developed by Gagnon and Pagé can be useful also to analyze and describe what is inside the 'black box of citizenship' and to identify the different ways in which societies are facing social pluralism. In this perspective, citizenship is on two axes: on the vertical axis of identity, there are the macro-concepts of national identity and social, cultural and supranational belonging; on the horizontal axis of equality, there are, instead, the poles of the system of rights and of the political and civic participation. The individual elements must be considered in close connection with each other. In other words, each Country will choose how to configure identity, how to manage memberships, the regime of rights and the rules of participation (Gagnon, Pagé, 1999).

Through such an image-picture it emerges that the town is made of civic culture, as expressed in the Constitution, and it is based on the complex balance that regulates the integration of differences, the effective rights re-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Urry argues "Society is no longer based on relationships among individuals who are physically close: technology has shattered all territorial boundaries. Mobility is the paradigm of our existence now: our identities are no longer rooted in a place that gives them meaning, but they roam the world without limits and activate relationships that movement immediately transforms into bonds and remote intimacy, as those allowed by email, sms and skype" (Aluffi, 2013).

gime, the degree of participation, etc; this social, civil, political, historical and cultural process must be analyzed in its becoming. Citizenship is the past, rules, institutions but also a political project for the future of a Country. "Despite the inconsistent parts of which every culture is made and despite the great social and cultural diversity that characterizes contemporary societies, to meet with the other remains an exciting experience, the drafting of which can cause different results" (Tabboni, 2006, p. 15)<sup>18</sup>.

Based on these statements, citizenship becomes a field characterized by heterogeneity, which can be analyzed from different points of view: legal, historical, of values, intercultural, etc.

To bring unity to the different souls of citizenship education may look like an impossible task, or simply useless. However, the multicultural challenge of integration still has to be collected. It is investing in training programs which discover and rediscover the meaning of citizenship in its multi-dimension of openness, equality and social cohesion. In other words, you need to create a balance between the acquisition of intercultural education as an up-to-date understanding (ability to know and appreciate the differences) and to orient it not only to the defence of particularism but also to convergence and social cohesion. This task becomes essential if you want to avoid a reified and reductive vision of individual cultures, and increase their capacity for dialogue and mutual understanding by supporting the centripetal forces of socio-cultural movements rather than the centrifugal ones (Santerini, 2001, 2005)<sup>19</sup>. We must learn to understand the emotions coming from other cultures. "The other will become more and more part of us, in our multicultural society. The emotional boundaries of the world have become as important as its geographical borders" (Moïsi, 2009, p. 228).

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# *Crossing Linguistic Borders: Translating Democracy in the 2012 Egyptian Constitution*

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### Abstract

The transfer of political concepts into different places and cultures happens first and foremost through translation. Far from being a simple transposition of meaning into a different language to facilitate border crossing, it also entails a process of adjustment to a different cultural context and a change in what is perceived to be the original meaning of the concept. Translation should also include the analysis of the social contexts that cause a political concept to be modified. Through Baker's social narrative theory, all these aspects can be integrated to analyse how the concept of democracy moves from place to place and from language to language leading to more complex understandings of it. I will examine the meaning of the concept of democracy in the 2012 Egyptian Constitution to outline the main features of an intercultural translational process of the concept of democracy.

Keywords: Democracy, Translation, Egyptian Constitution, Muslim Brothers.

## 1. Translation equivalence as negotiation of meaning

During the 1970s and throughout the 1980s and 1990s, with the gradual questioning of the paradigm of equivalence between an original and a translated text, translation ceased to be considered only a linguistic transfer, and has also started to be defined as a political and cultural process of communication, that involves texts, as well as different contexts and communities. These developments have brought considerable innovations in the field of translation research with equivalence being viewed as an illusory undertaking, whose misleading transparency, perfection and attainability mask linguistic and cultural asymmetries. Rather than being a stable, scientific and reliable paradigm, as well as the ultimate task of translators, equivalence could be considered a political space of negotiation in which viable linguistic solutions are continually worked out to introduce acceptable amounts of newness and foreignness into a well-established cultural and political order.

Considered as such, translation is a way of reproducing discourse not just at a textual level, but also in the transfer of ideas and theories into other cultural contexts by means of textual reproduction, interpretation and commentary<sup>1</sup>. In this sense, the analysis of the meaning of a concept through one of its many actualisations into a text appears to acquire significance in that it would contribute to mapping its transformations when introduced into a foreign cultural context (Polezzi, 2012). More specifically, when a theory or a concept are reproduced, it seems relevant to consider to what extent, in trying to convey the illusion of equivalence between the source and the receiving notion of it, there is a political attempt to accept foreignness into a cultural context. In this sense, one should not wonder whether concepts such as 'freedom', 'human rights', 'justice', or 'democracy' mean the same in different cultural contexts, given the fact that such terms could not possibly mean the same. Rather, one should look for the reason why is there so strong an attempt to make such concepts mean the same. In other words, it seems relevant to consider the purpose for creating an illusory correspondence of meaning that puts such terms into as equivalent a relationship as possible.

Against this background, it seems particularly interesting to examine democracy, nowadays an extremely positive and undisputed concept in the international geopolitical arena, and consider its role when translated into other cultures.

The modern notion of democracy is conventionally thought to have been transferred into the Arab world in the first decades of the nineteenth century from France into a colonised area, inspired by the ideals of freedom and equality and prompted by the experience of the French Revolution. However, far from being uniquely the result of European historical events, its development in the Arab world also depends on previous notions of ancient Greek democracy, and is as well strongly connected to the cultural, political and economic situation of the broader Ottoman Empire during the first decades of the century. In this large region, during the second half of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For further readings on the politics of translation see Alvarez & Vidal, 1996; Venuti, 1993; Baker, 2006, 2013; Tymoczko & Gentzler, 2002; Cronin, 2006; Sakai, 2009; Hermans, 2014.

the eighteenth century, there was a period of military, cultural and economic change prompted by a long economic and political crisis. These transformations were also influenced by the relations with French institutions around the 1720s for the transfer of military and naval innovations to the Ottoman army. This modernization process in the military, economic, agricultural and cultural fields took place in line with the principles of the French Revolution and following the technical advancements of the Industrial Revolution.

Starting from that period, there seems to be a gradual and continuous process of redefinition and questioning of the concept of democracy in the Arab world carried out by different scholars of classical Islam, academic intellectuals and political activists. These thinkers could be grouped according to their general attitude toward modernization and its satellite concepts of freedom, equality, democracy, human rights, and the like, into different strands of thought such as modernist, Salafist, reformist, liberal reformist, secularists, socialist etc., based on the specific historical period in which they have lived and interpreted the concept of democracy.

Such aspects should be taken into account also to investigate the more specific context of the notion of democracy in the period in which the 2012 Egyptian Constitution was formulated, issued and approved.

## 2. Analysing the meaning of democracy

In the first stance, democracy can be defined as a meta- or master narrative<sup>2</sup>. Somers and Gibson describe master/meta-narratives as those "in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The social-narrative theory appears to be the best equipped methodology in this case study since it connects effectively textual analysis to the texts' broader context of production and reception, so that it is possible to consider democracy not only as a single word to be transferred into a translated text, but also as a broader discourse that is not limited to textual representation. Most methodological tools in translation research, (see for example Hatim & Mason, 1990; Hatim, 1997; Schäffner, 2002, Munday, 2012) generally presuppose a comparison between two texts or (sets of texts) into two or more different languages, which is not the case here. Moreover, even if some of the analytical tools (Aixelà, 1996) try to integrate cultural variables and connect the texts with broader cultural contexts, a more flexible approach, which requires analysis of background cultural discourses, instead of only texts, appears to best adapt to the definition of translation given above.

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which we are embedded as contemporary actors in history ... Progress, Decadence, Industrialization, Enlightenment, etc." (as cited in Baker, 2006, p. 82). A meta- or master narrative started as a more limited narrative that was later extended to other contexts and places. In this sense, democracy intended in modern times could be thought to have been initiated or, rather, perceived to have gained relevance in the late eighteenth century in France and the United States, and to have gradually been disseminated into other areas, such as Europe, lately being transferred further into broader regions in the world. As Baker argues, a meta/master-narrative is such because it "has persisted for decades and [...] the lives of ordinary individuals across the planet have been influenced by it" (Baker, 2006, p.82). She also propounds an explanation for the establishment of a specific meta/master-narrative, arguing that "political and economic dominance may indeed be the prime factor determining the survival and circulation of political meta-narratives" (Baker, 2006, p.82). In this sense, it is possible to identify different trends at varying levels and periods of time that might be relevant for the analysis of the case under consideration.

Firstly, according to a widespread political postcolonial narrative, democracy is today viewed as a result of the United States' economic and cultural politics of control over various parts of the world. Similarly, at a more circumscribed local level, it could also be observed that, in the nineteenth century, the wealthy modern imperialist European countries started relations with the Ottoman Empire and Egypt as part of their struggle for power over the Mediterranean Sea. On the other hand, however, one should also mention that the Ottoman Empire, by employing modernization strategies and military innovations taken from European colonial powers and accepting to relate itself to such culturally-diverse peoples, was seeking to regain control over its large uncontrolled territories, and, at the same time, to defend itself from the very same European military intervention. Acceptance of cultural models may have served as a less conflicted way to allow for the inescapable political and economic influence of the foreign powers over the Empire. At this level, the welcoming of newness in different contexts always appears a contested one, and entails enthusiastic support, resolute rejections and mixed

selective reinterpretations<sup>3</sup>. From such broad range of outcomes and reactions, innovation and change are always the result of a complex blend of patterns of acceptance and resistance.

It seems interesting to consider "the way in which a longstanding, established meta-narrative may be used to lend weight and psychological salience to a developing public or meta-narrative" (Baker, 2006, p.86). Baker defines public narratives as "stories elaborated by and circulating among social and institutional formations larger than the individual, such as the family, religious or educational institution, the media, and the nation" (Baker, 2006, p. 66).

Since the effects of such extension of the meta-narrative of democracy could not be entirely predicted (Baker, 2006), it is necessary to envisage the possibility that meta-narratives may be contested or accepted in a variety of different modes, even in the same cultural contexts. It should thus be expected that democracy as a universal value could also be partly or completely questioned by a great variety of public narratives which aim at adapting it to local contexts. While maintaining an overlapping structure on the meaning of democracy, public narratives also introduce, through different strategies, some innovative aspects and concepts in the general meta/master-narrative of democracy as a universal value. Bell's illiberal democracy (Bell, Brown, Jayasuriya & Jones, 1995), the Indian subaltern (Kaviraj, 2005; Sheth & Nandy, 1996; Kothari, 2005; Chatterjee, 2011) studies' notion of democracy, as well as the Latin American (Quijano, 2000; Mignolo, 2000; Santos, 2007) one could be such examples.

In the case considered here, democracy in the twentieth century Arab world could be imagined as the result of a variety of conflicting public

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> In her discourse analysis on the concept of democracy in contemporary Egyptian political debate, Dunne, 2003 appears to move in a similar direction when she states that democracy in 2003 Mubarak's Egypt is "especially available or suitable for use in accomplishing necessary social interactional work such as identity construction, positioning, and negotiation of power relations». In her view, the Egyptian political debate over democracy should be considered a way of guiding the reinterpretation of democracy, viewed by Egyptians as an «irresistible external discourse" to be in turn appropriated and exploited to Egypt's advantage, partly embraced, readapted, but also treated with skepticism, ignored or rejected thus positioning oneself «vis-à-vis one's colleagues and rivals» (All citations Dunne, 2003, p.129).

narratives, among which blended liberal, socialist, nationalist, secular, anticapitalist and Islamic narratives of democracy have been proposed. However, during the 1980s and 1990s, Islamist political parties increased their visibility through a growing involvement of grassroots cultural, economic and political movements<sup>4</sup>.

For instance, Ismail (2003) explains that "the fortunes of Islamism as a political movement are conditioned by the structures of opportunities, and by political configurations and contingent identities. In their interaction with the state, and other political and social actors, Islamists have adopted a multitude of strategies, ranging from outright confrontation and violent action to agitation in the public sphere to infiltration of societal spaces" (Ismail, 2003, p.176).

As El-Ghobashy (2005) explains, in the wake of the twenty-first century, this led Islamist political movements to win elections in a variety of Arab countries such as Palestine, Lebanon and Egypt, as a result of an extensive recourse to electoralism. In particular, Ayubi (1993) claims that political Islam in Egypt is considered one of the most powerful movements in the Arab world. These major strategic changes could be accounted for by a variety of factors, such as the influence of the liberal Islamic thinkers that started in the 1970s (El-Ghobashy, 2005; Bayat, 2007; Pioppi, 2014), the exacerbation of the conflict with Israel, as well as the need to counter Western imperialist politics with a strong and appealing Islamic alternative, after the failure of nationalist and pan-Arab movements (Burgat, 2003; Zubaida, 2011).

According to El-Ghobashy (2005), in Egypt, such transformations were prompted by "a decisive move away from the uncompromising notions of Sayyid Qutb [...] toward a cautious reinterpretation of the ideas of founder al-Banna", that made the Society of the Muslim Brothers shift "from a religious mass movement to what looks very much like a modern political party". El-Ghobashy (2005) also adds that the electoralist turn of the Muslim Brothers led them to confront and be influenced by "common institutional variables on the organization and ideology of both secular and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> For further reading on Islamist political parties and movements see Esposito & Voll, 1996; Zaki, 1995; Ismail, 2003, El-Gobashi, 2005; Bayat, 2007; Zubaida, 2011; Pioppi, 2014; Browers, 2009.

religious political parties" (El-Ghobashy, 2005, p.375). This also caused among the Islamist political parties in Egypt disdain and reproach, with the accusations from the anti-secular and anti-capitalist movement Jama'at al-Islamiyya of "helping to build the institutions of the secular regime" (as cited in El-Ghobashy, 2005, p.379). Similarly, El-Ghobashy (2005) explains that the notion of democracy propounded by the Muslim Brothers was an appropriation of the discourse regarding the compatibility of democracy with Islamic principles supported by liberal Islamic thinkers in the 1980s: "A related innovation is the Ikhwan's appropriation of moderate Islamist thinkers' works authenticating democracy with Islamic concepts. Democracy here is defined as (1) broad, equal citizenship with (2) binding consultation of citizens with respect to governmental personnel and policies, and (3) protection of citizens from arbitrary state action" (El-Ghobashi, 2005, p. 374)<sup>5</sup>.

The Muslim Brothers' contemporary public narrative about democracy could be considered as the result of a specific adaptation of certain elements of democracy as a universal value to the Arab Egyptian electoral context. The Muslim Brothers claimed the compatibility of democracy with the principles of Islam. Baker states that the variants of narrative which acquire currency depends not only on the power structures in which such narratives are embedded, but also on the "determination with which their proponents promote and defend them" (Baker, 2006, p. 67).

Thanks to the engagement of large parts of the Egyptian civil society that was previously excluded from political participation, the Muslim Brothers gradually managed to build a wide and diversified political consensus that led them to become the first opposition party in the 2005 parliamentary elections. After the 2011 Egyptian Revolution, which forced President Hosni Mubarak to resign and led to presidential elections in June 2012, Muhammad Morsi, the candidate for the 'حزب الحرية والعدالة' ('Hizb-ul-Hurriyah-wa-l-'adala', The Freedom and Justice Party ] an exponent of the Society of the Muslim Brothers was elected as the fifth President of Egypt.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> 'Ikhwan' in the first line is the transliteration of اخوان, or Brothers, referring to the Society of the Muslim Brothers.

A product of such public narrative was the 2012 Egyptian Constitution (Constituent Assembly, [CA] 2012)<sup>6</sup>.

evitcejda ehT'ديمقر اطي' ['dimuqrātī', 'democratic', BQ] appears five times, more precisely twice in the Preamble; once in Part 1, Chapter 1, Article 1; and once respectively in Part 2, Chapter 2, Articles 52 and 53. From a comparative analysis of the preceding 1971 Constitution, the 2012 and the 2014<sup>7</sup> ones, it is possible to observe that reference to democratic rule and principles can be retrieved in the preambles of all the texts. It is also possible to conclude the same for the first article defining the State in each Constitution<sup>8</sup>, as well as for the articles that regulate the rights to form syndicates and trade unions<sup>9</sup>.

However, what appears remarkable for the sake of analysis is that the noun 'ديمقراطية' ['dimuqratīya', 'democracy', BQ] can be found only once and, more specifically, reference to democracy is in Part 1, Chapter 1, Article 6. Quite differently from what is stated not only in the previous 1971 Egyptian Constitution, but also in the 2014 following one, in Part 1, Chapter 1, Article 6 of the 2012 Constitution the form of government is defined as based " المواطنة" ("alā mabāda-l-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Constituent Assembly for the Draft of the Country's New Constitution, [ الجمعية التأسيسية لوضع Al-Jama'iyya al-Taassisiyya li-Wad' Mashrou' Dustour Jadid].

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Issued after the military coup d'etat that removed President Morsi and suspended the 2012 Constitution. It is possible to find originals of past constitutional documents and of the current Egyptian Constitution both in Arabic and English online see World Intellectual Property Organization [WIPO], n.d.

For a quick Arabic and English comparison of the three constitutions see Comparative Constitutions Project [CCP], 2016.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Respectively in Part 1: The State, Article 1 in the 1971 Constitution; Part 1: 'State and Society', Chapter 1: 'Political Principles', Article 1: 'Nature of the Republic, and of the Egyptian people' in the 2012 Constitution; and Chapter 1: 'The State', Article 1: 'Nature of the Republic' in the 2014 Constitution.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Respectively in Part 3: 'Public Freedoms, Rights and Duties', Article 56 in the 1971 Constitution, in Part 2: 'Rights and Freedoms', Chapter 2: 'Civil and Political Rights', Article 52: 'Right to form syndacates' and Article 53: 'Trade Unions' in the 2012 Constitution, and Chapter 3: 'Public Rights, Freedoms and Duties', Article 76: 'Right to form syndacates', and Article 77: 'Trade Unions', in the 2014 Constitution.

dimuqrātīya wa-asshura wa-l-muwātīna', 'on the principles of democracy and *shūrā*, and citizenship', BQ]<sup>10</sup>.

In such definition of the form of government, it is possible to notice a juxtaposition of the word 'ديمقر اطية', ['dimuqrātīya'] which is a transliteration of the English term 'democracy' or possibly of the French word 'démocratie', and the term 'metacy', ['shūrā', BQ]<sup>11</sup> typically considered an Islamic concept to mean 'consultation'<sup>12</sup>. According to Baker, the specific narrative feature of 'relativity' or 'hermeneutic composability' concentrates on the fact that "it is impossible for the human mind to make sense of isolated events or of a patchwork of events that are not constituted as a narrative" (Baker, 2006, p. 107).

Such combination appears to be instrumental while attempting to reinscribe the meta-narrative of democracy as a universal value into the Muslim Brothers' public narrative that purported the compatibility between democracy and Islamic principles. Their choice attempts at normalising a religious concept, namely  $sh\bar{u}r\bar{a}$ , by inscribing it into a binding and official document such as the Constitution of a nation, and using it to define a form of government together with the term 'democracy'. This process of normalisation should be also considered as a way not only to formally and legally support the introduction of a new political interpretation into Egyptian political understanding of government and democracy, but also to start a process of legitimation of the Muslim Brothers' public narrative in the international political arena.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Translated by BQ. Mashrou' dustour al-Jumhuriyya Misr al-'Arabiyya: On the concept of *shura* in the Arab political thought refer to Khalaf-Allah, 1973; Taha, 1987; Sulaiman, 1996.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> The word 'shura' is repeated many times in the 2012 Constitution, and it is mostly used to talk about the 'مجلس الشورى', ['Majlis-u-shura' 'Shura Council', BQ] the upper house of the Egyptian Parliament, abolished by the 2014 Constitution. Apart from many occurrences to refer to such institution, in the 2012 Constitution it is used only once to describe the process of consultation in the article examined here, in Part 1, Chapter 1, Article 6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> For a historical reconstruction of the Islamic use of 'shura' to mean 'democracy' see Moussalli, 2001.

## Conclusions

The meta-narrative of democracy as a secular universal value that influences the notion of good government of each individual, in Egypt, has affected political thinkers in the twentieth century. They have produced different public and collective narratives to adapt the notion of democracy as a universal secular value to the current political situation of the country. One of such public narratives is that of the Society of the Muslim Brothers, which, since its founding by Hasan Al-Banna in 1928 and throughout the twentieth century, has undergone changing fortunes. Once a mass movement inspired by the return to the principles of Islam in order to counter the cultural and political profligacy of modernization, the Society of the Muslim Brothers has gradually evolved into a proper political party, highly knowledgeable about procedural electoral politics. Further than that, the Muslim Brothers have created a public narrative that is deeply connected with the emerging Islamic liberal thought, while seeking compatibility of Islamic principles with democracy. Their current public narrative has recently been disseminated to a large part of the population and strengthened thanks to the engagement of grassroots cultural, religious and political movements during the 1980s and 1990s. Electoral politics brought the Muslim Brothers to be the strongest opposition party in 2011, and, after the Egyptian Revolution, it has allowed the Freedom and Justice Party to win the presidential elections with their candidate Muhammad Morsi. As a result, the Muslim Brothers, inspired by liberal political thought, in the 2012 Egyptian Constitution propounded a form of government based on the principles of democracy and shūrā. Such document results to be in line with their public narrative of compatibility and officially legitimates their Islamic political import.

Even though in the transfer of democracy it is possible to recognise an asymmetrical distribution of power, strategies of resistance from local political institutions should not be disregarded nor underrated since they make it possible to negotiate the meaning of key internationally-recognised political concepts, thus contributing to their change through a largely unpredictable renegotiation of meaning. Crossing Linguistic Borders : Translating Democracy in the 2012 Egyptian Constitution

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# *Guerra all'ISIS. Diario dal fronte curdo* [Waging War on ISIS : Diary from the Kurdish Front]. By Gastone Breccia, Bologna: il Mulino, 2016. ISBN: 978-88-15-26334-6, pp. 210, € 16,00.

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This very informative, interesting and well-written book is conceived and articulated as a travel diary, following the itinerary of the Author's travel from Erbil to Sinjar for the purpose of observing and understanding the war opposing the Kurds to the so-called "Islamic State", indicated in the book's title by the acronym ISIS. During his three-weeks-travel and stay in Kurdistan, in territories comprised within the Iraqi and the Syrian borders, Breccia meets some of the protagonists of such war, talking with them about a number of aspects, especially focusing on military issues. The idea behind the book is that despite its being seemingly "localized" such war will probably have global implications, to the extent that in his *Post scriptum* Breccia states that «the third world war has started», although this may seem a too «pessimistic view», and that «the feeling is shared in Kurdistan to have been ended up just in the middle of it» (p. 193; all translations from Italian are mine).

One of the most remarkable features of the book is that it has been written by a professor of Byzantine history. You might namely wonder why very "hot" and "timely" topics such as those relating to the "Islamic State" should be addressed by someone who is interested in, and expert at, "things of the past". As a matter of fact, those topics are something still developing *in the present time*, while – as it is well known – historians should deal with *the past*. As Breccia himself recollects at the beginning of the *Introduction*, just his being an *historian* and not a *journalist* – an expert at the present – often came as a surprise to the people he encountered during his journey to the "Kurdish front".

Now, I find that just this preliminary question of legitimacy, so to speak, is a very relevant aspect and that we should take it into account in reading Breccia's book. We are since long used to thinking of historical accounts as

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something giving a comprehensive picture of facts and events already concluded that have no longer to do with the lived experience of people in the here and now, if not in the sense that certain consequences of those facts and events still exercise an influence on the present. History, in this (western and "scientific") understanding, is something sequentially developing along a line – the arrow of time, if you prefer – that can be represented by reconstructing the sequence of facts and events on the basis of "correct" ordering principles.

In this way, that is to say by putting them in order, you become also able to assign a unitary meaning to those same facts and events, but to do this you need to be spatially and temporally situated outside them: in short, you need *distance* in order to exercise the *historical gaze*. However, this is only one possible way to define the essence of historical research and the role of the historian, one that has also given birth to a number of "grand narratives" to which western thinking has been stubbornly sticking until they were definitively deconstructed during the second half of the 20th century.

So, there is now space enough to recover other possible options, of which many eminent examples from the past might be mentioned, to think about history and to perform the role of the historian. Among them, as Breccia highlights, «the ancient historians, and the Byzantine ones who continued their splendid tradition for a millennium, considered the *autopsia* not only useful, but necessary, and they apologized to the readers because – obviously – they could not provide them with a direct testimony to the major part of the facts narrated in their works» (pp. 7-8).

The practice of *autopsia*, in the original ancient Greek meaning of "seeing [something] with one's own eyes", was considered by ancient historians as perfectly fitting the purposes of historical reconstruction, even if they felt obliged to apologize because they were not able to see *all* things with their own eyes and therefore could not narrate them exhaustively. The practice to "go and see" facts and events in order to "narrate them to others" is of course different from that of "historical research" as we commonly understand it today, and the same goes for their final products. While historical research results mainly in "historical essays" aiming to provide the readers with a reconstruction and discussion of "historical sources", the final product of an *autopsia* might be considered an historical source in itself, just because the historian performing it becomes part of the same facts and events

she intends to reconstruct, understand and narrate. But differently from an account given by a journalist, who is usually expected to "go and see" facts and events in order to narrate them *as they are unfolding in the present*, the testimony given by a professional historian is much more nuanced and complicated, just because the witness, so to speak, exercises a different gaze – that of a person who is able to insert current facts and events within a more general framework connecting past and present.

According to Breccia, there is also another reason why this different way of doing history may be considered adequate to the particular topic addressed by the book. In fact, it can be stated that «the war in Kurdistan is a particular case, in that it is the last episode of a collective sequence of events that have not had the possibility, until today, to consolidate to historical reflections and analyses». For various reasons, not least because of the «prohibition to use their own language», the Kurds have at their disposal «a very rich memory, but almost no written text that can secure it and can be used by others». Hence, in this case the possibility to rely upon different historical sources becomes relevant also to «contribute in the next future to the writing of more "pondered" essays» (p. 8).

Through Breccia's "diary", which might be also defined as a "chronicle", we follow the author's journey to the "Kurdish front" from its very beginning, sharing his encounters with persons involved, in various roles and positions, in the unfolding of a war which may well sound "strange" to the western sensibility under many different aspects. We meet different types of "warriors", ranging from the *peshmerga* of the Kurdistan Regional Government in Iraq to the guerrilla fighters of the PKK and PYD – getting lost in a forest of acronymes defining and demarcating the various groups (HPG, YPG, YPJ) –, and to the Italian military force training the *peshmerga* to become a more "proper" army. But we also meet "normal people", differently marked by the experience of the war(s), and we even come to know that the guerrilla fighters seem to take gender issues more seriously than "us", if it is true that all leading roles are shared between a man and a woman.

While reading the book, the reader slowly enters a world in which time and space are conceived differently, as are the rhythm of everyday life and all the notions she is familiar with, and she becomes even able to recognize different patterns of living and thinking, in a cultural setting in which you

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do not drink coffee but *chai* [tea]. *Chai* and *Da'ish* – the name by which people of the area indicate the entity we are used to calling ISIS – are the two words the reader will probably better remember after closing the book. From *chai* to *chai* she arrives with Breccia to the frontline in the Syrian territory, where the enemy can be seen and where a range of military actions are taking place. This is also the end of the journey, you cannot go further.

After that, only coming back is possible, to the point of departure and to the rewriting of the diary in order to transform it in a source available to all who happen to be interested in sharing the experience of the author. As the ancient historians already did, also Breccia seems to apologize because he has not been able to give a direct testimony to all the facts and events that could have been relevant to his readers. Especially, he feels bad that he has been not able to give an accurate account of the war, since he could not consider the enemy's viewpoint. As he himself states: «*I do not know the enemy*. I do not know him and therefore I cannot understand him; I am going to leave the places of this war, I have learnt a lot, but *Da'ish* has remained concealed» (p. 184).

In my opinion, just the awareness of incompleteness that Breccia evokes in many "personal comments" throughout his diary is one of the main reasons why his book surely deserves to be read. The feeling of incompleteness and the need to assume the attitude of a learner in order to understand the links between past and present to act responsibly in one's own times are just what historical accounts like this one have to offer to those who could not "be there", leaving open to their interpretation and further learning the task to fill the blanks, so to speak. In short, the merit of this and similar "small narratives", which we would need much more than the often rolling accounts provided by the media, consists in giving conclusive evidence that before turning into *memory*, history overlaps with *experience*.